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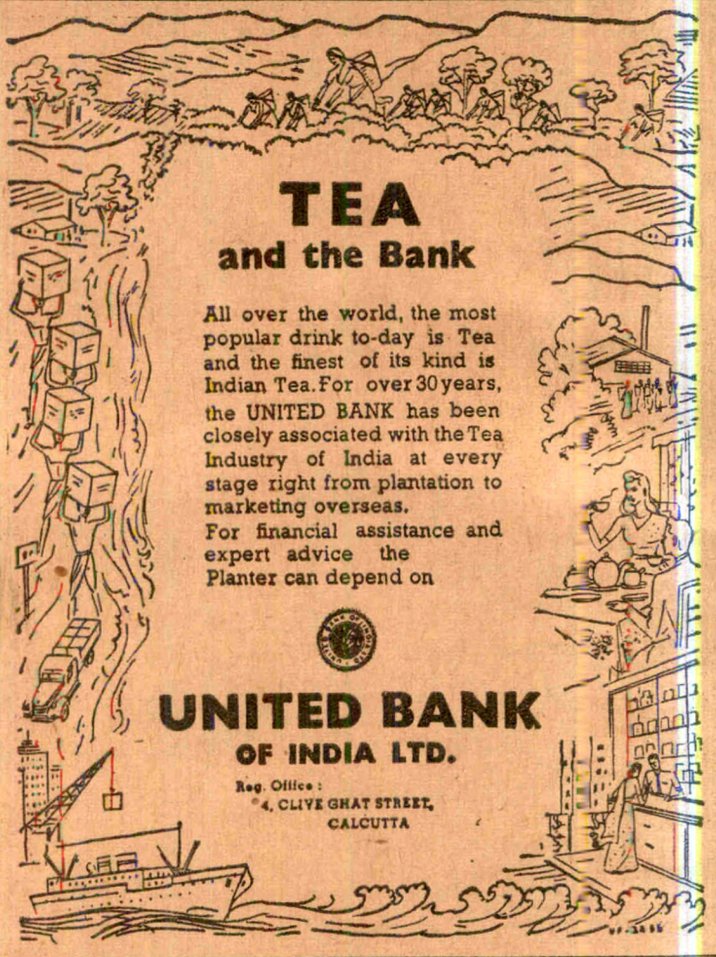

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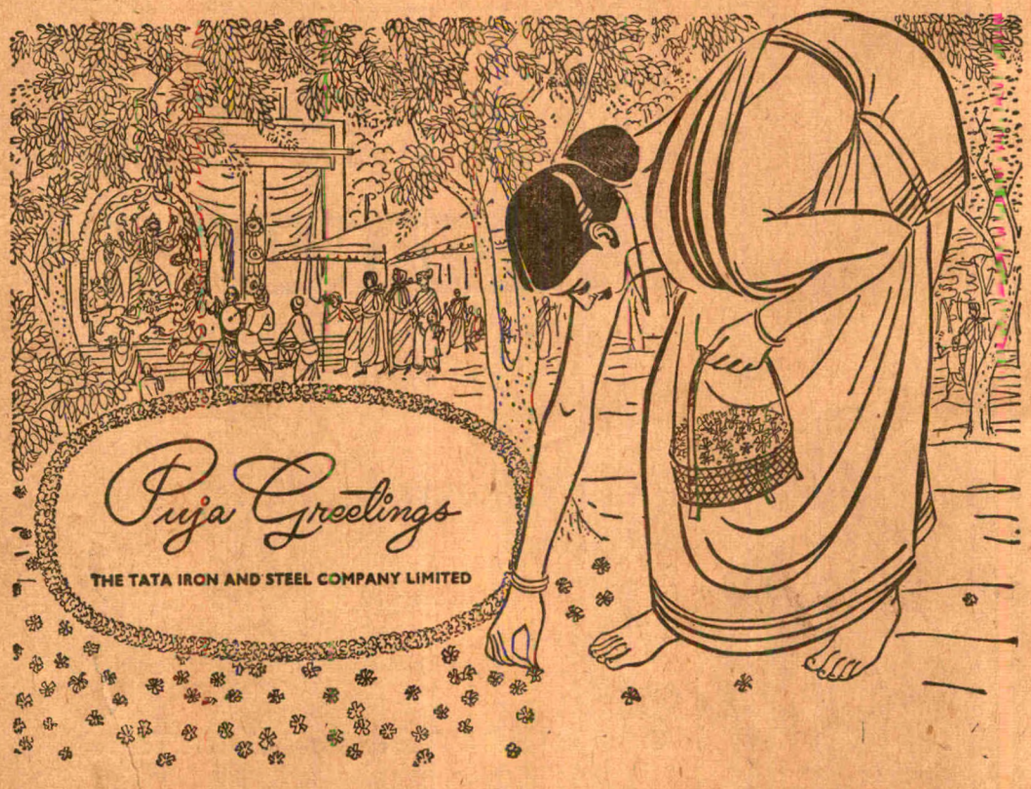

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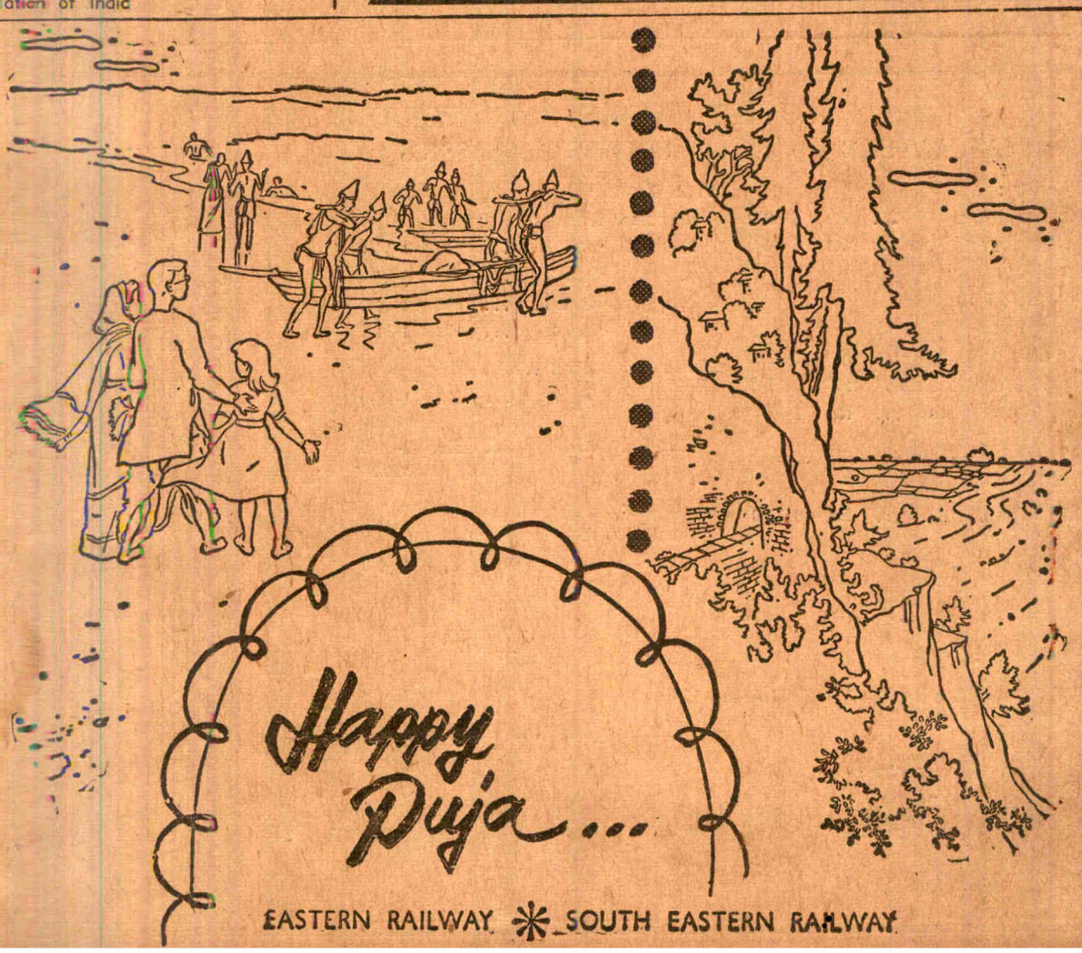

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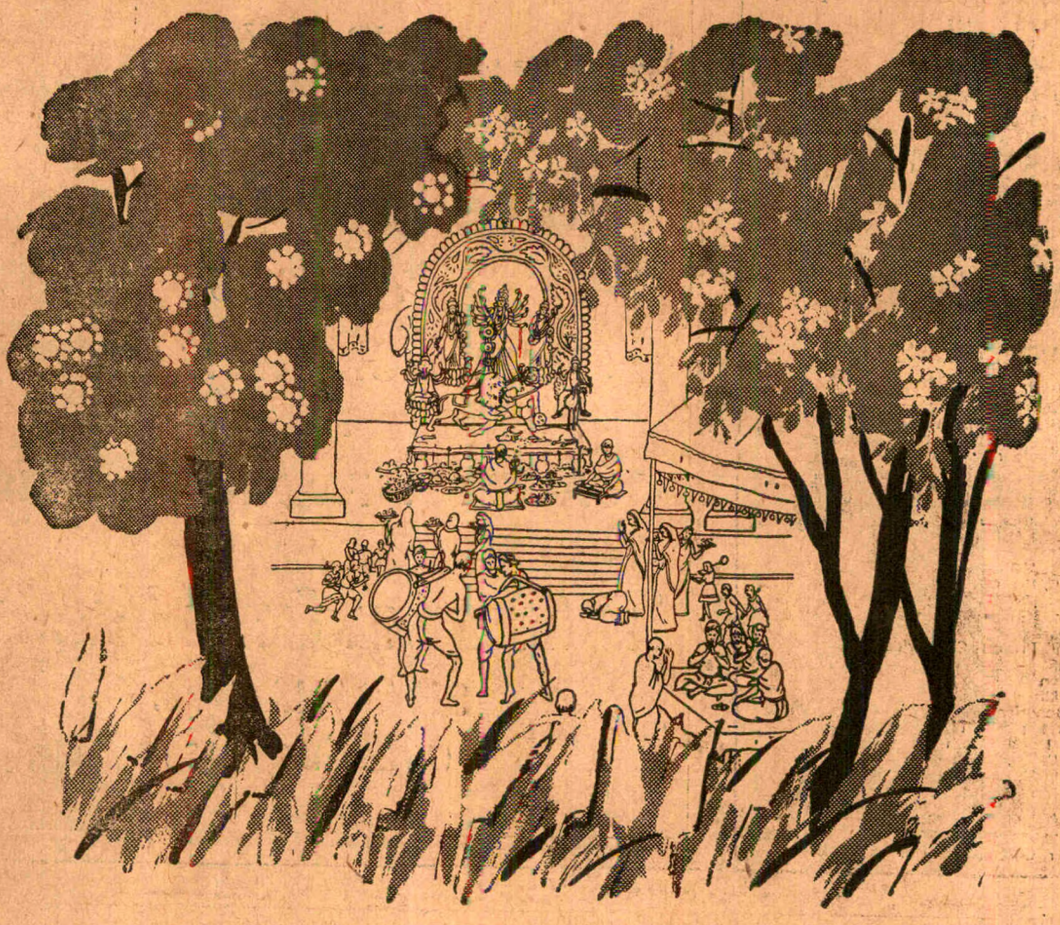

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HAIL: THE MOTHER

By MAHANAMBRATA BRAHMACHARI

"Alone I stand, unify I all
Who is to second me in the Universe?"
—X.5

IN the Second Chapter of the holy Chandi the manifestation of the Divine Mother is depicted in highly symbolic language. It begins with a tale of war—a war between the devas and the asuras which is so often spoken of in the Hindu scriptures.

A significantly moral war standing for a full hundred years! Hundred years esoterically symbolises the completion of a life's cycle. Man's life is indeed a story of continued struggle. "Struggle for existence" has been an oft-quoted phrase in modern science. The struggle continues in both physical and moral planes. Godliness in man stands always at war with animality in his constitution. This is the eternal war between the devas and the asuras, between Ahura Mazda and Ahirman as expressed by the great Zorothustra.

The gods being defeated, the asuras have occupied the throne of the heavenly kingdom. As a result, the Satanic instincts reign supreme in the domain. The immortal devas are hovering on earth like so many mortals being driven from their celestial abode. The Devas put the heads together and hit upon a plan. Brahma took the lead and proceeded towards the abode of Vishnu and Shiva. Brahma typifies the creative energy and so do Vishnu and Shiva, the power of preservation and destruction respectively. The Trinity embody the totality of energy and hence can never be subdued by any demonic power. Before the Trinity the devas narrated the pathetic tale of their great disaster—the fall from their Divine status. They piteously craved for redemption.

Vishnu, who has been called Chakri and holds the wheel of eternal activity that sustains the Universe, flew into a rage. Passion and compassion

moved the Divinity. The story of the demonic brutalities was instrumental, as it were, in pushing out of the Divine body, His all-swallowing energy in the form of effulgent light. Furious rays oozed out of His fiery face. The august sight brought terrific excitement in Brahma and Shiva. The creative and destructive energies came out of their glowing bodies and took the form of light. Sympathetically, the half-dead Gods regained their lost vigour and were furiously enraged. Divine wrath was transformed into fiery rage.

A mystic unification of all these luminous energies took place instantaneously. The flash spread far and wide like burning mountains. The accumulated glow of the flaming energy appeared in a great motherly figure. The entire creation was all aglow with the soothing luminous light of Her face. Reverentially the gods gazed at her with eyes full of joy and wonder. "Mother", all in one voice exclaimed delightfully. Passionately did She smile and from the depths of darkness and despair peeped forth the morning light of power and glory.

The different parts of the body of the Mother are the embodiment of energies of the different deities. Mysteries appear to be pictorially figured.

The power of Shiva found expression in the Mother's face. The term Shiva connotes purity and goodness and Mother's countenance is the embodiment thereof. The nectar of immortality is manifested in the sweetness of Her smile. The blue locks of cloudish hair represent the darkness of death. Whosoever demonically ventures to touch it embraces destruction.

THUNDER & KINDNESS

Mother is possessed of innumerable arms which represent the power of Vishnu—the strength to uphold and maintain the cosmic transformation. The same hand does caress the children and kill the demon simultaneously exhibiting loving kindness of mother and devastating boldness of thunder. So do conflicting qualities miraculously co-inhere.

The condensed form of the soothing rays of the full moon found expression in Mother's breasts so affectionately giving two kinds of man's food, physical and spiritual as well. Mother's breast sustains the body as does her loving kindness the soul. Both are bounteously supplied by the Mother Divine.

The feet stand for the creative energy, Brahma. Creation is invariably represented by motion. Motion expresses life and creativity. Mother's movement entails the procession of endless creation and transformation.

The pure sacrificial fire formulates Mother's organ of sight Unlike mortals she possesses three eyes, representing the sun, the moon, the fire—the trinity that dispel darkness. One eye takes notice of matter-of-fact and the other enjoys the aesthetic beauty of the Universe and the third, the eye of Supreme Wisdom—for the realisation of highest beatitude. The essence of that highest truth is embodied in the person of Mother's own self, and hence by the instrumentality of the third eye, She realises her own Supreme Self, and Her self-enjoyment accounts for the theatre of cosmic manifestation.

The two eye-brows of the Divine figure represent the two *sandhyas*. By *sandhya* is meant conjunction which we come across twice within a day's cycle —day and night—night and day—one indicating man's affinity with his fellow-being and the other unification of one's soul with the Supreme. In the first conjunction we find mankind united and in the second we dedicate ourselves to the feet of the Mother. Thus the eye-brows speak volumes.

Earth is pictured as Mother's lap—the safest refuge of human children. Man's existence on earth verily signifies his perpetual stay in Her all-embracing and all-enduring lap—the most cozy place to ensure security. No location is so peaceful and tranquil as it is.

HER GLORIOUS FORM

Such was the great manifestation of Mother Durga substantially embracing in one person the essence and energies of all the deities. The joy of the gods knew no bounds in beholding the most perfect and holy embodiment of the totality of universal energies the Mother. Their heart-felt reverence found expression in bountiful offerings.

Shiva—the holder of Trisula—brought out a similar weapon from his own and offered it in Her mighty arms. Trisul is, in fact, a symbolic weapon having three sharp ends for the destruction of three bodies of man—material, mental and moral—thereby helping him to reach spiritual excellence, transcending all that is mundane.

Another wheel of righteousness was made anew from the original one held by Lord Krishna and was presented to Mother's hands. The wheel eminently preserves the cosmic rhythm of the Universe and in Mother's hand brightly shone as the emblem of Law and Order.

Prajapati, the God of pro-creation, brought forth a presentation of a wreath of alphabets (akshamala). The letters of alphabet represent the eternal Logos called Sabda Brahma. The sound's symbol shone proudly round the holy neck of the Mother. The solar god dedicated the bright glaze of his own unextinguishable flame to the pores of the Mother's skin.

The burning rays of the rising Sun thus constitute the effulgence of Her body. The apparel round the Mother's waist is the emblem of maya—the principle of obscurity and the other on Her breast symbolically features Her unbounded mercy for human children. These two are the unblemished gifts of the ocean-of-milk-signifying illumined intelligence.

The marine god offered a wreath of lotuses—an unfaded one that shone gorgeously round Her graceful neck. This loving gift of a devout son graced the beloved Mother.

The custodian of heavenly wealth Kubera—symbolising vital energy — offered a vessel to drink from. The unemptied vessel contains life's ambrosia —the sweetest gift from the sweetest lover. This is the way how everyone offered the best of his possessions.

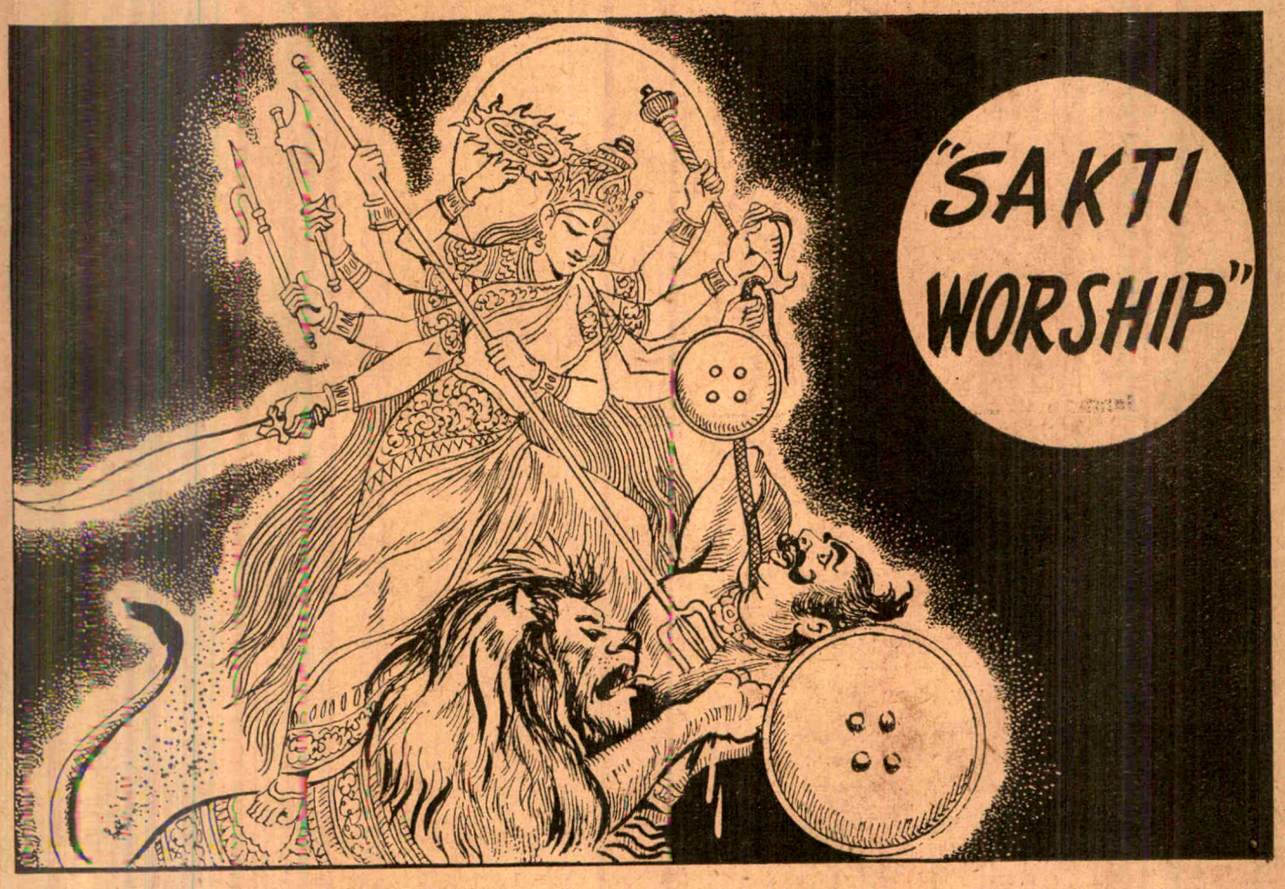
GODS DANCE IN JOY

Being endowed with the gifts of the devotees the Mother burst into a fit of laughter. The thunderous sound vibrates far and wide terrifying the asuras and making the gods dance.

Thus comes the Mother year after year. We assemble to see Her glorious morning face with wistful eyes. The immortals have offered their rich outpourings. What have we, the poor mortals, to bring forward? Mother longs for no honour from Her child. She treasures in Her heart the sweet and loving call of Her devotee—a call that springs from the innermost being.

United we stand before Her benign presence and beseech Her blessings with hands folded and heads bent. We pray in unison :

"Mother, thou art the ocean of bliss;
Casteth thine loving glance at us.
Stretcheth thine soothing arms to shelter us within.
Uniteth the broken hearts of Bengal and bringeth joy to all."



By Dr. GAURINATH SHASTRI

M.A., P.R.S., D.Litt., (Professor, Sanskrit College and Lecturer, Calcutta University.

IT is difficult to trace the origin and growth of Sakti-cult in India. The origin, in particular, is shrouded in deep mysterious obscurity. In the opinion of some scholars Sakti-worship owes its origin to the non-Aryans of ancient India. And it was only in course of years that it came to be adopted by the Aryans. Others opine that the Sakta system of thought which acknowledges the authority of Agama literature as supreme, was essentially non-Vedic in origin. It is in the Great Epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, that an ingenuous attempt is noticed to reconcile Vedic religion and the non-Vedic religion of the Sakta Agamas. From this fusion of a Vedic and a non-Vedic religion has evolved the modern form of Saktaism. Yet another school thinks that Sakti-worship is a direct development of religious practice as found in the Upanisads. The pioneers of Sakti-cult did not for a moment forget that the Impersonal Absolute of the Upanisads is the only one Ultimate Reality.

SAKTI CULT & VEDANTA

But human intelligence with its limitations cannot grasp the full significance of the transcendent conception of the Impersonal Absolute. Ordinary people can at best conceive of a personal deity which serves as the object of worship. So the Sakta theists invested the Impersonal Absolute with a distinct personality. The Saktas were not content with the conception of a personal god only. They affiliated the divinity with Sakti or cosmic energy. Hence, the personal god of Vedanta, viz., Isvara, came to be transformed into Sakti or Chandika, the Universal Mother in Sakta literature.

The conception of Chandika in the transcendent aspect runs parallel to that of the Impersonal Absolute in the Monistic Upanisads. But the latter, the static transcendent aspect of the unrestricted unconditioned and unqualified Absolute, cannot satisfy the many-sided needs and devotional activities of the theistic Saktas.

It is the dynamic aspect of the god-head—the active manifestation of a personal deity endowed with cosmic energy — that has a direct bearing on Sakta Tantras.

Accordingly, the Sakta-worshippers found it necessary to transform the Absolute into a personal deity, omnipotent, ubiquitous and omniscient. To the Saktas the conception of the personal god as Divine Mother is the sublimest and this position seems to be supported by the Upanisads which describe personal god as the source of the empirical

universe. From what has been said above it is clear that Mother Goddess is not merely a personification of cosmic material energy, but is rather Spirit-cum-Matter. It needs to be carefully remembered that Sakti of the Saktas is not identified with the self-evolving Primordial Matter in the Sankhya system of Indian thought. It is true that Sakti is often described as Prakriti in Tantric literature. But Sakti as Prakriti is not a non-intelligent principle, but is endowed with activity—it is constantly undergoing real transformations in the process of creation. Sakti is not merely a passive background for the active manifestation of Purusa. It is essentially dynamic and as much self-luminous as Purusa.

DIVINE MOTHER & MAYA

The Divine Mother again should not be identified with Maya as postulated in Monistic Vedanta. Maya as described by Sankara, the great apostle of Monistic Vedanta, is a purely illusory principle which by its inherent power of projection focusses the world-appearance on the Ultimate Reality. Sakti has been called by such different names as Maya, Yogamaya, Mahamaya, Visnumaya and the like in various Tantric texts and it is said that Sakti as Maya, Yogamaya etc., explains such events and phenomena as are realities and not fictions but baffle all human efforts to understand them. The Bhagavata Purana narrates the birth of Krishna in a cell in the prison-house of king Kamsa at Mathura where his parents were put in chains. But as soon as the baby was born the father found himself freed from chains, the iron gates were thrown open, the guards fell fast asleep and the father went out with the baby in his arms, crossed the turbulent waters of the Jamuna, reached the house of Nanda and came back.

All these events actually took place and there was no illusory principle working behind them. These supernatural incidents were not the work of magic. The Sakta would say that it was not the work of Maya but of Yogamaya which is an essentially conscious principle just on a par with the Transcendent Reality, or, to be strictly precise, Sakti and Transcendent Reality are but the two aspects or moments of one and the same Ultimate Reality.

SAKTI-WORSHIP & DEVI-SUKTA

Orthodox Indian Scholars traditionally trace back the beginnings of Sakti-worship to a hymn of the Rig Veda (X.125) technically known as the Devi-sukta or the Vak-sukta. In this sacred hymn, Vak, the spiritually enlightened daughter of Ambhrna, the seer, speaks out in the fulness and enthusiasm of her knowledge, identifies herself with the Primal Energy of Eternal Life. This hymn enjoys paramount importance in view of the fact that it has prompted Sanskrit grammarians to develop their thesis of the evolution of the universe out of Eternal Verbum which according to them is the Ultimate Reality.

Vak or supreme word is essentially a spiritual entity which assumes diverse manifestations in the form of words and meanings or objects. This Vak again is conceived as inseparably linked to Sakti or Kalasakti, the Time-force and this proves that the Eternal Verbum is a dynamic principle.

In the Narayana Upanisad belonging to the Taittiriya Aranyaka of the Taittiriya Samhita (i.e. the Black Yajurveda) one comes across a hymn addressed to the Divine Energy called Kanyakumari and Durgi. In another hymn the Divine Energy has been described as Durga, a goddess enveloped in flames of fire and eternally associated with the Supreme Universal Self and worshipped by devotees for the fulfilment of their desires here and hereafter. It is Durga who delivers the aspirants after liberation from the cycles of existences. To be brief, Durga stands for Brahmavidya, the delivering knowledge of the Supreme.

UMA OF KENA UPANISHAD

In the Kena Upanishad she is mentioned as a Divine Female, Uma Haimavati, who appears before Indra, Vayu and others to impart esoteric knowledge of the Supreme Being to them. Sankaracharya with his unassailable logic identifies her with Brahmavidya incarnate.

These references to the Divine Mother in Vedic literature unmistakably prove that Durga was a Vedic deity. Turning to the Great Epic, it may be pointed out that the worship of Sakti is found in several books of the Mahabharata. The Epic describes her as the fierce black goddess of destruction who was a sister of Lord Krishna, and who killed the demon in the form of a buffalo (Mahisasura) while dwelling in the Vindhya mountains.

MESSAGE OF THE SAPTASATI

In the Puranas, especially the Markandeya, she appears as the centre of the great Sakti-cult. The Devimahatmya portion of the Markandeya Purana contains an account of the glorification of the Great Mother, Goddess Chandika. The work is popularly known as the Saptasati (i.e. a work of seven hundred stanzas) or the Chandi.

It is one of the most sacred texts of the Saktas and ranks only second in importance and popularity to the celebrated philosophical song—the Bhagavadgita. In the Sakta temples all over India the Devimahatmya is regularly recited and in Bengal it is read with greatest solemnity during the Durga Pujas.

The Saptasati attempts a sort of compromise between the conflicting doctrines of Vedanta and Samkhya. The Upanisads declare that the Absolute has two forms—a higher (transcendental) and a lower (immanent). The Saptasati too speaks of the transcendent and immanent conception of Chandika. Prior to the first creation there was nothing else but uncaused, eternal and self-revealing Chandika. In the beginning of the first creation the transcendent aspect of the Goddess seemed to transform itself into an immanent one. Looked at from the empirical viewpoint of causation Chandika became Mahalakshmi—the Universal Cause.

In this causal state she is regarded as the equilibrium of the three elemental qualities—sattya (purity, intelligence-stuff), rajas (activity, energy, passion) and tamas (ignorance, inertia, matter-stuff). Thus Mahalakshmi closely corresponds to Isvara of the Upanisads.

In the beginning of a Kalpa (one particular cycle of creation) Mahalakshmi manifests herself as Mahakali due to the preponderance of the element of tamas. Mahakali is said to be first incarnation of the Great Goddess whose exploits are given in detail in the first section of Saptasati.

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RITUAL and FESTIVAL

By C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

READING a recently published beautiful book on the teachings of the Compassionate Buddha I was confirmed in my mind that those who put the great and ancient religions of the world in the language of today render international service of the highest order. The condition of our times specially calls for such service. Things of eternal value require to be re-told again and again in the changing jargon of mankind. Arnold Toynbee laid his finger on the spot when he said that religion is the most important thing in life. This was the firm conviction of earnest men in the old days. Later it became commonplace and thereby soon lost its special meaning. When Toynbee says this in our times, it is as useful and important as it sounds strange. The great historian of this century has pointed out that a mutual understanding of nations at the religious level is the key to happy co-existence. Warren Hastings of British Indian history realised this, and so when he began to rule India as Governor-General on behalf of Britain, he proceeded to get the Bhagawat Gita translated into English so that his people may truly understand what kind of men and women they had the ambitious plan to govern. I have read this British satrap's preface to this English rendering of the Gita, a copy of which was available in a public library in Madras. It is a remarkable essay.

The teachings of the Buddha cannot be properly understood unless the religion of the Hindu people whom he taught is understood. This is the case also about the teachings of Jesus whose words and works cannot be rightly and fully understood unless one is familiar with the Old Testament.

There is nothing in the world more elevating than the words of the Dhammapada or the other recorded sayings of Buddha and his associates and successors. But we ought to remember one important thing. Purity of mind and action and the way of life comprehensively called compassion cannot be created by mere aphoristic admonition, without the faith and the reverence developed by direct contact with a holy person and subsequent tradition, such as are embodied in all the great religions of the world. When Jesus or Buddha taught, they could and did utilise the inheritance of faith and reverence that was already there. They could not but do it as it was there and could not be done away with. What either of them did was to add and subtract here and there. Buddha taught people to give up vain disputation over the unknowable and laid greater stress on rectitude and compassion than prevailed in the religion of his time. It was a rich gift to the people who had all the faith and reverence and all else that was requisite for absorbing the corrections as part of religion. But to attempt to isolate Buddhism from that background and to offer it in a filtered form to people as food for the spirit would be like seeking to put men on a diet of bleached rice or synthetic starch. Can one become learned by studying only the proof corrections of a book in print ? The teachings of the Buddha or of any other great teacher must be related to the time and context in which he taught. The doctrine of Karma was the foundation for the Buddha's teaching on which all that he imparted firmly rested. It was the root from which his instruction received sustaining life. He re-defined who a Brahmana was and gave that definition to all those that could receive that gift. After him those on whom his words and his life made holy impression built up an altogether new edifice of reverence, devotion and worship. The disciples of Buddha shaped him soon into a God as indeed he deserved to be. His teachings were clothed with divinity. Thus was supplied what was essential and what even now is essential, though we may not care to recognise it. A code of conduct or moral instruction cannot become a faith or religion that governs life unless divinity is attached to it.

We may not light-heartedly seek to undermine faith believing that mere aphorisms newly imparted can help mankind to restrain or guide themselves. Nor can we hope to improve any group of men by proselytisation. Even Buddhism intellectually accepted is not good enough as a new faith for any people brought up in Christianity or Hinduism or Islam. The teachings of the Great Ones of the world, Jesus or Mahomed or Gautama Buddha dressed in modern language can be precious gifts to people who still may continue to worship as they hitherto did. An understanding of religions other than one's own helps and enriches. We cannot have too much of good and sympathetic understanding of others. But it would be a grave error to imagine that rituals and festivals and temples and churches and mosques might be given up and that masses of men and women could live on aphorisms. Greatest common measures will be found to be dead matter on which life cannot subsist. What makes moral truth potent and living is Religion and Faith, rituals and festivals.

LORD CURZON—A RETROSPECT

By DR. R. C. MAJUMDAR

THE fifty years anniversary of the Boycott and Swadeshi Movement which was celebrated in Calcutta a few months ago naturally brings to our mind the career of Lord Curzon, the author of the Partition of Bengal which called forth this movement. Lord Curzon was the most unpopular Viceroy and he has been abused by all classes of Indians during the last fifty years. It is not my intention to whitewash his character, or even to condone his faults which are numerous, but I believe time has come when we might look at his career from a more detached point of view than has hitherto been possible. As is well-known, lapse of time changes our views in many respects. In this case, there has not only been a lapse of time but also a radical change of circumstances, and it is but fit and proper that we should try to re-value the services or disservices of Lord Curzon during his tenure of office in India.

To-day, the very first thought that occurs to us about Lord Curzon is a deep debt of gratitude that we owe to him. This may appear somewhat strange and it is, therefore, necessary to explain what I mean. A little reflection will show that but for the autocratic regime of Lord Curzon, our national spirit would not have been quickened to that degree which ultimately enabled us to achieve our independence within such a short time. It is a well-known fact in history that reactionary rulers often give a stimulus to public life, and that they are a blessing in disguise. Lord Lytton, a worthy peer of Lord Curzon, stirred Indians into organized political activities which years of agitation could perhaps not have called into being. Lord Curzon's administration similarly called into being a politically united Bengal and re-awakened national consciousness which, growing in volume and gradually expanding all over India, created that atmosphere and brought into being that national life which perhaps would not have been possible in normal course in the next half a century. It is, therefore, only proper to recognise, now that we have achieved independence, that both Lord Lytton and Lord Curzon were our benefactors without intending to be so. To the former may be ascribed that impetus which gave rise to the Indian National Congress, and to the latter, the Great Swadeshi Movement, the real beginning of our struggle for independence, which led us to success within 42 years.

STRANGE CONTRADICTIONS

In some respects, Lord Curzon's career offers a great contradiction between words and deeds. The most serious charge against him is undoubtedly his systematic habit of flouting public opinion, and yet, we find the following remarkable utterance in this respect in one of his letters to Sir A. Godley, dated January 27, 1904 :

> *"Public opinion daily becoming more powerful cannot be ignored—to contend that it does not exist, that it has not advanced in the last fifteen years or that it may be treated with general indifference is to ignore the great change which is passing over this country, and which I believe History will recognise myself as having done much (whether wisely or unwisely) to accelerate; viz., the lifting of India from the level of a Dependency to the position which is bound one day to be hers, if it is not so already, namely that of the greatest partner in the Empire."*

This strange contradiction between profession and practice makes one feel that Lord Curzon, though conceding the principle in the abstract, reserved to himself the right to decide when public opinion was to be adhered to and when it was not necessary to do so. It is only fair to remark that though Lord Curzon was undoubtedly guilty of systematically flouting public opinion, the authorities before and after him, at Home or in India, are not known to have given much consideration to public opinion in India in any vital matter, though perhaps none of them revealed himself so directly or crudely by actions.

UNIVERSITY REFORMS

Before coming to the Partition of Bengal, which is the most serious charge against him, I would like to say a few words about two others which were usually brought against Lord Curzon. One was the officialising of the universities. While this charge is undoubtedly true as an abstract principle, it is also necessary to remember two things, first of all, we have to compare the new constitution of the university formulated by him with the existing one. Nobody could regard that as in any way suitable for modern times. So, at best, Lord Curzon supplanted one bad system by another. In the second place, we should also remember that it was under the system introduced by Lord Curzon that the University of Calcutta made the greatest progress in its history. This is, of course, due to the personality of Sir Asutosh Mookerjee, but can we altogether blame a system which, however bad it is, still leaves enough opportunity for a man of outstanding personality to do good to his country by improving the educational system beyond all recognition ?

"UNTRUTHFULNESS" OF INDIANS

Another serious charge against him is his accusation of untruthfulness against all Indians in his address at the Convocation of the Calcutta University on February 11, 1905. There is no doubt that the words were in bad taste and reflected the arrogant spirit of an imperialist, but if anybody goes through

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FEARS PROVED FALSE

By C. C. BISWAS
Minister of Law, Government of India

EIGHT years ago, I sat on a Commission charged with the task of drawing a line across the map of what was then known as Bengal.

The Province was to be partitioned. God—or Geography, if you please,—having failed to indicate a natural boundary between the two proposed parts, human ingenuity had to be requisitioned for working out the artificial frontiers.

I can still recall the heavy heart with which I addressed myself to this melancholy assignment. Was it not almost exactly what Curzon, in his anxiety to curb the growing spirit of nationalism in the country, planned and perpetrated, though with temporary success? To those of us who in their youth had witnessed the mass resentment and determined resistance to that sinister move, the proposed partition of the Province by consent after four decades was almost a historical irony.

My feeling, however, was not only of sorrow but of concern also.

The partition of Bengal was merely a projection on the provincial level of a plan which had been accepted on a higher national plane. A big slice of the Indian territory was being cut to carve out a separate State for Muslims who, according to the queer logic of their leaders, were supposed to belong to a different nationality. The vivisection of the country was the price which Nationalists in India were being made to pay for the attainment of freedom.

The political unity of India, which has often been paraded by the champions of British imperialism as a British contribution to this country, was, in fact, a natural response to her geographical conditions. A familiar contrast with Europe would be as instructive on this point as it is on several others. For, whereas the configuration of Europe—its long indented coast line, its peninsulas, its inland seas and islands, its high mountain ranges — has fostered the growth of separate nations and their seclusion from one another in separate States, the continuous and unalluvial plains marked out India, though not much smaller than Europe in size, to become, in due course, a single political unit. Long before the advent of the British Raj, when lack of quick means of transport and communication was a serious obstacle in the way of expanding the authority of Central administration to far flung areas, the country had come and remained, though for short durations, under the ultimate control of one single government. Aided by the strength of western science and technology and also the adoption of English as *lingua franca*, the British, no doubt, accelerated the process of unification. More pronounced had been India's economic unity which again, unlike in Europe, developed as a natural corollary to the country's political homogeneity, without being impeded by physical frontiers of jealously competing and potentially hostile States. The division of India, therefore, constituted an immediate threat to her economic stability, also.

BLEAK FOOD POSITION

I felt particularly worried over the food position. Shortage of foodgrains, especially of cereals, had been India's biggest headache for a number of years. Although the origin of the problem could be traced back to the separation of Burma, its gravity was not fully realised till the outbreak of hostilities in the Far East when imports of rice from abroad ceased completely. The devastating famine which followed, stalking over this unfortunate Province of Bengal in 1943, was still a gruesome memory. Viewed in this perspective of scarcity, post-partition food prospects looked particularly disheartening. The surplus States of West Punjab and Sind, endowed with most modern and extensive irrigation facilities, had so long been the granaries to the deficit provinces in India. They now lay on the other side of our border. In terms of foodgrains, that meant a loss of nearly eight lakh tons per year. Repercussions of the partition on the food front could well be gauged from the fact that while 82 per cent of the population of the pre-partitioned country remained in India, only 77 per cent of the total production of foodgrains went to her share.

If in recent years I have tried to keep myself posted with the salient facts about the country's food position as well as its agricultural development, it is because of the doubts and apprehensions which haunted me during my association with the Radcliffe Commission. Later, my association with the Government of independent India provided me with the opportunities of acquiring a more intimate knowledge of the situation than would have been possible from a less close quarter.

According to a recent official review of agricultural production, the total production of cereals during the year 1954-55 was 55.3 million tons. This represents an increase of more than 11 million tons over that of 1947-48. Wheat production in the current year has established an all-time record at 8.5 million tons. The production of millets and other minor cereals reached 22.6 million tons. Indeed, the agricultural year which ended in last June witnessed a remarkable increase both in the acreage and in the production of cereals in India as compared to the year of our Independence. The total production of cereals, it appears, not only exceeded the quantity aimed at for the fourth year of the Five-Year Plan, but even crossed the target fixed for 1955-56 by 2.8 million tons. Similarly, the acreage

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INDUSTRY IN THE SECOND PLAN

By N. KANUNGO
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SOON after the end of the current year, we will be completing the period of our First Five-Year Plan. Hence preparations are going on to decide our programme for the Second Five-Year Plan which will commence in 1956 and run upto 1961.

As is natural in a democratic country, the scope and contents of the Second Five-Year Plan are being widely discussed all over the country. When we think of it, planning is as much necessary in our individual lives, as in that of a nation. We plan out our work for the day, if we want to get through most of our work properly. So also in a family, planning for education of children, building a house, going out on a trip or celebrating a ceremony have to be planned years, months or weeks ahead. Planning for the nation was not a live issue because we were not free to do so. Even then, the Congress got together the best brains of our country as early as 1940 and under the chairmanship of Shri Jawaharlal Nehru set up a Committee for Planning which devoted a great deal of labour in preparing a plan. How necessary is planning for a nation, may be realized from the fact that even in the worst days of the last war the Government of the U.K. were working on plans for reconstruction and rehabilitation of their country.

THEN AND NOW

With the advent of independence, we launched upon our first period of planning in conditions which were far from normal. Apart from instability and scarcity all over the world, as a result of the terrible World War, our shortages in every necessity of life, particularly in food, could not claim our singleminded devotion, because of the events following the partition of the country and the uprooting of large masses of population. The magnitude of the shock may be understood when we realise that the displacement and migration of population involved was the largest in volume in recorded history.

Under conditions of acute crisis all round, we launched upon our First Five-Year Plan which inevitably gave the highest priority to agricultural production and irrigation. Then, cereals had to be counted in ounces, cloth in yards, sugar in tolas, salt and kerosene in chhataks and so on, for every necessity of life. Memory of those days is like a bad dream. All necessities of life are in plentiful supply all over the country now, though it cannot be said that every one of our population is able to secure as much as he needs.

It does not need any statistics to show that we as a nation are extremely poor and the standard of living of the bulk of our population is extremely low. In the ultimate analysis, the wealth of a Nation consists of the volume and variety of the goods that its people produce and the political system under which it can ensure an equitable distribution of that wealth. For the last two centuries and more the only goods that we have been producing are the fruits of agriculture. Industrial production—whether in organised factories or by craftsmen—is too little compared to the size of our population, extent of our country and the resources in raw materials available.

DAWN OF MODERN INDUSTRIES

In the 16th and 17th centuries, methods of industrial production were the same all over the world. It was the skill of the craftsman which was the only means of production of material wealth. Even in those days fine steel, and fine chemicals were produced but the time and labour involved were enormous. India had the advantage of its climatic conditions, availability of resources and raw materials and above all the trained intelligence and skill of its men and women which enabled the nation to achieve abundant production of material wealth judged by the standards of those days. This enabled her to engage in a large volume of trade with the rest of the world.

With the advent of steam power the entire technique of production of goods underwent complete change which, in other words, is known as the Industrial Revolution. The impact of the Industrial Revolution affected all countries of the world but in different ways. In Europe, all nations adapted themselves to the change in technology, but Asia (including India) was deliberately used as a supplier of cheap raw materials to European countries and a consumer of their manufactured products. This was made possible because India was under the domination of an industrialised nation. How India would have reacted to the impact of the Technological Revolution if she were a free nation, is a matter of idle speculation now. The fact remains that for centuries she remained outside the pale of technological advances, not only of the steam age but of the subsequent age of electricity as well. Perhaps it is not an unmixed evil that she has escaped the Industrial Revolution at the time when it was spreading in Europe. It certainly caused a great deal of misery and social upheaval. Perhaps now we may be able to avoid many of the shocks through which

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Divine Mother

Artist — Kalikinkar Ghosh Dastidar.

PLACE-NAMES OF UTTAR PRADESH

By Dr. NANDALAL CHATTERJI

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PLACE-names of a country possess a peculiar-historical significance, but this is hardly realised by an average citizen. That place-names often supply valuable clues to an understanding of the evolution of the civic life of a country is a fact which invests the study of toponymy with a deep and abiding interest of its own. And toponymy is of more than usual importance in our country, because the deliberate christening of a town or a village has never been a normal feature and place-names are ordinarily self-evolved in India. The manner in which a place-name has grown, the pattern which it has assumed, and the source as well as the implication of any particular toponymal prefix or suffix are matters of more than passing interest, though it is a pity that Indian toponymy has not yet received the attention it deserves.

With the attainment of India's freedom, however, the subject has acquired a special meaning, for there is now a popular demand for the re-naming or at least for the re-spelling of many old and familiar place-names. The place-names in Uttar Pradesh as those in any other part of India, indicate the local history and traditions no less than local life and public opinion. The sources from which the materials of nomenclature are derived also amply illustrate the composite character of the culture of the local people.

Though the appellatives are of various types, they are usually composite terms wherein some stock termination is compounded with a legendary or historical cognomen. In other words, the generic base in such names is coupled with a descriptive characteristic such as *pur* (city), *garh* (citadel), *ganj* (mart), *abad* (abode), or *sarai* (inn) The toponymal termination alone is rarely used as a name. The unusual instance of the town of PUR in Muzzaffarnagar District may be cited in this connection Most of the familiar place-names are thus compound ones, such as MIRZAPUR (the city of Mirza) in which the base is clearly distinct from the name suffix. There are, however, some derivative names wherein the base has been disintegrated, altered or concealed as in the name of AHRAULI which was originally ABHIRPALLI (village of cow-herds).

THREE GROUPS OF NAMES

The toponymal suffixes commonly met with may be classified under three groups, with well-defined characteristics, that can be named Metropolitan, Pastoral and Denominational. The Metropolitan group is numerically the largest one, and it includes place-names which have terminations like *pur, nagar, ganj, abad, shahr* and *sarai*, which convey the sense of either an administrative or commercial town. The Pastoral group comprises place-names terminating in *gaon, khera, dih, jhil* and the like which signify diverse associations of village life. The place-names of the Denominational group end in suffixes like *dwar, math, prayag, esar, dham* and so on, appellatives which reflect some religious or sectarian aspects and associations.

Among the place-names of the Metropolitan group, there is a very large admixture of the Muslim element, though Hindu names are no less prominent. The indiscriminate use of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian terms illustrates the cosmopolitan character of our place-names, and throws some light on the cultural synthesis that came about in the national life of India in medieval times. The Muslim element is noticeable only in this group, for the Muslim ruling classes had very little to do with life in the villages where Hindu influence remained naturally strong. The remaining two groups, therefore, are almost entirely of Hindu origin.

The most numerous family of place-names belonging to the first group, or for the matter of that in any group, comprises those which terminate in *pur*. The suffix *pur* is sometimes modified as *pura, purwa* or *puri*. Some European scholars have presumed, on the analogy of the Greek *polis*, that *pur* signifies a walled or fortified city. But this interpretation does not seem to be well founded. In Sanskrit, GOPURAM means the principal gate such as that of a temple. It may be that originally it was meant to be opened in the morning when the herds were taken out for grazing and shut in the evening when they returned from pasture. The bucolic association of the word is in keeping with the early social economy of the Aryans.

To begin with, therefore, *pur* may have meant a gateway, but in due course the implication expanded as the ancient Aryan life itself transcended the isolation of forest surroundings, and was merged in an urban civilisation. Names ending in *pur* finally came to mean a cluster of dwellings rather than a pastoral enclosure. The suffix was usually coupled with proper names or titles but was compounded with old village names only when the places were no longer wholly agricultural. It was normally never added to the names of natural objects like trees. On the whole, the names formed with *pur* are mostly of early or late medieval origin, and are due as much to Muslim as to Hindu influence.

SOME MUSLIM COGNOMEN

Among the appellatives with some Muslim cognomen and the suffix *pur* are Akbarpur, Alipur, Fatehpur, Ghazipur, Jaunpur, Mirzapur, Shahjahanpur, Sultanpur, etc. The names compounded with some Hindu cognomen include Bhagwanpur, Gangapur, Gorakhpur, Hamirpur, Kashipur, Lalitpur, Ranipur, Sitapur, etc. Muslim names are derived from both Arabic and Persian, while Hindu names are taken from Sanskrit, Prakrit, etc. The names are mostly personal, though there are certain generi

appellations signifying a class or an official title, e.g. Mirjapur, Shaikhpur, Sayyidpur, Dhimarpur, Gujarpur, Rajapur, etc. Some of the names which now seem to be Muslim were in fact originally Hindu. Ghazipur is a name obviously given by the Muslims, yet it may be an adaptation of the original Hindu name of GARJPUR, according to Sir A. Cunningham who suggests in his Ancient Geography that GARJANPATI is a title of the God of War. In 1874, the Govt. of the N.-W. Provinces published a list of place-names according to approved spellings in Hindustani and Roman characters (vide Resolution No. 2286 dated the 25th of September, 1874). In this list, Cawnpore appears as *KANPUR* in Urdu and KANHPUR in Hindi. Now, KANHPUR takes us etymologically to the well-known Hindu name of *Kanh* or *Krishna*. According to some KANPUR may be a corruption of KHANPUR. Again KANPUR is also sometimes associated with KARNA which in Sanskrit means ear, and is a familiar proper name in the Mahabharat. In other words, *KANPUR* has, it is assumed, evolved out of the original *KARNAPUR* and its subsequent corrupt form of KARANPUR.

NAMES AFTER PERSONS

It is indeed very difficult to identify the persons after whom certain towns are named, for the local traditions in such cases are vague and ambiguous. BADLAPUR (in Jaunpur District) and CHANDPUR (in Bijnor District) may be as much commemorative of BADAL KHAN and CHAND KHAN as of *BADLA SHAHU* and *CHANDAMAL*. Again, *SHIKARPUR* (in Bulandshahr District) may have originated from *SHIKAR*, but this is a name used by Muslims and Hindus alike. *SHIKAR* may be a corruption of *SHUKR* or *SHUKUR* (Muslim), or of *SHIKAR* (Hindu).

TILBEGUMPUR (in Bulandshahr District) is an interesting example of the coupling of a Hindu name with the title of a Muslim lady. The town originally belonged to the *BHATTI* Rajputs who were later converted to Islam; and so its half-Hindu and half-Muslim name may have been adopted after the conversion.

SAHARANPUR is commonly taken to have been named after a Muslim saint, SHAH HARAN, whose mausoleum still exists there. But, it is likely that the name is an adaptation of the Sanskrit word, SADHARAN (i.e. ordinary).

JAUNPUR is another such ambiguous name of which the origin is doubtful. Was it the town of *YAVANA* i.e., non-Aryan (foreigner), or the town of *JUNA*, Sultan of Delhi ?

NAMES WITH NAGAR

Nagar is a common suffix added to place-names of the Metropolitan group; and its history is to some extent similar to that of *pur*. The basic name may be both Hindu and Muslim, e.g., Azamnagar, Dildarnagar, Muzaffarnagar, Jaswantnagar, Ramnagar, Srinagar, and so on. The source of the word *nagar* is doubtful. *Nagar* is sometimes associated with the *NAGA* people, but it is not clear how the name of a primitive tribe came to mean a city. It has also been derived from *NAGA*, a mountain, meaning therefore a place with houses as high as mountains. A more plausible theory connects *NAGAR* with the Sanskrit word *LANGALAM*, a plough. *Mr. CROOKE* has mentioned the use of the word *NAGAR* in north Oudh in the sense of a heavy plough with a perpendicular frame. The plough is said to have gradually assumed the connotation of a ploughed land, then a settled land and finally of an inhabited town.

NAMES WITH GANJ

Ganj is another suffix signifying a town. It is a Persian word which means a store or a storehouse. Such store-houses meant for the use of the military were usually built by the Muslim rulers on the strategic highways, and therefore it is hardly surprising that a major portion of the names ending in *ganj* are associated with Muslim names, e.g., Aliganj, Basharatganj, Fatehganj, Hussainganj, Kadirganj, Mansurganj, Nawabganj, Shahganj, Wazirganj, etc. Hindu names coupled with *ganj* are usually such as are common to the mercantile community, e.g., Chetganj, Dataganj, Gursahaiganj, Hanumanganj, Maharajganj, etc. It may be pointed out here that the Persian word, *ganj*, is similar in origin to Sanskrit *Ganja*, meaning a mine, a treasury or a mart; but as a name-suffix its use was popularized by the Muslims.

NAMES WITH ABAD

From *Nagar* we pass to *Abad* which in Persian means a settlement or abode. *Abad* is also familiar as an element in place-names, e.g., Allahabad, Begumabad, Faizabad, Farrukhabad, Ghaziabad, Jahanabad, Khalilabad, Moradabad, Najibabad, Rasulabad, Shikohabad, Zafarabad, etc. According to some authorities, *Abad* comes in fact from Sanskrit *Avas* (abode), but the names ending in *Abad* are Muslim, though Allahabad, for instance, may be an adaptation of the ancient Indian name of ILA.

NAMES WITH GARH

The next suffix *Garh* is from Sanskrit *Gadah*, a fort, fence or ditch. This is generally associated with the small fortified towns of the petty chiefs of medieval times, though bigger forts are implied in names like Aligarh or Fatehgarh. Compounded with Hindu proper names we find Bijaigarh, Madhogarh, Parichhatgarh, Pithoragarh, Saktesgarh, etc. Among those that are compounded with Muslim names are Aligarh, Azamgarh, Fatehgarh, Hasangarh, Khairagarh, Najafgarh, etc.

SHAHR & SARAI

The next termination — *Shahr* — is the Persian counterpart of the Sanskrit word Nagar, but its use as a name-suffix is rather limited, and the only notable instances are Anupshahr, Bulandshahr and Machlishahr.

Sarai meaning rest house is another component which is used either as a prefix or as a suffix, e.g., Khetasarai, Moghulsarai, Sarai Aqil, Sarai Mahiuddin. The Persian word SARAI, it may be added, reminds one of the Sanskrit word SALA (hall or shelter), or ASRAYA (refuge).

PASTORAL NAMES

The Pastoral and Denominational groups comprise names which are of purely Hindu origin. Muslim names are conspicuous by their absence in these groups. As ancient Indian life was indirectly centred on agriculture, these two groups illustrate a new phase of Hindu life.

The PASTORAL names are reminiscent of life in the village with its presiding gods and its agricultural set-up — the cultivated land, the cattleshed and the grove, the ditch, the mound, the mud fort and the flowing stream. The common bases are GAON (as in Chirgaon), KHERA (as in Kankarkhera), DIH (as in Unchdih), and BAHAT (as in Talbahat) which all signify a village.

Certain suffixes relate to some familiar object in or around the village. BHIT meaning a mound

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The Development Of Village Industries Along With Agriculture

By Dr. HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

Governor of Bombay

HOUSEHOLD and hand-industry is a new expression used by Mahalanobis in his Planframe, I suppose this expression will not be required to mean literally an industry which is carried on by hand without the use of machines or an industry which is carried on in a household but not by several families in a village co-operating together. A warning on the interpretation is necessary because of the opinion about this industry which is held by some constructive workers since the time Gandhiji laid all stress on it. However much one may talk about it, it is not practical for an average family to carry on any industry entirely by itself for the production of any goods. Even in agriculture, a family has to secure the co-operation of its neighbours either on cash payment or on some material consideration. Even in the ancient days, the Varnashram was intended to secure co-operation among families without any deviation from generation to generation. The four castes gradually became subdivided into a number of sub-castes as the population increased and as the life became more complex. When the needs became larger and larger, labour became more and more complex resulting in division of the main castes into a number of sub-castes. Gandhiji laid stress on self-sufficiency in the family in a general way, but that was and is even now interpreted literally to the extent of *reductio ad absurdum*. Since Gandhiji's name is connected with the industry and since there are many who have made it a religion for themselves to interpret literally what Gandhiji said, it is necessary to clear one's mind as to what the underlying principle of Gandhiji was and then to apply that principle according as the circumstances demand. Gandhiji's principle can best be described in his own words (Tendulkar, Vol. IV, page 34):—

> *"If we could have electricity in every village home, I should not mind villagers plying their implements and tools with electricity. But the village communities or the State would overpower houses just as they have their grazing pastures."*

Gandhiji was against highly organized factories because they deprive workers of their home life. He did not like people to flock to the towns deserting their villages. But it would be very much to the liking of Gandhiji if villagers, while remaining in their homes in the villages, were provided with some work which would increase their income substantially, whatever might be the character of the tools and implements used by them for the work.

EMPLOYMENT, WORK & WAGES

It is not my purpose to cross swords with those who hold views different from the above. The subject may be discussed on its own merit and, if necessary, even new lines of work may be chalked out if they prove to be practical and beneficial to the common man as well as to the nation. Theory and practice have to be harmonized. To labour hard to earn even a few pice rather than sit idle is good in theory provided there is mental reconciliation to one's fate. But in practice one will not labour for eight hours to earn, say, four annas while one sees another earning two rupees with much less labour. Discontentment is the result of this psychological resistance to the counsel of reconciliation based more or less on the old Varnashram. Employment means work on remunerative wages. Nobody is in a mood to work on any wages for he had the alternative to agitate. To offer employment on very low wages is impractical unless the State comes forward to enforce something like Varnashram with an iron rod as in the olden days. Faith in fate and in Varnashram having disappeared, rightly in my opinion, we have to approach the problem in a practical manner.

Village industry should be organised in such a manner as to change the character of India's economy from agricultural to industrial, thus providing for a higher standard of living which is in view. Obviously, agricultural economy cannot give the same standard of living as industrial economy. The standard of living which is now aimed at by the Plan and also wished for by the people can be attained only by industrial economy and not by agricultural economy, however much agriculture may be improved.

IMPROVED MACHINERY

In order to bring about industrial economy in the villages, it is necessary to link industry with agriculture at the village level. If this is done, industries will have scope for natural growth in the country. The following is the method by which this object can be attained. The processing of all agricultural products, e.g., rice, wheat, oil-seeds, etc., may be done on the spot in the village or, say, within a radius of five miles from the place of production. Such processing cannot be done with old implements, such as dhenki, ghani, etc., for the old village economy has changed completely. Today the village, like the town, is in the grip of money economy. The village is not an isolated place now as before

nor are the villagers the same old unsophisticated people as they were some years back. Because of the spread of education, development of contact with cities through industrial labour which is drawn from villages, and of communication, the village today demands about the same amenities as the townspeople have or are going to have. The old economy was in terms of goods inasmuch as storage of goods was the standard of wealth. The needs were few and there was no necessity for selling stocks as today. But now the villager is in need of selling his agricultural products as soon as possible so that he may have money to meet other demands, such as clothes, better food, medicines, education of his children, etc. He sells away the raw products of agriculture as he cannot process them with the old implements even if he wants to, nor can he find labour in the village to do the job on the wages offered. Few have the mind and the patience to do very hard work for hours only to earn paltry wages. Even if a few hands are available to do the work, it is not physically possible to process all agricultural products on the spot with the old implements. The result is that the agriculturist is compelled under circumstances to sell mostly raw products to be processed at a distant place. The loss incurred by the agriculturist on this account is the profit which is shared between the trader and the mill at a distance. But the agriculturist will be in a position to sell the processed goods if he gets the help of small improved implements which are to be plied with electricity.

INDUSTRIALISING VILLAGES

The following picture with regard to only one agricultural product will give an idea of how the whole scheme will operate. In order to enable the agriculturist to sell processed paddy, i.e., rice, each village will require at least one hauler. If he can sell rice instead of paddy, an agriculturist having about 20 acres of dry land gets an additional income of about Rs. 300/- annually even after paying about three annas per maund as hauling charges. The cost of a hauler is about Rs. 3,000/-. This amount may be contributed by the villagers co-operating together or even by an individual or by the Panchayat. The return on the capital will be about Rs. 60/- per month, excluding about Rs. 30/- which is to be paid per month to the mechanic who will ply the machine. The cry that those who live upon dhenki will be unemployed is baseless as I have found from experiment. Conversion of paddy into rice consists of three processes — first, boiling, second, husking and the third, sifting. The hauler does the most painstaking work, namely, husking only. The dhenki huskers earn more by doing more of either or both of the remaining two processes for which the agriculturist easily pays out of the margin of profit which accrues to him. Of course, there will be a little inconvenience for a short interval till the adjustment is made. This is inevitable during the period of change-over from one kind of occupation to another.

EXPANSION OF INDUSTRIALISATION

Then the scheme proceeds : If each village has at least one hauler working, each district will require the setting up of a plant to manufacture haulers and their spare parts. Each police station will require a full-fledged repairing shop. All these will open up new avenues of employment to the villagers. One can easily imagine the situation when along with the rice-hauler, oil processing machines, small spinning machines of 10 to 100 spindles, rope-making machines, etc. will work in the villages. The industry will thus develop from the village to the district headquarters, which will ultimately be connected with the basic heavy industries. According to this scheme, rice mills, oil mills, atta mills, etc., have to be completely decentralized. The textile industry for internal consumption will also be decentralized. So also the sugar industry. For all these small machines are available today. With regard to jute, I have no idea whether there are small machines or whether they can be made easily. If that can be done, then the jute industry also should be decentralized to the level of the regions where jute is grown. So far as the textile industry is concerned, it can be decentralized to the level of the area where cotton is grown—and cotton can be grown in almost every area. If the weavers are to be helped materially, there should be small spinning machines of about 200 spindles in a large number of areas spread over the whole country as the population of weavers is spread far and wide.

It is not necessary for the State to take any drastic steps against the existing rice mills, oil mills, textile mills, etc., for when the village industries begin getting established on the lines suggested above, the bigger mills will automatically disintegrate. The village industries run with the help of electricity can easily compete with largescale industries for the former are almost free from overhead charges, cost of transport, interest on capital, high labour wages and a number of other items of expenditure which the latter have to incur.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Agriculture will have to be organized also in accordance with the needs of the areas. Particularly, cotton and cane cultivation will have to be introduced in all areas. When electricity is available in the villages, it will be possible to build up cold-storage plants in suitable central places so that fruits, vegetables, fish and milk can be preserved for some days at least to enable them to be marketed. It is a regrettable fact that in villages large quantities of vegetables get rotten and are thrown away because all of them cannot be sold on the weekly or bi-weekly market days. They cannot be preserved even for a few days to be marketed in places at a little distance where there is a demand for them. Similarly, large quantities of fish get rotten and are wasted because they are much in surplus of the needs of the place but cannot be preserved for being marketed elsewhere. This is also the case with milk. The agriculturist instinctively does not undertake more production of vegetables, etc., because he feels and he has the experience that his articles cannot be marketed. The fact that cold-storage arrangements give incentive to the agriculturist to grow vegetables, particularly potatoes, is within my own personal knowledge. Even the families in villages can have small refrigerators to preserve perishable edible articles during the period between the two market days in the week.

This is the skeleton of the integral scheme of development of agriculture, village industry and the basic industries which, I think, is practical and will show results almost immediately.

JAPANESE METHODS

There is always the loose talk of introducing the Japanese method of small scale industries in India. That method is roughly this that large industries get component parts manufactured by small

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RAIL TRANSPORT

By BEJOY PROSAD SINGH ROY

WITH only a few months to go for the completion of the First Five-Year Plan and the Second Five-Year Plan in the offing, increased interest is being evinced in the transport position of the country, as it is being increasingly realised that an adequate transport facility is an essential pre-requisite for industrial development of a country. Industrial production not only requires a constant and steady supply of raw materials but also a quicker disposal of the manufactured product; and if facilities are not available for this movement, production and distribution cannot but be hampered. It is, therefore, essential to ensure transport capacity of the country ahead of transport requirements otherwise the very objective of planning will be jeopardised.

The First Five-Year Plan has given a fillip to our industries and to a great extent been helpful in consolidating the economic position of the country and creating favourable condition for an industrial evolution. During this period, the agricultural and industrial production have maintained a steady upward trend, the percentage increase in production in certain industries in 1954 being as much as 200. Industries have been set up in new regions and with the completion of the Multi-purpose Projects, many more new industrial sites are likely to develop.

RAILWAYS' SLOW GROWTH

Unfortunately, lack of adequate transport facilities has been a barrier against full utilisation of the benefits accruing from the quicker tempo of industrial activities. The main transport system is the Railways which handle the vast bulk of the country's traffic accounting for as much as 80% of the nation's goods and 70% of the passenger. Even so, a comparative study of the Railways in India with that of other industrial countries shows how slow had been the growth of our Railways in the course of the last hundred years. The total mileage is only 34,275 and there is only 29 miles of Rail per 1000 Sq. miles as compared to 75 in U.S.A. and 555 miles in the U.K.

During the last 20 years the Railways were put to intensive and extensive use with little opportunity for rehabilitation and particularly during the war period the stress and strain which the Railways had to suffer was enormous with little or no provision for renewals and replacements. The result was that there was considerable arrears of renewals of rolling stock and by March 31st 1951, it accumulated to 2,554 locomotives, 6,895 coaching vehicles and 47,256 wagons against the normal figures of average annual renewals of 190 locomotives, 650 coaching vehicles and 5,000 wagons. It is expected that the total stock for replacement by the end of 1955-56 will be 3,696 locomotives, 9,916 coaching vehicles and 73,371 wagons. If the programme of the Railways for procurement of rolling stock is achieved, the total number of over-aged locomotives at the end of the Plan period would be 1,985 as against 2,554 with which the Plan started. So far as wagons are concerned by 1955-56 the number of over-aged wagons will be reduced to 14,078. This reduction in the number of over-aged rolling stock will no doubt be conducive towards improvement of the situation but it is feared that unless there is an increase in the transportation capacity, it will not be of material benefit to the economic development of the country. Although in 1953-54, Railways carried 11 per cent more goods than in 1951 and about 35 per cent more than in 1938-39, the figures do not give any indication of the total traffic that could have been moved if there had been adequate capacity for doing the same. It needs no reiteration that the successful functioning of trade and industry is dependent to a great extent as to how quickly and cheaply the goods can be transported from the centres of production to those of consumption.

DIFFICULTIES OF INDUSTRIES

It is an accepted fact that presently the Railways are not in a position to move the traffic currently offered. It is estimated that the traffic requirement will be about 1,09,000 wagons including the replacements, whereas about 61,000 were proposed to be obtained by March, 1956, thus leaving a deficit of about 48,000 wagons. The Planning Commission has visualised an annual increase of 2% in traffic i.e. 10% in five years' time and has programmed the expansion of Rail capacity on that basis. Even assuming that the supply efforts of the Railways will be able to increase the capacity as provided in the Five-Year Plan, still additional traffic resulting from increased agricultural and industrial output will require immediate expansion of all forms of transport.

Under the Five-Year Plan a sum of Rupees four hundred crores has been allotted for Railway development, major portion of this amount is being spent on rehabilitation and replacement of old and over aged rolling stock, which could not be replaced during the last 20 years, only 5% of the total allotment being ear-marked for the opening of new lines. Consequently, even after 4 years of the Plan, the available transport facilities have lagged far behind the actual requirements. As a result, inadequacy of rolling stock has been responsible for the inability of Railways to cater fully to the needs of the industries as well as of the general public. Whereas in 1951-52 a railway wagon has travelled only about 40 miles per day, in 1954 it travelled 41 miles and if the average speed for a goods-train is 12 miles per hour, it means that a railway wagon can put up efficiency of only 3½ hours per day which it must be admitted is far from satisfactory.

Apart from the over-age of rolling stock, there are other bottlenecks in railway transport such as the non-availability of wagons, absence of transhipment facilities at the break of gauge points such as Mokamaghat, Agra and Sabarmati etc. The limitation at Mokamaghat is due to ferry crossing across the river. The Railways have already made a provision for a bridge over the Ganga near Mokamagha and the plan has been sanctioned. The completion of the bridge at Mokamaghat will however take some years and unless in the meantime some effective measures are taken to improve transhipment difficulties hitherto experienced at this point will continue.

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FARAKKA WILL BE A GREAT BOON

To overcome the transport inconvenience caused due to non-existence of uninterrupted and direct rail connection between North Bengal and Assam and South Bengal, a proposal was made to construct a barrage across the Ganga at Farakka. This barrage is contemplated to be a combined barrage and bridge project which apart from offering a direct link between the different parts of Bengal and

Assam will keep the navigational channel of the Hooghly River alive and flush out the port of Calcutta which is threatened due to constant silting. If this proposal is accepted by the Planning Commission, and it is included in the Second Five-Year Plan, the rail transport facilities between Bihar, West Bengal and Assam will greatly improve and it will directly contribute to the development of industry and commerce in these States.

COAL MOVEMENT BY VESSELS

Owing to the scarcity of wagons and other difficulties enumerated above, the industrial production has suffered due to shortage of raw materials and particularly the supply of coal so very vital for the industries. The figure for the daily requirement of wagons for coal industries today is 3,600 whereas the daily average loading is 3,400 wagons only, thus presently there is a deficiency of 200 wagons a day which not only affects the supply of coal but its raising also. The Second Five-Year Plan has fixed the target of coal production at 60 million tons and for the movement of the increased production additional 1,680 wagons a day will be required. The number of wagons that will be available at the end of the Second Five-Year Plan will not be adequate to provide for this additional number and in such eventuality production of other industries will suffer due to shortage of coal. In order to overcome this difficulty it is necessary to make available the required numbers of wagons to the coal industry by making greater use of alternative form of transport wherever possible. Coal is particularly suitable for movement by sea and it is therefore essential to ensure that the movement of coal between two ports should be exclusively entrusted to coastal vessels. The wagons which will be thus released can be utilised for inland traffic and provision of permanent volume of cargo for the coastal shipping will also be helpful in keeping it in full trim. It is important for a country like India with her long coast line to have an adequate and efficient coastal shipping not only for emergency but also as a second line of defence. Coastal shipping of the country cannot develop nor can it provide efficient service without having a proper co-ordination with the Railways. It is a matter of satisfaction that the Ministry of Transport is fully alive to this problem and has appointed the Rail-Sea Co-ordination Committee and the Railway Freight Structure Committee to probe into the question and devise ways of establishing co-ordination between the two forms of transport.

NEED OF NEW FREIGHT STRUCTURE

The present freight structure for transport by goods train which has been in force from 1st October, 1948, was evolved as a result of detailed investigation. Since then, however, far-reaching changes have taken place in the economic activities of the country and big changes are envisaged in the Second Five-Year Plan. The development of Railway facilities will also be considerable and there is a need for a fresh examination of the freight structure. It is hoped that the Committee will examine the issues involved in all its aspects and will evolve a new freight structure which will meet the grievances of all the interests concerned.

Indusfrial development has been stressed in the Second Five-Year Plan which is in the stage of finalisation. The Plan envisages an all-round increase in production, the percentage of increase in some of the important industries would be as follows:—

	Units	1955-56	1960-61	Percentage increase
Food Grains	(Million Tons)	66.0	76.0	15.15
Steel finished	"	1.6	4.5	181.25
Coal	"	37	60	62.16
Aluminium	(tons)	12,000	30,000	150.00
Cement	(Million Tons)	4.6	10	117.39
Fertilizers (Ammonium Sulphate)	(000 tons)	450	1,350	200.0
Soda Ash	"	78	200	156.41
Caustic Soda	"	33	100	203.03
Cotton Textiles	(Million yards)	4,700	5,500	17.02
Sugar	(Million tons)	1.5	2.1	40.00
Paper	"	140	200	42.85
Bicycles	(Nos. in 000)	500	1,000	100.00
Oilseeds	(Million tons)	5.6	7.0	25.00

The successful implementation of the Plan will depend on a large measure on the transport system keeping pace with the economic development. In the Second Plan, the total capital outlay on the railway is expected to be about Rupees one thousand and five hundred crores as compared to the provision of Rupees four hundred crores in the First Plan. As a long-term measure, the Railways are contemplating to increase the overall capacity by 50% in the next five years for all the restricted goods.

RAIL-SEA CO-ORDINATION

It is however unlikely that the Railway transport alone will be sufficient to cope with the increased movement that will be required. Therefore the coastal ships should be put to greater use, thereby reducing the pressure on the Railways. Although Railways are State managed and the coastal shipping privately operated, an important point to be borne in mind is that an adequate merchant fleet on the coast is always maintained in full trim. In order to achieve this, competition between Rail and coastal shipping should be eliminated. To ensure co-ordination of movement between shipping and railways, there should be no movement of bulk cargoes by rail between any two ports, and also in respect of general cargoes, the port to port movement by the rail route should take place only if the consignments offered are in small quantities. It is also desirable to introduce rail-cum-sea through booking arrangements for greater facilities for movement of cargo.

The Railways should be apprised of the tonnage expansion programme of the Indian Shipping and the need for providing ships with adequate coastal cargoes, including coal, salt and petroleum products of the newly-established refineries. It will be a tragedy if the Railways were to divert the cargo as a result of its superior strength or as a consequence of its rate manoeuvring policies. Rail-sea co-ordination should be based on the full and economic employment of coastal ships and on strict adherence to not diverting any cargo now moving or suitable for movement in future by sea to the rail route. It is essential that there should be co-ordination in the development and lop-sided development should be avoided. If and only if there is such co-ordination between the two forms of transport, the Railway wagons now employed in carrying cargo from port to port will be released for profitable utilisation in inland movement. Thus by co-ordination and planning of the available transport facilities within the country, we can ensure successful fulfilment of the Second Five-Year Plan.

Further such development of large tracks in the country will be helpful in opening up regions abounding in minerals, forests and other resources which have remained unexplored and undeveloped. In anticipation of the future requirements of traffic in the context of large-scale industrial development, the Government have appointed the Rail-Sea Co-ordination Committee to evolve measures for full utilisation of the transport facilities and thus ensure development of industries at the speed visualised in the Second Five-Year Plan.

The Planning Of Mental Frame In The Plan-Frame For Employment

By D. N. BHATTACHERJEE

UNEMPLOYMENT is the foremost problem with the Five-Year Planners. From day to day, the queues at the altars of the Employment Exchanges are getting longer and longer. To those 6 lakhs of people striving for jobs there, unemployment is no ghost of theory, but it is a devil of daily experience. And these unemployed persons, however huge their number may be, represent only a small fraction of the countless multitude of idle hands that are lying beyond the survey of statisticians. I mean the unemployed and under-employed masses, often disguised in different walks of subsistence, whose number may better be speculated than being actually calculated. Even a conservative guesswork will show that leaving aside the volume of spare-hands in agricultural sector, the number of wholly unemployed amongst the non-agriculturists will be no fewer than 3.4 million while the extent of under-employed in that same sphere will be about 4.9 million man-years. If we add to these the possible number in employable population every year, we can fairly arrive at an approximate estimate of non-agriculturist man-power for which the 2nd Five-Year Plan will have to find employment.

The total strength of present population of India is estimated at 383.7 million and 40% of this is assessed to be her total employable population. Out of this, the 1956 figures of total employment stand at 152 million of which the quanta of agricultura and non-agricultural employment are 109.5 million and 42.5 million respectively. It can be easily seen therefore, that the present incidence of unemployment in non-agricultural sector is 20% of its employable man-power. If in terms of the present trends the annual increase in population is 4.5 million and if 40% of this annual growth has to be added to the unemployment figures here, the 2nd Five-Year Plan will precisely be required to provide further employmen to 17.3 million non-agricultural people in the event of its aiming at full employment within five years in the above sector. Besides this assessment of unemployment in the above planned ector, there exists a much bigger proportion of unemployed people crowding over agricultural pursuits, which constitutes a major part of the private sector in our country and which has remained mostly unplanned so long. The ratio of percentages of agricultural and non-agricultural man-power is found to be as 72 : 28. This 72% of the total employable persons that solely depend on agriculture cannot be altogether ignored and completely set apart for self-employment. These poor children of the soil should also be given their due share of consideration at the hands of the planning authorities and called upon to harness all their strength to cultivate and create more national income. The problem of unemployment, among other things, is, therefore, no mean dilemma for the economists, and it is only in the fitness of things that the question of full employment has been given the top priority in the Draft Plan-frame.

ENORMITY OF TASK

Of course, with a clever jugglery of statistics and a twist of imagination it would not be at all difficult to reverse the calamitous picture and to deduce a paper solution to this acute demand of the day. If during the next five years the total population increases to 409.7 million, the total employment will also rise up from 152 million to, say, 163 million, taking 11 million to be the quantum of new employment during the period as proposed in the plan-frame. On the basis of assuming 40% of the total population to be the number of employable persons, it conclusively proves that we shall not have more than ½% of employable strength as unemployed by the year 1961. This by no means appears to be a matter of worry since it is commonly accepted that unemployment, till it is below 3% of the total employable hands, is no threat to the advancement of a country's economy.

Such a complacent view of the situation, however, cannot be without its pitfalls, and even the best of standpoints would instantaneously collapse if we merely take into account the case of non-agricultural unemployment separately, where it has already been seen that unemployment is 20% of the employable total and that is 17 points higher to make it worse than the stipulated danger limit of 3%. Thus evidently the enormity of the task before the planners called for the best of their prudence to cope with this nation-wide problem and this they have fully taken cognisance of, in drawing up the blueprint of the next Five-Year Plan.

11 MILLION NEW JOBS

To open up adequate employment opportunities to another 11 million people within the next plan-period, the statisticians and the economists are found to have joined their hands in planning the national investment most profitably both in long-term and short-term projects of development. Of the total planned outlay of 4300 crores in the public sector, they have made the allocations in the following way :—

(1) Rs 1100 crores i.e. 26% of the total investment	towards	Mining and Industry
(2) Rs 950 crores i.e 22% of the total investment	,,	Agriculture, Irrigation and Rural Development.
(3) Rs. 1700 crores i.e. 39% of the total investment	,,	Transport, Communication Construction and Social Service.
(4) Rs 100 crores i.e. 25% of the total investment	,,	Stock-holding operations.

In private sector again where the total planned investment is proposed to be Rs. 2200 crores, the

following ceilings are given for different budgetary heads :—

(1) Rs. 400 crores i.e. 18% of the total amount	towards Industry.
(2) Rs. 200 crores i.e. 9% of the total amount	„ Agriculture and Irrigation.
(3) Rs. 100 crores i.e. 5% of the total amount	„ Electricity, Transport and Communication.
(4) Rs. 400 crores i.e. 18% of the total amount	„ Stockholding.
(5) Rs. 1100 crores i.e. 50% of the total amount	„ Construction.

Taking the expenditures together, whereof we can expect some 11 million jobs to be newly created, the employment potential in different fields may be estimated as follows :—

(1) 1.5 million in Agriculture and allied pursuits.
(2) 1.7 million in Mining and Factory Industry.
(3) 3 million in Household Industry and Construction.
(4) 2 million in Trade and Transport (excluding Railways).
(5) 0.4 million in Communication, Railways, Banks and Insurance.
(6) 2.4 million in Professions, Services and Miscellaneous activities.

The above is only a broad approximation and the impact of all-round development activities as envisaged in the proposed plan, along with the Refugee-Rehabilitation enterprises, may even lead to offer greater sources of employment, if the proposals of the planners work up to their expectations.

CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

But here the opinions differ. There has started a good deal of controversy over a number of vital issues of the draft plan-frame and some of the disquieting questions raised are :—

(i) How far deficit financing is safe and dependable for financing the Plan ?
(ii) How to check the spiral of inflation in spite of more employment and wider circulation of money ?
(iii) How to balance the demand and supply of productions of small-scale cottage industries, medium-scale consumer goods industries and large-scale producer goods industries ?
(iv) How to bring about co-ordination between Agricultural and Industrial Sectors as also between Public and Private Sectors ?

It is no wonder that in an underdeveloped country like India where the investable surplus is too meagre and where the resources and services of people have to be commissioned only in democratic and peaceful methods, planning would entail lots of such conflicting points. But in view of our setting out for a common goal i.e. the maximum good of the maximum number of our people in the minimum possible time, for which no compromise or sacrifice can be too much for us, it can be well assumed that a comfortable measure of agreement on the main grounds of dispute can never be far off.

While leaving the physical aspects of the Plan-frame to coagulate and precipitate after necessary exposure to expert opinions, we should meanwhile focus our attention to another very important factor that has not yet received the share of emphasis it actually deserves. It is not the body of Planning that can by itself soar up to the peak of our expectations, but it is the soul — the linchpin of human mechanism — that is the driving force behind. However abstract the idea may seem at the outset, the material success of any planning can hardly be achieved without adequate spiritual preparation on the part of its constituents.

By drawing in the idea of morale within the folds of material well-being, we do not intend to underestimate the technical procedure and executive mechanism so very essential for planning activities. We fully appreciate that for successful implementation of the plan-projects, extensive industrialisation is an immediate imperative on our country and for that it is a crying need with us that technical training and scientific education must be widely provided for without any delay. We also warmly welcome the useful suggestions of necessary reforms in administrative and organisational set-ups to expedite their activities, as also of the formation of a National Labour Force to ensure the mobility of labour from one place to another according to the nature of local demands. These and many other constructive suggestions of the propounders of the plan will perhaps meet with the desired approval from all corners. But then, this must not be the be-all and end-all of their responsibilities. In their memorandum of the 10th April, 1955, the panel of economists have not only pointed out the lack of technical training in our country but have also raised their finger to the significant problem of lack of training "in disciplined or regular hours of work". Although the implications of this observation have not been clarified in details there, it is obvious that they have hinted at the importance of the training of human mind so that it may be alive and equal to the task entrusted to it.

However perfect a planning might be, it would at best give out sufficient opportunities to work, but in spite of all abundance of work and working facilities and work tools, how can the work be carried out if we have no mind to work? Without employing our mind in the faithful performance of the duties ordained by our employment, we cannot fully utilise the existing capacities of our employed man-power. It is, therefore, not by creating the millions of new jobs alone that the distress of the country will be ended, but to bring about the real wealth and welfare of the nation there must also be created a congenial mental atmosphere whereby everyone can put his heart and soul into his job.

SPIRIT OF FELLOWSHIP

To fight for economic progress of the nation on the one hand and to fight sporadically for some dispensable factional demands on the other are efforts that counteract each other and defeat the purpose of either. Non-co-operation in the form of strikes and slow-downs has become so very common these days, that inter-relation between the employers and the employees is growing to be almost inimical. Until there is an all-round attempt to root out this undermined evil and unless there is a definite improvement in the mental attitude of our personnel there will be no preventive for the disputes and discords that hamper production, disturb market and dislocate employment. Human relations play a very important role in conjoint activities and without a spirit of real fellowship, industrial enterprises where good many people have to work together for any joint production can but make a very little headway.

Even in the case of individual enterprises, the psychological factor has its own place of influence. The 12 million people now engaged in small industries like tailoring, metal works, handlooms, carpentry, tobacco manufacture etc. and in construction works, who will have a further reinforcement of 3 million during the next five years, must be skilled in their vocational training no doubt, but in the perspective of the newly emergent India, they will also be required to equip themselves with mental qualities like perseverance, alertness and endurance. Other gifts of mental discipline, placid temper and courteous demeanour, are so much demanded of the

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RAW MATERIALS FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

By SURESH CHANDRA ROY

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THE change in the proportion of raw materials entering into India's foreign trade has occurred during the last fifty years is a striking development to which frequent attention has been drawn by students of Indian economics. From the position of supplier of raw materials to the industrialised nations of the West, India has now come to depend on imports for some of the main raw materials necessary to feed her growing industry. During the years 1951 to 1954, out of total exports of the average annual value of Rs. 603 crores, raw materials accounted for Rs. 135 crores, less than 23 per cent., while exports of manufactured goods valued at Rs. 307 crores constituted more than fifty per cent of the total exports. This change in the pattern of exports has been accompanied by a corresponding change in imports. Imports of raw materials amounted to Rs. 201 crores out of total imports of Rs. 678 crores while manufactures amounted to Rs. 301 crores. The figures show that while imports and exports of manufactured articles were more or less equally balanced, the value of raw materials imported was one and a half times the value of the raw material exports. The figures for the year ending March 1955 are given in the following table.

	Exports		Imports	
	Value-crores of rupees	%	Value-crores of rupees	%
Food, drink & tobacco	199	34.8	116	19.0
Raw materials	118	20.5	187	30.6
Manufactured goods	250	43.7	304	49.8
Others	5	1.0	3	0.6
Total	572	100.0	610	100.0

Two factors, one positive and the other negative, have brought about this transformation in the national economy. Even under conditions of foreign domination industrial development, which was proceeding at a slow pace, received powerful impetus during the two world wars. The process has been accelerated after the attainment of independence. Industrial development has led to greater utilisation of produce and materials which were formerly exported in the unprocessed state. It has also been responsible for the increase in the value of the exports of manufactures and for the change in imports from consumer goods to producer goods. The scale of industrial development that has actually taken place cannot by itself account for the large increase in the imports of raw materials. The main contributing factor is the Partition, as a result of which raw cotton and jute which were major items of export in the past, figure in the list of India's imports.

GAPS IN RESOURCES

While the change in the categories of goods that enter into India's foreign trade reflects more economic utilisation of our resources as a result of industrialisation, and is to that extent gratifying, it also reveals wide gaps in indigenous resources of the essential materials of industry. The problem of shortage of raw materials will assume greater importance with the accelerated pace of industrialisation set by the second five-year plan. In contrast with the first plan now coming to its conclusion which was mainly concerned with the agricultural sector, the tentative draft of the second plan lays greater stress on industry. Its twin objective is to provide additional employment by the creation of twelve million new jobs, mainly through the development of home industries, and to lay the basis of heavy industry which will ensure a rapid pace of industrial expansion in the future. Even during the first plan India experienced acute shortages of some essential materials, especially during the Korean War, when stockpiling by the U.S.A. created a world-wide shortage of strategic materials. Industrialisation under the second plan will make progressively greater demands on raw materials.

The publication of the draft plan frame has touched off many controversies. But the discussions have been mainly concerned with the adequacy or otherwise of the targets and allocations. When resources are mentioned they are thought of in terms of money or of the quantum of savings available for investment. Not much attention has been devoted, at any rate in public discussions, to the material resources necessary for the attainment of the planned targets or of the extent to which the requirements can be met from indigenous production. The actual position of many essential materials is such that it leaves no room for the complacent assumption that, once finance could be found and technical organisation set up, raw materials will

be forthcoming in abundant measure. The problem of maintaining a regular supply of raw materials calls for as much careful and detailed planning as the various projects of industrial development. Even a small shortage or a temporary interruption of imported supplies will upset the financial estimates of the plan and throw the entire programme out of gear.

INDUSTRIAL PLANNING

For a country like India, which has neither the Imperial power which enabled Britain in the nineteenth century to control the resources of a vast empire or the incomparable economic strength of the U.S.A. which enables it to command the resources of the entire world regardless of price, Industrial Planning must of necessity be based mainly, if not exclusively, on the effective utilisation of resources available within the country. The plan must be designed to secure

(i) The optimum utilisation of the resources of raw material of which the country has a surplus;

(ii) Strict economy in the use of materials in which the country is in deficit, side by side with measures to meet the deficit by increased production or discovery of new sources of supply or of substitutes.

The plan for industry must be supplemented by a Plan for foreign trade which will deploy the country's exportable surplus of raw materials so as to further the objectives of the plan, by securing in return a steady supply of the imports of essential raw materials not produced in the country.

The soundness of any plan for industry will, therefore, have to be judged in the light of a detailed evaluation of the raw material resources of the country. The supply position of each item must be investigated in detail and the result correlated with the targets for the various manufacturing industries which use that material so as to evolve a workable plan that will really add to the wealth of the country. The cursory survey of India's raw materials position that is attempted here is indicative rather than exhaustive and is intended to draw attention to this important aspect of industrial planning rather than to serve as a comprehensive evaluation.

The main raw materials of industry can be conveniently classified under the following heads: (1) Metals and metallic ores; (2) Textile fibres; (3) Chemicals; (4) Fuel; and a few other individual items like rubber, mica, sulphur which do not come under the categories mentioned above.

METALS AND ORES

Iron and Iron ore: Among the metals iron is easily the first in order of importance. India is well placed in respect of abundant supplies of high grade iron ore. We have also a well established iron and steel industry consisting at present of three units. Three more units will be established in the next few years. The magnitude of India's iron ore reserves, of which only a very small fraction is utilised at present, is the main justification for the emphasis placed on the expansion of the iron and steel industry in the Second Five-Year Plan which, however, is criticised in some quarters as excessive in relation to our financial resources. Current requirements of steel are estimated at 2.5 million tons per year against production which reached 1.12 million tons in 1954. During 1954-55 India imported 366,983 tons of iron and steel of the value of Rs. 27.91 crores. Internal demand for iron and steel, it is estimated, will be of the order of six million tons by 1960-61. The target for iron and steel in the Second Five-Year Plan has been fixed at 1.8 million tons of pig iron for foundries and 5 million tons of finished steel. A considerable proportion of imports consists of special grades and alloy steels which are not now manufactured in the country. It is essential, therefore, that expansion plans for the iron and steel industry should provide for the production of special steels and alloys which are now imported. In this context it is satisfactory to note that the Planning Commission has recently sanctioned a Rs. 12-crore scheme for stepping up the output of steel at Bhadravati from 25,000 to 100,000 tons including stainless, tool and alloy special steel.

Apart from iron ore, the only important metallic ores of which India has adequate resources sufficient to leave a surplus after meeting current demand of Indian industry are manganese and aluminium. In respect of other metals like copper, lead, zinc, tin, nickel etc., indigenous resources are either deficient or non-existent. This fact should be kept in the forefront in planning for industrial development.

Manganese: India is the largest world exporter of manganese. We cannot derive much satisfaction from this distinction when we consider that the entire output of manganese ore is at present being exported. Very little of it is processed within the country. The needs of Indian industry for the processed metal are met by imports. The quantity and value of manganese ore exports for the last three years are given below:

	Tons	Rs. - Crores
1952-53	14,39,678	21.78
1953-54	15,67,949	24.23
1954-55	9,44,877	12.43

Most of the world production of manganese ore is used by the iron and steel industry in the form of ferro-manganese. 30 lbs. of ferro-manganese are required for making one ton of steel. Manufacture of five million tons of steel, which is the target fixed in the Second Five Year Plan will require 67,000 tons of ferro-manganese. This will cost at current import prices about Rs. 6 crores. During 1954-55 India imported 3567 tons of ferro-manganese valued at Rs. 33.37 lakhs. The production of ferro-manganese in India at present is in an incipient stage. Some quantity is produced by Tatas in blast furnaces for their own use. The Bhadravati Iron and Steel works have also produced ferro-manganese in electric furnace on an experimental basis. The most promising line of development for manganese is to convert the ore into ferro-manganese both for domestic use and for export of the surplus in place of the crude ore. In this connection it is gratifying to learn that a private concern has come forward to start a ferro-manganese factory costing Rs. 1.5 crores at Srikakulam (Andhra). The factory will have total capacity to produce 30,000 tons of ferro-manganese per annum.

THE VERSATILE METAL

Aluminium: Aluminium is a versatile metal with a wide range of use, from the manufacture of decorative panels and utensils to aircraft and in shipbuilding. In India aluminium is mostly used for domestic utensils for which it is not quite suitable. India has extensive deposits of the raw material,

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IN THE BLACK MAN'S COUNTRY

By Dr. SUNITI KUMAR CHATTERJEE

Chairman, West Bengal Legislative Council

MY plane, in the B.O.A.C. service, left Tripoli in Libya after 12 in the night, and crossing the Sahara we arrived at Kano in the northern section of Nigeria, at about 7-30 in the morning. Of course, during the night, one cannot see anything from plane and one simply passes over vast spaces of the country. When the plane flies at a sufficiently high altitude, it passes through clouds which prevent one from seeing the earth below even during day times and even when one is lucky in getting a side seat from where one could have a look at the outside world through the window.

At Kano the plane stopped for about half an hour and we could get a shave, and then we had enough time to post a few letters to Lagos, the capital of Nigeria, addressed to African friends whose acquaintance I had made before. Kano is a town which has got its special cachet. It is in the Black Man's Country, but here the Black Men have been profoundly influenced by the Arab and Berber world — the world of Islam.

"ANOTHER PAKISTAN IN MAKING"?

The local people who speak the Hausa language —one of the most important, even international, species of the African continent—are now Muslims, although apart from the Mallams or Muslim priests, their Islam sits rather lightly on them. In their life and notions still a great many relics and ideas of their pre-Muslim pagan religion and thought persist. The people of the Northern Province of Nigeria are rather backward in education, and their Muslim leaders, have up till now been resisting English education, the full benefit of which has been received by the peoples of the southern area, and those in the western and eastern provinces of Nigeria—men of the Yoruba, Ibgo, Ibibio, Ijaw and other species.

In the future history of Nigeria, these diversities of attitude among the people of the Northern Province and those of the two southern provinces will lead to complications, and may in all probability bring about a division of the country. Another Pakistan appears to be in the making in Northern Algeria.

In the little stationery and newspaper shop (which was also combined with a post office) at the airport at Kano, the assistant in charge was an African from the South—not a local man. He was a young man looking like an ungainly lad, a black Christian from Ibgo country. He was ignorant but at the same time quite a fussy individual, who had to consult the postal directory for finding out how much an air-letter would cost from Kano to Lagos, which were both in the same colony; and the air of importance which he assumed did not conceal his inefficiency or want of knowledge in such a simple matter.

There were several Hausa policemen in attendance, but they did not seem very smart or military-like, compared with our Bhojpuri or Punjabi policemen.

"WHITE MAN'S GRAVE"

We boarded the plane, and immediately after we took off we received from our air-hostess a packet in the form of a flat paper-board with a tissue-paper cover, holding 10 tablets of Paludrine. There was a caption at the top of this packet—"the B. O. A. C. takes good care of you : Take one tablet every evening with a glass of cold water to avoid Malaria." This gave me an idea of precaution that is necessary for the white men and other persons not accustomed to the climate.

A Russian Tsar had once said that Russia had two very great Generals—General January and General February—who always made short work of foreign invaders (like Napoleon and his French army) who found themselves on Russian soil. The severity of Russian winter was a great asset in keeping away foreign aggressors. So too in Bengal our rainy season, during the months of Asharh and Sravan, used to make it exceedingly difficult for North Indian invading armies on our terrain.

For the various African peoples of West Africa the very climate has been a great asset. Fortunately for them, the tropical diseases which have been found there and from which local people have acquired an immunity proved to be fatal for the Europeans sojourning there for long. The country acquired an evil reputation among the Europeans as "the White Man's Grave." This has prevented White colonisation in the Black Man's country in West Africa.

Consequently, the people have no foreign intruders to sit tight over them. Had it not been this,—there were other factors too, including, it must be said, the presence of a long series of able and sympathetic British administrators in the British West African colonies,—the plight of the local Africans would have been as bad as in South Africa and Rhodesia and Tanganyika and Kenya. Europeans there must take special precautions to resist the climate, and tablets and injections are the rule. Too much Paludrine gives quite an unhealthy yellow complexion to a great many Europeans that I have seen, and it is only natural that the B. O. A. C. Air

Line people would underline the necessity of taking great care for their health to the European and other foreign passengers coming to West Africa.

LITTLE FRIEND

In our plane there was a number of British children who were sent home to Britain for school, and they were coming to various places in West Africa to spend two months of their vacation with their parents. Two little girls thought it a great fun to help the Air Hostess when she was serving refreshments to the passengers and they incidentally appreciated very much the little packets of sweets which many of the passengers, who received them from the catering service of the plane, presented these little girls with. There was not that feeling of stand-offishness among the little white boys and girls, and I found how a little British boy was speaking in perfect friendship and sociability with a big burly African gentleman, a Muslim (from his long robe and red turboosh or Fez cap). They were chattering merrily in English, and the very affectionate way in which the African gentleman was regarding his little friend and fellow-passenger reminded one of a similar situation in Rabindranath's story, *Kabuliwala*.

We landed at Accra, capital of Gold Coast, at about 10-30 A.M. There were the usually fussy scenes at disembarkation, and the whole scene was quite new and exotic and "oriental," even for an Indian. The smart airport officers and policemen were all black Africans, and their white teeth and the whites of their eyes flashed in a spirit of friendliness and good humour in their jet-black faces, and they were moving about and looking after the passengers. Quite a lot of people were gathered there, some in uniforms and others in a medley of European and native African dress, but it appeared that by far the larger number was dressed in the distinctive dress of the Akan people of Gold Coast and of the adjacent areas. The men wore a big piece of unsewn cloth, generally in gorgeous colours, in the style of a Roman toga. The cloth covered the left shoulder and exposed the right shoulder and right arm, and the exposed black or bronze skin showed wonderfully athletic types of physique, in the midst of multi-coloured garments with the most refreshing colour schemes. They had sandals on their feet, and every one seemed to move with dignity of kings—I should say of Roman Senators.

At the station I found Raja Rameswara Rao, Commissioner for India in Gold Coast and Nigeria, accompanied by one of the secretaries of the Indian Establishment at Accra, Sri Narendra Singh, and the head assistant of the office, Sri Gopala Nayar, to receive me at the airport. Through the courtesy of our Foreign Affairs Ministry in New Delhi, intimation was sent to the Commissioner of my forthcoming visit, and I had also sent him a wire from Tripoli. Raja Sri Rameswara Rao and Sri Singh were fine types of Indian aristocracy. They were full of dignity, and they were highly cultured gentlemen with family traditions which take us back to Indian history of pre-Muslim times. Raja Sri Rao is one of the first Jagirdars of Hyderabad, and he claims descent from Vijayanagara line of Emperors. Highly educated, he has been selected to represent India as a diplomat in West Africa, a country which is full of problems of all sorts and where a person of culture and vision, innate goodness and sympathy for the entire human race is required. During my week's stay in Gold Coast, it was a most pleasant experience to know intimately Raja Sri Rao and his charming wife, and also to form the acquaintance of Sri Narendra Singh. This gentleman is the scion of a Rajput ruling family from Hamipur State in Madhya Bharat.

COURTESY EVERYWHERE

I had no difficulty in finishing the formalities of passport and custom examination, particularly when the latter was waived in my case as a visitor from India known to the popular Indian Commissioner. There were Gold Coast officials, and some Ministers and others, also in native garb, happened to be present at the airport, and I was introduced to one or two of them; and I found nothing but perfect courtesy everywhere. We came out of the station, and our luggage was looked after by Sri Gopala Nayar who, as his name shows, hailed from Kerala, and was most efficient and courteous. Outside the station there was quite a crowd, and it seemed that some Ashanti notability (the Ashantis are most important section of the Akan people, who are numerically most prominent in Gold Coast) had just arrived, and his friends had come to give him a rousing reception. In the crowd I found an Ashanti gentleman dressed in a yellow or saffron dress, and he looked exactly like dark-skinned Hinayana Buddhist monk. Only he had what Buddhist monks in the southern Buddhist countries do not have, namely, a head-band in the same saffron colour to match.

There were representatives of the Press, and bulbs were flashed and photos taken. In the local English paper the *Daily Graphic* of the day, there was already news of my coming and our pictures were published later. I was taken from the station through a suburban area of the town to the residence of Raja Sri Rao. There I met the Rani Sahiba, Srimati Santa Rao, and their little daughter, Devi. We could at once see it was the residence of a man of high culture. On the walls of the hall original paintings of Basohli and Hill Rajput Schools were hung, and in a corner of the sitting room there was a very distinctive library of books relating mainly to Africa and to Art, both Indian and foreign. I was made a guest of the Gold Coast Government during my first stay for 3 days in Accra. It was arranged by the Raja Sahib that I was to stay at the State Guest House, but was to have my meals with him and his family. The Guest House was within a stone's throw from the Commissioner's residence.

I was given a tentative programme for the whole of my stay in Gold Coast and Nigeria. After my arrival at Accra in the morning of the 28th of July, 1954, I was to leave and arrive at Lagos, the capital of Nigeria, on the 3rd August. From Accra my programme had been prepared, and I was to come to Kumasi, centre of the Ashanti people and of most of its traditions and culture and art, on 31st July for a 2-day stay.

AT STATE GUEST HOUSE

After coffee with Raja Rao in his bungalow, I was taken to the State Guest House. It was, like most of the houses near about, made mainly of wood, with wooden floors and walls, but quite upto-date with all amenities. I soon made friends with servants in the Guest House, and I got to know a

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WEST BENGAL'S SECOND FIVE-YEAR PLAN

By TARUN KANTI GHOSH
Deputy Development Minister, West Bengal

A planned economy in a democratic set-up at times appeared to be a paradox. When India's First Five-Year Plan for the development of the country was announced, involving an expenditure of Rs. 2,249 crores, it was considered unrealistic and impracticable both in attaining the targets and also in securing resources to finance it. But the striking progress made during the plan period in various sectors have shown that planned development is possible with the determination to accomplish it and above all with the active co-operation and consent of the people.

Considerable progress has been made in West Bengal by implementing the State's First Five-Year Plan. The target of expenditure in various nation-building activities which was estimated at the outset at Rs. 69 crores, 9 lakhs and 60 thousand, had to be raised to Rs. 77 crores, 32 lakhs and 53 thousand owing to the inclusion of a few more projects in the original plan and owing to some adjustments in the original plan. The progress achieved in the First Plan, though considerable, has not yet been able to remove the ills from which this truncated State of West Bengal has been suffering since Partition. We have not yet been able to rebuild the State according to our needs and aspiration and more concentrated efforts have to be made to revitalise the economy of the State. That is why this State has prepared the blueprint of a more ambitious and elaborate plan of development better known as the State's Second Five-Year Plan to be implemented during 1956-61.

EMPHASIS ON RURAL ECONOMY

The basic principle on which West Bengal's Second Five-Year Plan has been drawn up is that it aims at a balanced growth of the various aspects of the life of the people of the State. The State has not concentrated, therefore, on economic planning only but also attempts a comprehensive coverage including health, education, housing and other Social Welfare measures. To build a sound national economy, we cannot afford to rebuild one sector of the economy neglecting the other. Our object is, therefore, a balanced growth of development of all the sectors of our economy so that the entire structure may receive the impetus of a healthy growth.

The Chief Minister of the State, Dr. B. C. Roy, has made it clear on a number of occasions that all planning should start from the bottom. Our first task would be to revitalise the moribund rural economy of the State on which the bulk of our population depends. The State's economy can be durable on a consolidated base—a sound rural economy. West Bengal's Second Five-Year Plan has been formulated with greater emphasis on the need of developing our rural economy during the Second Plan period. But this does not mean that we have under-estimated the need of developing other sectors. Due consideration has been paid in extending and improving the social services like improving people's health, extending educational facilities etc.

TARGET OF RS. 255 CRORES

The Planning Commission of India have recently approved the State's Second Five-Year Plan in principle. Excluding the Ganga Barrage schemes to be executed by the Development Corporation, and certain other schemes like Urban water supply and Sunderban Embankment which have been reserved for separate consideration, and excluding the schemes for refugee rehabilitation, to be financed by the Government of India, West Bengal's total target of expenditure comes to Rs. 255 crores.

The Ganga Barrage which would cost Rs. 30 crores in the next five years will be financed by the Government of India.

The paramount need to-day is the improvement of agriculture in the State. The Second Five-Year Plan proposes to raise and distribute adequate improved seeds, purchase and distribute fertilisers and fertiliser mixtures. It is also proposed to distribute organic manures like bonemeal, sludge and town-compost to the needy cultivators in order that they can raise the level of their yield. Development of agriculture would also depend on adequate irrigation facilities. A number of small irrigation and drainage schemes would be taken up during the Second Plan period. To encourage pump irrigation, it has also been tentatively proposed to distribute about 200 pumping plants per year during the Second Plan period. The cultivators would be expected to pay 50% of the plant at the time of taking delivery and the balance has to be paid within a year from the date of supply. Among other measures proposed to be taken for developing agriculture in the State, mention may be made of mechanical reclamation and cultivation of land, plant protection, soil conservation, agricultural marketing, education and research.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND FOREST

The programme for improving the Animal Husbandry in the State comprises in upgrading the cattle. For this purpose, artificial insemination services would be continued in the existing centres in the State. As the availability of sufficient fodder is an essential factor for improvement of the livestock, a

large number of improved fodder production demonstration plots would be established all over the State.

To improve the milk supply in the State, a scheme named Greater Calcutta Milk Supply Scheme has been included in the Second Plan. It aims at abolishing Khatals in the city and to colonise the milk animals and their owners in rural areas.

The schemes under the conservation and development of Forests comprise in further afforestation of 50,000 acres of waste lands which are not suitable for agriculture, creation of new forests and industrial plantations in different parts of the State for prevention of soil erosion and supply of raw materials to paper mills and match factories. Besides, provision has also been made for creating shelter belts by means of afforestation along the sea coast to protect cultivable land along the coast against damage by sand, strong winds and tidal bores. Among the other important schemes, mention may be made of creating teak plantations, improvement of communication facilities in the forest areas and various welfare activities for the labourers working in forests.

VILLAGE CREDIT AND FISHERIES

The economic life of rural Bengal can never be improved unless the cultivators are rescued from the clutches of the village money lenders. In order that they can depend on their own pulled resources, it is necessary to urge them to take to co-operation. In West Bengal's Second Five-Year Plan, a number of schemes have been adopted which would aim at an integrated development of rural credit on co-operative lines.

In order to further develop the fisheries in the State, 11 different schemes excluding the Deep Sea Fishing Schemes are proposed to be implemented during the Second Plan period. It is proposed to increase the area under pisciculture by about 1 lakh acres through (a) financial help in the form of short, medium and long-term loans, (b) assisting in production and distribution of fry and fingerlings at reasonable prices, (c) training fishermen in improved method of pisciculture and (d) research for better production.

The works started in C.D.P. and N.E.S. Blocks are proposed to be carried through the Second Plan period. Of the 243 rural thanas in West Bengal, 61 thanas would be covered by the end of the First Plan period. Work will start in the remaining 181 thanas during the Second Plan period.

SCHEMES FOR IRRIGATION

Irrigation was given a high priority in our First Five-Year Plan so that State's agriculture had not to depend on uncertainties of rainfall. Out of 118 schemes of the First Five-Year Plan with an estimated cost of Rs. 15.38 crores, most of the schemes will be completed within the Plan period leaving 3 to be completed by the first 3 months of 1956-57. In the Second Plan, altogether 87 schemes are proposed to be executed to extend the irrigation facilities in drought areas. Besides, there are 3 more schemes which had partly been executed during the Five-Year Plan period and to be completed during the Second Plan period. Before the commencement of the execution of the First Five-Year Plan, the total irrigated area in West Bengal was 24,70,700 acres. With the completion of the schemes under the First Five-Year Plan, additional 15,82,800 acres would be brought under irrigation facilities. When all the schemes under the Second Five-Year Plan would be executed, a substantial portion of the potentially culturable lands would be brought under irrigation.

PROGRESS IN POWER DEVELOPMENT

Considerable progress has been made in the development of power in the State during the First Plan period. 15 schemes were taken up during that period and power is now being supplied in bulk and also in retail through a grid of 197 miles of transmission lines. The Second Plan for power projects consists of 11 schemes proposed by the West Bengal State Electricity Board. The objective of these schemes are expansion of the scope of the schemes already started under the First Plan and extension of power facilities to wider areas of the State by executing new schemes.

The need of developing the decadent cottage industries of the State is of paramount importance because the rural economy can never be revitalised without an established cottage industry. The intolerable pressure of population on land has to be minimised to save agriculture from further deterioration and this pre-supposes revival of cottage industries offering subsidiary occupation in villages. Under the First Five-Year Plan, a number of schemes were successfully implemented in promoting industries like mat, khadi, gur, hand-made paper etc. In preparing the Second Five-Year Plan, we worked on the principle of "keeping the eye on the village." Work started under the First Five-Year Plan would be carried through and more new schemes to promote ghani, coirs, pottery, blacksmithy, ceramics and such other cottage industries would be executed during the Second Plan period.

ROADS AND ROAD TRANSPORT

The development of roads and road transport has also been given priority in our Second Five-Year Plan. The Plan for the first five-year included development of 380 miles of new State highways, 1617 miles of district roads and 196 miles of village roads apart from the development of National Highways undertaken from the Central Roads Fund. It will be possible to undertake a larger programme of works for the Second Plan with reasonable augmentation of existing resources, both technical and material. The programme envisages works on 3,248 miles of roads, 1,155 miles of which are being carried over from the First Plan programme. Besides, the Plan also envisages improvement of 2,000 miles of existing municipal roads during the Second Plan period.

The State transport services for Calcutta will be extended in the Second Plan period 552 private buses operating on 26 routes in the City will be replaced by State buses by the end of the Second Plan period.

DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION

West Bengal's Second Five-Year Plan on Education aims at a balanced development of various aspects of education particularly those which could

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INDO-CHINA PAST & PRESENT

By Dr. KALIDAS NAG, D.Litt. (Paris)

NEARLY two thousand years ago, the Greek Geographer Ptolemy significantly named the area, now known as Indo-China, to be "Trans-Gangetic" territories. So the *Artha-Shastra* of Kautilya, completed before Ptolemy, shows detailed knowledge of the Indians relating to Suvarnabhumi and the *Ramayana* also refers to Suvarna-dwipa conclusively proved by Dr. R. C. Majumdar and other historians to be the general name for Sumatra, Java etc. of the group of islands under Insulindia or Island India. No wonder then that Ptolemy, in 150 A.D., transcribed from Sanskrit into Greek the name of Java as 'Java-diu' or 'Sava-diu', showing that the maritime expansion of the Indians up to Indo-China and Indonesia were known to the Greco-Roman traders and geographers.

Subarna-bhumi or Burma was known to the Ashokan missionaries (3rd century B.C.) and thence Buddhism and Brahmanism gradually entered, by the land and sea routes, the zones known as (1) Siam or Thailand, (2) Kamboj or land of the Khmers, (3) Laos, (4) Champa or Cham country (Viet-Nam). Thus "Hinduized" kingdoms flourished in these areas for over one thousand years (4th to 14th century A.D.), sapped one another's strength through mutual fights and ultimately fell victims to Western Colonial Powers.

Burma was till 1945, a British territory; Siam, theoretically free, was at first under French influence, but now, virtually an American Protectorate. America goes on extending her influence into Cambodia, south Laos and south Viet-Nam, provoking counter-groupings in the Communist-influenced Pathet Laos, north Viet-Nam and the infiltrated zones of Cambodia and Cochin China.

Thus France, once dominating the whole of Indo-China, is forced gradually to retire or submit to American leadership. So the British, dominating once the major sea-routes and ports from Rangoon and Singapore to Hong Kong, are accepting their colonial zones restricted to Malaya, and north Borneo under one High Commissioner posted at Singapore. Recognizing promptly the Chinese People's Republic, the British have saved so far their only prosperous port in the Far East — Hong Kong. The Communists are still giving headache to the British planters and rulers of Malaya for the zones are infiltrated by the Soviet-inspired Chinese passing through Burma and Siam which jointly form the northern boundaries of Malaya. No wonder then that the Western Powers are desperately trying to maintain the *status quo* by strengthening their economic and military resources in this troubled area, and raising a bulwark against the communist pressure from the north by building SEADO (Asian counterpart of NATO), involving Pakistan, Siam, South Indo-China and the Philippines. The Western Manila Pact provoked movements for Asian solidarity and freedom as demonstrated by the Bandung Conference which opened up the larger perspective of Afro-Asian security which necessitates regrouping of nations on the Indian Ocean basin.

The Japanese, by defeating, for a time, most of the Western colonial powers, indirectly helped the freedom movement in South East Asia. That movement is working out naturally in the progressive emergence of free and quasi-free States like Indonesia (freed from the Dutch) and the Philippines (liberated by the U.S.A.). The colonial Malaya is already offered self-government by the British, and the Indo-China to-day is a vast wreckage of the over-centralized French colonial empire.

I visited Indo-China in 1924 and also in 1939; but little did I suspect that the apparently solid structure of French imperialism there would collapse so rapidly. From British Hong Kong I travelled through Hai-Phong to Hanoi, the seat of the French Government, and visited their major Research Institute — (Ecole Francaise d' Extreme Orient) the French School of the Far East. The French were badly defeated by the Viet-minh soldiers of Ho Chi Minh who was recently given grand receptions in Peking and Moscow. The French lost the whole of North Indo-China and are struggling desperately, with American aid, to maintain some fragments of South Viet-Nam, just as the defeated Dutch are frantically clinging to Western New Guinea claimed as Irian by the Government of Free Indonesia. Cambodia, Laos, Siam etc. are in the "melting pot" in this critical age of transition from Western colonialism to Asian self-sufficiency.

VIET-NAM : ITS PEOPLE & CULTURE

This vast area is mostly inhabited by the Annamites of Chinese lineage, who are subdivided into three groups :—

(*a*) North Viet-Nam, formerly known as Tonking, with an area of 115,700 sq. miles and a population of about 10 million souls.

(*b*) Central Viet-Nam hitherto called Annam : area 6000 sq. miles with a population of 7 millions.

(*c*) South Viet-Nam or Cochin China : area — 26,476 sq. miles : Population — 5,628,472.

(*d*) Ethnic minorities are represented by non-Annamite races like the Thai, Meo and Lolo tribes in Tongking. In South Annam there are primitive races like the Moi (in the hill tracts) enjoying special status like the Tribals of India.

French intervention in Indo-China started as early as 1787 under the corrupt French monarchy swept away by the Revolution of 1789. After a century we find a French Protectorate over Annam rati-

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UNITY OF INDIAN LITERATURE

By PRIYARANJAN SEN, M.A., P.R.S., Kabyatirtha

INDIA is a sub-continent; nay, it is something more. "What is there in the world which we do not find in India ?"

It is an exaggerated idea, perhaps, but it rightly emphasises the variety of interests, of phenomena, of ideas, that make up the background of Indian life.

Let us just think of the Puja season, fast approaching. The whole of India responds to the call of the Puja; there is a wave of festivity, an atmosphere of joy, an elation of the spirit, almost a spiritual experience. We cannot treat it only as a festival for Hindus only; it is a national holiday mood. For a vast country like India, it is necessary to have bonds that unify, that cement the union, that link together the different regions, distant from one another. Local variations there must be, from the very nature of things, but when we look at the similarities, the differences tend to disappear. It is good for us to look at the similarities, if only to check the fissiparous tendencies that have been our bane in the past. There are many threads running through the web of Indian life, and literature is one of them.

But is India one ? There are so many different languages. We were told in the past by our friends of the West that we were not a nation and we could never be one, because of the many languages that are spoken, the many scripts that are written, the many literatures that are produced in the country. The idea was unacceptable to us; we felt we *were* a nation. And after a grim struggle, we feel that we have been welded into a nation in spite of the bogey of "250 languages and more" that have been counted. The first half of the twentieth century has seen us fiercely battling to prove our claim of being one nation. Even now, the language question is no doubt a thorn at our side. For the teacher, it is a source of endless worry. How many languages has the young learner to pick up ? The mother-tongue has no doubt the first claim, and then the regional language. Then comes the Hindi language, the *Rashtrabhasa*, to bind the different States of India together, to solve the one language problem, to be used as common currency between State and State. But, then, it is necessary, so thinks the educationist, to undergo also the discipline imposed in learning a classical language like Sanskrit or Persian. Finally, there is no questioning the utility (not futility, whatever the extreme nationalist might say) of learning English — the key to the world's knowledge and the vast treasury of books containing the world's wisdom. Does it mean the picking up of five languages ? As many as five ? No wonder the strain is heavy and the young hopefuls are bent down by the load of knowledge they have to carry.

DIFFERENCES ONLY APPARENT

But let us take courage; the differences are more apparent than real. At any rate, in spite of them, Sir Asutosh organized the study of Modern Indian Languages in the University of Calcutta about 40 years ago. He did not neglect the four main languages of the South — Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kanarese — and he made arrangements also for teaching the languages of the North — Bengali, Assamese, Maithili, Oriya, Gujrati and Urdu. Sir Asutosh saw that the study of the modern languages of India would not be successful, if it was not based on the study of Pali, Prakrit, Persian or Pushtu out of which they had sprung. He called it the study of national literature, and encouraged it by organizing, as I have said, a course of studies for the M.A. Examination which made it compulsory for a candidate to study two modern languages, one main, the other subsidiary, as well as two basic languages. It was his dream that some day there would be available a band of scholars who would introduce one language to another, say Urdu to Assamese or Gujrati to Oriya, who could serve as liaison officers in a cultural exchange so that, after a few years, researches into their mutual relations would be easily undertaken. He offered stipends to students for each language, and teachers for these languages were available in the University of Calcutta.

Sir Asutosh was not alone in his struggle. Ten years or a little more before, Justice Sarada Charan Mitra of Calcutta High Court had started *Ekalipivistara Parishad* and a paper *Devanagar* which used to publish articles written in the different languages of India in Devanagar type. Kanarese, Tamil, Urdu, Gujrati articles by prominent writers were transliterated into Nagri. At least one impediment — the impediment of script — was removed, and the idea of one language, one script, one literature was kept in view.

The *Hans*, a monthly magazine, published from Banaras, edited by the gifted writer, Munshi Premchand was a venture on similar lines. Even since Mahatmaji had entered the arena of Indian politics, he was keen on the propagation of the State Language, one language which would serve as the unifying link between one province of India and another. He had chosen Hindi, and later on made it clear that this Hindi was to be recognised as written in two scripts and that it was to be a language freed from the dominance either of Sanskrit or Persian — it was to be the language of the common man. A worker was available in Munshi Premchand, who had resigned his Government job and turned a nationalist working on the cultural side. He thus came to bring out a paper, the *Hans*, — "the magazine working for a commonwealth of literatures of India," under the editorship of Karanjalal Munshi and himself, — which would make available through Hindi the achievements of other Indian literatures.

PREMCHAND'S LETTERS

I have in my possession two letters written by Premchand. I offer no excuse for quoting them below in extenso :

I

7th Dec. 1935.

Dear Sir,

Your beautiful survey of recent Bengali literature has appeared in the December issue of *Hans*, a copy of which has been sent to you. The Hindi readers all over India will highly appreciate your

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Sree Gouranga and Ma Bishnupriya

Sherlock Holmes

The HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES

By

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

"You know my methods," and not one in a million book-lovers mistakes as to whose methods, for there is one Sherlock Holmes, creation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. "The Hound of The Baskervilles" is one of the startling demonstrations of his "methods" by which he unravels the mysteries of a lethal legend of a flaming hell-hound haunting an ancient baronial hall. Narrated by Dr. Watson, the hair-raising and breath-taking sequences also give a good account of the narrator himself.

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CHAPTER–I

HERLOCK Holmes, who was usually very late in the mornings, save upon those not infrequent occasions when he was up all night, was seated at the breakfast table. I stood upon the hearth-rug and picked up the stick which our visitor had left behind him the night before. It was a fine, thick piece of wood, bulbous-headed, of the sort which is known as a "Penang lawyer." Just under the head was a broad silver band, nearly an inch across. "To James Mortimer, M.R.C.S., from his friends of the C.C.H.," was engraved upon it, with the date "1884."

"Well, Watson, what do you make of it ?"

Holmes was sitting with his back to me, and I had given him no sign of my occupation. "How did you know what I was doing ? I believe you have eyes in the back of your head."

"I have, at least, a well-polished, silver-plated coffee-pot in front of me," said he. "But tell me, Watson, what do you make of our visitor's stick ? Since we have been so unfortunate as to miss him and have no notion of his errand, this accidental souvenir becomes of importance. Let me hear you reconstruct the man by an examination of it."

"I think", said I, following as far as I could the methods of my companion, "that Dr. Mortimer is a successful, elderly medical man, well-esteemed, since those who know him give him this mark of their appreciation."

"Good !" said Holmes. "Excellent !"

"I think also that the probability is in favour of his being a country practitioner who does a great deal of his visiting on foot."

"Why so ?"

"Because this stick, though originally a very handsome one, has been so knocked about that I can hardly imagine a town practitioner carrying it."

"Perfectly sound !" said Holmes.

"And then again, there is the 'friends of the C.C.H.' I should guess that to be the Something Hunt, the local hunt to whose members he has possibly given some surgical assistance."

"Really, Watson, you excel yourself," said Holmes, pushing back his chair and lighting a cigarette. "I am bound to say that in all the accounts which you have been so good as to give of my own small achievements you have habitually underrated your own abilities. It may be that you are not yourself luminous, but you are a conductor of light. Some people without possessing genius have a remarkable power of stimulating it. I confess, my dear fellow, that I am very much in your debt."

He had never said as much before, and I must admit that his words gave me keen pleasure. He now took the stick from my hands and examined it for a few minutes with his naked eyes. Then with an expression of interest he laid down his cigarette, and, carrying the cane to the window, he looked over it again with a convex lens.

"Interesting, though elementary," said he as he returned to his favourite corner of the settee. "There are certainly one or two indications upon the stick. It gives us the basis for several deductions."

"Has anything escaped me ?" I asked with some self-importance.

"I am afraid, my dear Watson, that most of your conclusions were erroneous. When I said that you stimulated me I meant, to be frank, that in noting your fallacies I was occasionally guided towards the truth. Not that you are entirely wrong in this instance. The man is certainly a country practitioner. And he walks a good deal."

"Then I was right."

"To that extent."

"But that was all."

"No, no, my dear Watson, not all — by no means all. I would suggest, for example, that a presentation to a doctor is more likely to come from a hospital than from a hunt, and that when the initials 'C.C.' are placed before that hospital the words 'Charing Cross' very naturally suggest themselves."

"Well, then, supposing that 'C.C.H.' does stand for 'Charing Cross Hospital,' what further inferences may we draw ?"

"Do none suggest themselves ? You know my methods. Apply them !"

"I can only think of the obvious conclusion that the man has practised in town before going to the country."

"I think that we might venture a little farther than this. Look at it in this light. On what occasion would it be most probable that such a presentation would be made ? When would his friends unite to give him a pledge of their good will ? Obviously at the moment when Dr. Mortimer withdrew from the service of the hospital in order to start in practice for himself. We know there has been a presentation. We believe there has been a change from a town hospital to a country practice. Is it, then, stretching our inference too far to say that the presentation was on the occasion of the change ?"

"It certainly seems probable."

"Now, you will observe that he could not have been on the staff of the hospital since only a man well-established in a London practice could hold such a position, and such a one would not drift into the country. What was he, then ? If he was in the hospital and yet not on the staff he could only have been a house-surgeon or a house-physician—little more than a senior student. And he left five years ago—the date is on the stick. So your grave, middle-aged family practitioner vanishes into thin air, my dear Watson, and there emerges a young fellow, under thirty, amiable, unambitious, absent-minded, and the possessor of a favourite dog, which I should describe roughly as being larger than a terrier and smaller than a mastiff."

I laughed incredulously as Sherlock Holmes leaned back in his settee. "As to the latter part, I have no means of checking you," said I, "but at least it is not difficult to find out a few particulars about the man's age and professional career." From my small medical shelf I took down the Medical

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Directory and turned up the name. There were several Mortimers, but only one who could be our visitor. I read his record aloud :

"Mortimer, James, M.R.C.S., 1882, Grimpen, Dartmoor, Devon. House surgeon, from 1882 to1884, at Charing Cross Hospital. Winner of the Jackson prize for Comparative Pathology, with essay entitled 'Is Disease a Reversion ?' Corresponding member of the Swedish Pathological Society. Author of 'Some Freaks of Atavism' (Lancet, 1882). 'Do We Progress ?' (Journal of Psychology, March, 1883). Medical Officer for the parishes of Grimpen, Thorsley, and High Barrow."

"No mention of that local hunt, Watson," said Holmes with a mischievous smile, "but a country doctor, as you very astutely observed. I think that I am fairly justified in my inferences. As to the adjectives, I said, if I remember right, amiable, unambitious, and absent-minded. It is my experience that it is only an amiable man in this world who receives testimonials, only an unambitious one who abandons a London career for the country, and only an absent-minded one who leaves his stick and not his visiting-card after waiting an hour in your room."

"And the dog ?"

"Has been in the habit of carrying this stick behind his master. The marks of his teeth are very plainly visible. The dog's jaw, as shown in the space between these marks, is too broad in my opinion for a terrier and not broad enough for a mastiff. It may have been—yes, by Jove, it *is* a curly-haired spaniel."

He had risen and paced the room as he spoke. Now he halted in the recess of the window.

"My dear fellow, how can you possibly be so sure of that ?"

"For the very simple reason that I see the dog himself on our very door-step, and there is the ring of its owner. Don't move, I beg you, Watson. He is a professional brother of yours, and your presence may be of assistance to me. Now is the dramatic moment of fate, when you hear a step upon the stair which is walking into your life, and you know not whether for good or ill. What does Dr. James Mortimer, the man of science, ask of Sherlock Holmes, the specialist in crime ? Come in !"

The appearance of our visitor was a surprise to me, since I had expected a typical country practitioner. He was a very tall, thin man, with a long nose like a beak, which jutted out between two keen, gray eyes, set closely together and sparkling brightly from behind a pair of gold-rimmed glasses. He was clad in a professional but rather slovenly fashion, for his frock-coat was dingy and his trousers frayed. Though young, his long back was already bowed, and he walked with a forward thrust of his head and a general air of peering benevolence. As he entered his eyes fell upon the stick in Holmes's hand, and he ran towards it with an exclamation of joy. "I am so very glad," said he. "I was not sure whether I had left it here or in the Shipping Office. I would not lose that stick for the world."

"A presentation, I see," said Holmes.

"Yes, sir."

"From Charing Cross Hospital ?"

"From one or two friends there on the occasion of my marriage."

"Dear, dear, that's bad !" said Holmes shaking his head.

Dr. Mortimer blinked through his glasses in mild astonishment. "Why was it bad ?"

"Only that you have disarranged our little deductions. Your marriage, you say ?"

"Yes, sir. I married, and so left the hospital, and with it all hopes of a consulting practice. It was necessary to make a home of my own."

"Come, come, we are not so far wrong, after all," said Holmes. "And now, Dr. James Mortimer———"

"Mister, sir, Mister—a humble M.R.C.S."

"And a man of precise mind, evidently".

"A dabbler in science, a picker up of shells on the shores of the great unknown ocean. I presume that it is Mr. Sherlock Holmes whom I am addressing and not——"

"No, this is my friend Dr. Watson."

"Glad to meet you, sir. I have heard your name mentioned in connection with that of your friend. You interest me very much, Mr. Holmes. I had hardly expected so dolichocephalic a skull or such well-marked supraorbital development. Would you have any objection to my running my finger along your parietal fissure ? A cast of your skull, sir, until the original is available, would be an ornament to any anthropological museum. It is not my intention to be fulsome, but I confess that I covet your skull."

Sherlock Holmes waved our strange visitor into a chair. "You are an enthusiast in your line of thought, I perceive, sir, as I am in mine. I presume that it was not merely for the purpose of examining my skull that you have done me the honour to call here last night and again today ?"

"No, sir, no; though I am happy to have had the opportunity of doing that as well. I came to you because I recognized that I am myself an unpractical man and because I am suddenly confronted with a most serious and extraordinary problem. I have in my pocket a manuscript——"

"I observed it as you entered the room," said Holmes.

"It is an old manuscript."

"Early eighteenth century, unless it is a forgery."

"How can you say that, sir ?"

"You have presented an inch or two of it to my examination all the time that you have been talking. It would be a poor expert who could not give the date of a document within a decade or so. I put that at 1730."

"The exact date is 1742." Dr. Mortimer drew it from his breast-pocket. "This family paper was committed to my care by Sir Charles Baskerville, whose sudden and tragic death some three months ago created so much excitment in Devonshire. I may say that I was his personal friend as well as his medical attendant. He was a strong-minded man, shrewd, practical, and as unimaginative as I am myself. Yet he took this document very seriously, and his mind was prepared for just such an end as did eventually overtake him."

Holmes stretched out his hand for the manuscript and flattened it upon his knee. I looked over

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his shoulder at the yellow paper and the faded script. At the head was written :

"Baskerville Hall," and below, in large, scrawling figures : "1742."

"It appears to be a statement of some sort."

"Yes, it is a statement of a certain legend which runs in the Baskerville family. With your permission I will read it to you".

Holmes leaned back in his chair, placed his finger-tips together, and closed his eyes, with an air of resignation. Dr. Mortimer turned the manuscript to the light and read in a high, crackling voice the following curious, old-world narrative :

"Of the origin of the Hound of the Baskervilles there have been many statements, yet as I come in a direct line from Hugo Baskerville, and as I had the story from my father, who also had it from his, I have set it down with all belief that it occurred even as is here set forth. Learn then from this story not to fear the fruits of the past, but rather to be circumspect in the future, that those foul passions whereby our family has suffered so grievously may not again be loosed to our undoing.

"Know then that in the time of the Great Rebellion (the history of which by the learned Lord Clarendon I most earnestly commend to your attention) this Manor of Baskerville was held by Hugo of that name, nor can it be gainsaid that he was a most wild, profane, and godless man. This, in truth, his neighbours might have pardoned, seeing that saints have never flourished in those parts, but there was in him a certain wanton and cruel humour which made his name a byword through the West. It chanced that this Hugo came to love (if, indeed, so dark a passion may be known under so bright a name) the daughter of a yeoman who held lands near the Baskerville estate. But the young maiden, being discreet and of good repute, would ever avoid him, for she feared his evil name. So it came to pass that one Michaelmas this Hugo, with five or six of his idle and wicked companions, stole down upon the farm and carried her off. When they had brought her to the Hall the maiden was placed in an upper chamber, while Hugo and his friends sat down to a long carouse, as was their nightly custom. Now, the poor lass upstairs was like to have her wits turned at the singing and shouting and terrible oaths which came up to her from below, for they say that the words used by Hugo Baskerville, when he was in wine, were such as might blast the man who said them. At last in the stress of her fear she did that which might have daunted the bravest or most active man, for by the aid of the growth of ivy which covered (and still covers) the south wall she came down from under the eaves, and so homeward across the moor, there being three leagues betwixt the Hall and her father's farm.

"It chanced that some little time later Hugo left his guests to carry food and drink—with other worse things, perchance—to his captive, and so found the cage empty and the bird escaped. Then, as it would seem, he became as one that hath a devil, for rushing down the stairs into the dining-hall, he sprang upon the great table, flagons and trenchers flying before him, and he cried aloud before all the company that he would that very night render his body and soul to the Powers of Evil if he might but overtake the wench. And while the revellers stood aghast at the fury of the man one more wicked or, it may be, more drunken than the rest, cried out that they should put the hounds upon her. Whereat Hugo ran from the house, crying to his grooms that they should saddle his mare and unkennel the pack, and giving the hounds a kerchief of the maid's he swung them to the line, and so off full cry in the moonlight over the moor.

"Now, for some space the revellers stood agape. But anon their bemused wits awoke to the nature of the deed which was like to be done upon the moorlands. Everything was now in an uproar, some calling for their pistols, some for their horses, and some for another flask of wine. But at length some sense came back to their crazed minds, and the whole of them, thirteen in number, took horse and started in pursuit. The moon shone clear above them, and they rode swiftly abreast, taking that course which the maid must needs have taken if she were to reach her own home.

"They had gone a mile or two when they passed one of the night shepherds upon the moorlands, and they cried to him to know if he had seen the hunt. And the man, as the story goes, was so crazed with fear that he could scarce speak, but at last he said that he had indeed seen the unhappy maiden, with the hounds upon her track. 'But I have seen more than that,' said he, 'for Hugo Baskerville passed me upon his black mare, and there ran mute behind him such a hound of hell as God forbid should ever be at my heels.' So the drunken squires cursed the shepherd and rode onward. But soon their skins turned cold, for there came agalloping across the moor, and the black mare dabbled with white froth, went past with trailing bridle and empty saddle. Then the revellers rode close together, for a great fear was on them. Riding slowly in this fashion they came at last upon the hounds. These, though known for their valour and their breed, were whimpering in a cluster at the head of a deep dip or goyal.

"The company had come to a halt, more sober men than when they started. Most of them would by no means advance, but three of them, the boldest, or it may be the most drunken, rode forward down the goyal. Now it opened into a broad space in which stood two of those great stones, still to be seen there which were set by certain forgotten peoples in the days of old. The moon was shining bright upon the clearing, and there in the centre lay the unhappy maid where she had fallen, dead of fear and fatigue. But it was not the sight of her body, nor yet was it that of the body of Hugo Baskerville lying near her, which raised the hair upon the heads of these three dare-devil roysterers, but it was that, standing over Hugo, and plucking at his throat, there stood a foul thing, a great, black beast, shaped like a hound, yet larger than any hound that eye mortal eye has rested upon. And even as they looked, the thing tore the throat out of Hugo Baskerville, on which, as it turned its blazing

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eyes and dripping jaws upon them, the three shrieked with fear and rode for dear life, still screaming, across the moor.

"Such is the tale of the coming of the hound which is said to have plagued the family so sorely ever since. To Providence, my sons, I hereby commend you, and I counsel you by way of caution to forbear from crossing the moor in those dark hours when the powers of evil are exalted.

"[This from Hugo Baskerville to his sons Rodger and John, with instructions that they say nothing thereof to their sister Elizabeth.]"

When Dr. Mortimer had finished reading this singular narrative he pushed his spectacles up on his forehead and stared at Sherlock Holmes. The latter yawned and tossed the end of his cigarette into the fire.

"Well ?" said he. "Do you not find it interesting ?"

"To a collector of fairy tales".

Dr. Mortimer drew a folded newspaper out of his pocket.

"Now, Mr. Holmes, we will give you something a little more recent. This is the *Devon County Chronicle* of May 14th of this year. It is a short account of the facts elicited at the death of Sir Charles Baskerville which occurred a few days before that date." Our visitor readjusted his glasses and began :

"The recent sudden death of Sir Charles Baskerville, whose name has been mentioned as the probable Liberal candidate for Mid-Devon at the next election, has cast a gloom over the county. Though Sir Charles had resided at Baskerville Hall for a comparatively short period, he had won the affection of all who had been brought into contact with him. Being himself childless, it was his openly expressed desire that the whole countryside should, within his own lifetime, profit by his good fortune, and many will have personal reasons for bewailing his untimely end. His generous donations to local and county charities have been frequently chronicled in these columns.

"The circumstances connected with the death of Sir Charles cannot be said to have been entirely cleared up by the inquest, but at least enough has been done to dispose of those rumours to which local superstition has given rise. There is no reason whatever to suspect foul play, or to imagine that death could be from any but natural causes. Sir Charles was a widower, and a man who may be said to have been in some ways of an eccentric habit of mind. In spite of his considerable wealth he was simple in his personal tastes, and his indoor servants at Baskerville Hall consisted of a married couple named Barrymore, the husband acting as butler and the wife as housekeeper. Their evidence, corroborated by that of several friends, tends to show that Sir Charles's health has for some time been impaired, and points especially to some affection of the heart, manifesting itself in changes of colour, breathlessness, and acute attacks of nervous depression. Dr. James Mortimer, the friend and medical attendant of the deceased, has given evidence to the same effect.

"The facts of the case are simple. Sir Charles was in the habit every night before going to bed of walking down the famous yew alley of Baskerville Hall. On the fourth of May he had declared his intention of starting next day for London, and had ordered Barrymore to prepare his luggage. That night he went out as usual for his walk, in the course of which he was in the habit of smoking a cigar. He never returned. At twelve o'clock, Barrymore, finding the hall door still open, became alarmed, and, lighting a lantern, went in search of his master. The day had been wet, and Sir Charles's footmarks were easily traced halfway down the alley where there is a gate which leads out on to the moor. There were indications that Sir Charles had stood for some little time here. He then proceeded down the alley, and it was at the far end of it that his body was discovered.

It was at the far end of the alley that Barrymore discovered the body of Sir Charles Baskerville.

One odd fact is the statement of Barrymore that his master's footprints altered their character from the time that he passed the moor-gate, and that he appeared from thence onward to have been walking on his toes. One Murphy, a gipsy horse-dealer, was on the moor at no great distance at the time, but he appears by his own confession to have been worse for drink. He declares that he heard cries but is unable to state from what direction they came.

"No signs of violence were discovered upon Sir Charles's person and, though the doctor's

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evidence pointed to an almost incredible facial distortion—so great that Dr. Mortimer refused at first to believe that it was indeed his friend and patient who lay before him—it was explained that that is a symptom which is not unusual in cases of dyspnoea and death from cardiac exhaustion. This explanation was borne out by the post-mortem examination. The coroner's jury returned a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence.

"It is understood that the next of kin is Mr. Henry Baskerville, if he be still alive, the son of Sir Charles Baskerville's younger brother. The young man when last heard of was in America."

Dr. Mortimer refolded the newspaper and replaced it in his pocket. "Those are the public facts, Mr. Holmes, in connection with the death of Sir Charles Baskerville."

CHAPTER—II

I MUST thank you, Dr. Mortimer, said Holmes, "for calling my attention to a case which certainly presents some features of interest. "That article, you say, contains all the public facts ?"

"It does."

"Then let me have the private ones." He leaned back, put his finger-tips together and assumed his most impassive, judicial expression.

"In doing so," said Dr. Mortimer, who had begun to show signs of some strong emotion, "I am telling that which I have not confided to anyone. My motive for withholding it from the coroner's inquiry is that a man of science shrinks from placing himself in the public position of seeming to indorse a popular superstition. But with you there is no reason why I should not be perfectly frank.

"The moor is very sparsely inhabited, and those who live near each other are thrown very much together. For this reason I saw a good deal of Sir Charles Baskerville. With the exception of Mr. Frankland, of Lafter Hall, and Mr. Stapleton, the naturalist, there are no other men of education within many miles. Sir Charles was a retiring man, but his illness brought us together. Within the last few months it became increasingly plain to me that Sir Charles's nervous system was strained to the breaking point. He had taken this legend which I have read you exceedingly to heart—so much so that, although he would walk in his own grounds, nothing would induce him to go out upon the moor at night. The idea of some ghastly presence constantly haunted him, and on more than one occasion he has asked me whether I had on my medical journeys at night ever seen any strange creature or heard the baying of a hound.

"I can well remember driving up to his house one evening, some three weeks before the fatal event. He chanced to be at his hall door. I had descended from my gig and was standing in front of him, when I saw his eyes fix themselves over my shoulder and stare past me with an expression of the most dreadful horror. I whisked round and had just time to catch a glimpse of something which I took to be a large black calf passing at the head of the drive. So excited and alarmed was he that I was compelled to go down to the spot where the animal had been. It was gone, however, and the incident appeared to make the worst impression upon his mind. I stayed with him all that evening, and it was to explain the emotion which he had shown, that he confided to my keeping that narrative which I read to you when first I came.

"I saw his eyes stare past me with an expression of the most dreadful horror." I whisked round....

"It was at my advice that Sir Charles was about to go to London. His heart was affected, and the constant anxiety in which he lived, however chimerical the cause, was having a serious effect upon his health. I thought that a few months among city distractions would send him back a new man. Mr. Stapleton, a mutual friend, was of the same opinion. Then came this terrible catastrophe.

"On the night of his death, Barrymore the butler sent Perkins the groom on horseback to me. As I was sitting up late I was able to reach Baskerville Hall within an hour. I checked and corroborated all the facts which were mentioned at the inquest. I followed the footsteps down the yew alley, saw the spot at the moor-gate where he seemed to have waited. I remarked the change in the shape of the prints after that point, noted that there were no other footsteps save Barrymore's on the soft gravel, and finally I carefully examined the body which had not been touched until my arrival.

"Sir Charles lay on his face, his arms out, his fingers dug into the ground, and his features convulsed as if by some strong emotion. There was certainly no physical injury of any kind. But one false statement was made by Barrymore at the in-

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quest. He said that there were no traces upon the ground round the body. He did not observe any. But I did—some little distance off, fresh and clear footprints."

"A man's or woman's ?"

Dr. Mortimer looked strangely at us for an instant, and his voice sank almost to a whisper as he answered : "They were the footprints of a gigantic hound !"

I confess at these words a shudder passed through me. Holmes leaned forward in his excitement to stress. "You saw this ?"

"As clearly as I see you. The marks were some twenty yards from the body and no one gave them a thought. I don't suppose I should have done so had I not known this legend."

"What is the alley like ?"

"There are two lines of old yew hedge, twelve feet high and impenetrable. The walk in the centre is about eight feet across."

"Is there anything between the hedges and the walk ?"

"Yes, a strip of grass about six feet broad on either side."

"I understand that the yew hedge is penetrated at one point by a gate ?"

"Yes, the wicket-gate which leads on to the moor."

"So that to reach the alley one either has to come down it from the house or else to enter it by the moor-gate ?"

"There is an exit through a summer-house at the far end."

"Had Sir Charles reached this ?"

"No; he lay about fifty yards from it."

"Now, tell me, Dr. Mortimer—and this is important—the marks which you saw were on the path and not on the grass ?"

"No marks could show on the grass."

"Were they on the same side of the path as the moor-gate ?"

"Yes; they were on the edge of the path."

"You interest me exceedingly. Another point. Was the wicket-gate closed ?"

"Closed and padlocked."

"How high was it ?"

"About four feet high."

"Then anyone could have got over it ?"

"Yes."

"And what marks did you see by the wicket-gate ?"

"None in particular."

"Good heaven ! Did no one examine ?"

"Yes, I examined, myself."

"And found nothing ?"

"It was all very confused. Sir Charles had evidently stood there for five or ten minutes."

"How do you know that ?"

"Because the ash had twice dropped from his cigar."

"Excellent ! This is a colleague, Watson, after our own heart. But the marks ?"

"He had left his own marks all over that small patch of gravel. I could discern no others."

Sherlock Holmes struck his hand against his knee with an impatient gesture. "If I had only been there ! Oh, Dr. Mortimer, to think that you did not call me in earlier !"

"I could not, Mr. Holmes, without disclosing certain secrets to the world; I have already given my reasons for not wishing to do so. Besides, besides——"

"Why do you hesitate ?" pressed Sherlock.

"There is a realm in which the most acute and experienced of detectives is helpless——"

"You mean that the thing is supernatural ?"

"I did not positively say so."

"No, but you evidently think it."

"Well, I learned that several people had seen a creature upon the moor which corresponds with this Baskerville demon, and which could not possibly be any animal known to science. They all agreed that it was a huge creature, luminous, ghastly, and spectral."

"And you, a trained man of science, believe it to be supernatural ?"

"I do not know what to believe."

Holmes shrugged his shoulders. "I have hitherto confined my investigations to this world," said he. "In a modest way I have combated evil, but to take on the Father of Evil himself would, perhaps, be too ambitious a task. Yet you must admit that the footmark is material."

"The original hound was material enough to tug a man's throat out, and yet he was diabolical as well."'

"I see that you have quite gone over to the supernaturalists. But now, Dr. Mortimer, tell me this. If you hold these views, why have you come to consult me at all ?"

"To advise me what I should do with Sir Henry Baskerville, the heir, who arrives at Waterloo Station"—Dr. Mortimer looked at his watch—"in exactly one hour and a quarter. After the death of Sir Charles we located this young gentleman who had been farming in Canada. He is reputed to be an excellent fellow. I speak now not as a medical man but as a trustee and executor of Sir Charles's will."

"There is no other claimant, I presume ?"

"None. The only other kinsman whom we have been able to trace was Rodger Baskerville, the youngest of three brothers of whom poor Sir Charles was the elder. The second brother, who died young, is the father of this lad Henry. The third, Rodger, was the black sheep of the family. He came of the old masterful Baskerville strain and was the very image, they tell me, of the family picture of old Hugo. He made England too hot to hold him, fled to Central America, and died there in 1876 of yellow fever. Henry is the last of the Baskervilles. Now, Mr. Holmes, what would you advise me to do ?"

Sherlock considered for a little time, then remarked, "Put into plain words, the matter is this. In your opinion there is a diabolical agency which makes Dartmoor an unsafe abode for a Baskerville—that is your opinion ?"

"There is some evidence that this may be so."

"Exactly. But surely, if your supernatural theory be correct, it could work the young man evil in London as in Devonshire."

"Your advice, then, is that the young man will be as safe in Devonshire as in London. He comes in fifty minutes. What would you recommend ?"

"I recommend, sir, that you take a cab, call off your spaniel who is scratching at my front door, and proceed to Waterloo to meet Sir Henry."

"And then ?"

"And then you will say nothing to him at all

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until I have made up my mind about the matter."

"How long will it take you to make up your mind ?"

"Twenty-four hours. At ten o'clock to-morrow, Dr. Mortimer, I will be much obliged to you if you will call upon me here, and it will be of help to me in my plans if you will bring Sir Henry with you."

"I will do so, Mr. Holmes." He scribbled the appointment on his shirt-cuff and hurried off in his strange, peering, absentminded fashion. Holmes stopped him at the head of the stair.

"Only one more question, Dr. Mortimer. You say that before Sir Charles's death several people saw this apparition upon the moor ?"

"Three people did."

"Did any see it after ?"

"I have not heard of any."

"Thank you. Good-morning."

Holmes returned to his seat with that quiet look of inward satisfaction which meant that he had a congenial task before him. I knew that seclusion and solitude were very necessary for my friend in those hours of intense mental concentration during which he weighed every particle of evidence, constructed alternative theories, balanced one against the other, and made up his mind as to which points were essential and which immaterial. I therefore spent the day at my club and did not return to Baker Street until evening. It was nearly nine o'clock when I found myself in the sitting-room once more.

My first impression as I opened the door was that a fire had broken out, for the room was so filled with smoke that the light of the lamp upon the table was blurred by it. As I entered, however, my fears were set at rest, for it was the acrid fumes of strong coarse tobacco which took me by the throat and set me coughing. Through the haze I had a vague vision of Holmes in his dressing-gown coiled up in an armchair with his black clay pipe between his lips. Several rolls of paper lay around him—Ordnance maps of Devonshire. Holmes unrolled one section and held it over his knee. "Watson, here we have the particular district which concerns us. That is Baskerville Hall in the middle."

"With a wood round it ?"

"Exactly. I fancy the yew alley, though not marked under that name, must stretch along this line, with the moor, as you perceive, upon the right of it. This small clump of buildings here is the hamlet of Grimpen. Within a radius of five miles there are, as you see, only a few scattered dwellings. Here is Lafter Hall, which was mentioned in the narrative. There is a house indicated here which may be the residence of the naturalist—Stapleton, if I remember right, was his name. Here are two moorland farmhouses, High Tor and Foulmire. Then fourteen miles away the great convict prison of Princetown. Between and around these scattered points extends the desolate, lifeless moor. This, then, is the stage upon which tragedy has been played."

"It must be a wild place."

"It has certainly a character of its own. There are points of distinction about it. That change in the footprints, for example. What do you make of that ?"

"Mortimer said that the man had walked on tiptoe down that portion of the alley."

"He only repeated what some fool had said at the inquest. Why should a man walk on tiptoe down the alley ?"

"What then ?"

"He was running, Watson—running desperately, running for his life, running until he burst his heart and fell dead upon his face."

"Running from what ?"

"There lies our problem. There are indications that the man was crazed with fear before ever he began to run."

"How can you say that ?"

"I am presuming that the cause of his fears came to him across the moor. If that were so, and it seems most probable, only a man who had lost his wits would have run *from* the house instead of towards it. If the gipsy's evidence be true, he ran with cries for help in the direction where help was least likely to be. Then, again, whom was he waiting for that night, and why was he waiting for him in the yew alley rather than in his own house ?"

"You think that he was waiting for someone ?"

"The man was elderly and infirm. We can understand his taking an evening stroll, but the ground was damp and the night inclement. Is it natural that he should stand for five or ten minutes, as Dr. Mortimer, with more practical sense than I should have given him credit for, deduced from the cigar ash ?"

"But he went out every evening."

"I think it unlikely that he waited at the moor-gate every evening. On the contrary, the evidence is that he avoided the moor. That night he waited there. It was the night before he made his departure for London. The thing takes shape, Watson. We will postpone all further discussion of this business until we meet Dr. Mortimer and Sir Henry Baskerville in the morning."

CHAPTER—III

OUR clients were punctual to their appointment, for the clock had just struck ten when Dr. Mortimer was shown up, followed by the young baronet. The latter was a small, alert, dark-eyed man about thirty years of age, very sturdily built, with thick black eyebrows and a strong, pugnacious face. He wore a ruddy-tinted tweed suit and had the weather-beaten appearance of one who has spent most of his time in the open air, and yet there was something in his steady eye and the quiet assurance of his bearing which indicated the gentleman.

"This is Sir Henry Baskerville," said Dr. Mortimer.

"Why, yes," said he, "and the strange thing is, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, that if my friend here had not proposed coming round to you this morning I should have come on my own account. I understand that you think out little puzzles, and I've had one this morning which wants more thinking out than I am able to give it."

"Pray take a seat, Sir Henry. Do I understand you to say that you have yourself had some remarkable experience since you arrived in London ?"

"Nothing of much importance, Mr. Holmes. It was this letter, if you can call it a letter, which reached me this morning".

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He laid an envelope upon the table, and we all bent over it. It was of common quality, grayish in colour. The address, "Sir Henry Baskerville, Northumberland Hotel," was printed in rough characters; the post-mark "Charing Cross," and the date of posting the preceding evening.

"Who knew that you were going to the Northumberland Hotel ?" asked Holmes, glancing keenly across at our visitor.

"No one could have known. We only decided after I met Dr. Mortimer."

"But Dr. Mortimer was no doubt already stopping there ?"

"No, I had been staying with a friend," said the doctor. "There was no possible indication that we intended to go to this hotel !"

"Hum ! Someone seems to be very deeply interested in your movements." Out of the envelope he took a half-sheet of foolscap paper folded into four. This he opened and spread flat upon the table. Across the middle of it a single sentence had been formed by the expedient of pasting printed words upon it. It ran :

As you value your life or your reason keep away from the moor.

The word "moor" only was written in ordinary ink.

"Now," said Sir Henry, "perhaps you will tell me, Mr. Holmes, what in thunder is the meaning of that ? It seems to me that all you gentlemen know a great deal more than I do about my own affairs."

"You shall share our knowledge before you leave this room, Sir Henry. I promise you that," said Sherlock Holmes. "We will confine ourselves for the present to this very interesting document, which must have been put together and posted yesterday evening. Have you yesterday's *Times*, Watson ?"

"It is here in the corner."

"Might I trouble you for it—the inside page, please, with the leading articles ?" He glanced swiftly over it, running his eyes up and down the columns. "Capital article this on free trade. Permit me to give you an extract from it : 'You may be cajoled into imagining that your own special trade or your own industry will be encouraged by a protective tariff, but it stands to reason that such legislation must in the long run keep away wealth from the country, diminish the value of our imports, and lower the general conditions of life in this island.'

"What do you think of that ?" cried Sherlock in high glee, rubbing his hands together with satisfaction.

Dr. Mortimer looked at Holmes with an air of professional interest, and Sir Henry turned a pair of puzzled dark eyes upon me. "I don't know much about the tariff," said he, "but it seems to me we've got a bit off the trail so far as that note is concerned."

"On the contrary, I think we are particularly hot upon the trail. There is so very close a connection that the one is extracted out of the other. 'You,' 'your,' 'life,' 'reason,' 'value,' 'keep away,' 'from the.' Don't you see now whence these words were taken ?"

"By thunder, you're right !" exclaimed Sir Henry.

"By thunder, you're right !" exclaimed Sir Henry.

"If any possible doubt remained it is settled by the fact that 'keep away' and 'from the' are cut out in one piece".

"Well, now—so it is !"

"Really, Mr. Holmes, this exceeds anything which I could have imagined," said Dr. Mortimer, gazing at my friend in amazement.

"So," said Sir Henry, "someone cut out this message with a scissors——"

"Nail scissors," said Holmes. "You can see that it was a very short-bladed scissors, since the cutter had to take two snips over 'keep away.' "

"That is so. Someone cut out the words and pasted them with paste——"

"Gum," corrected Sherlock.

"With gum on to the paper. But I want to know why the word 'moor' should have been written ?"

"Because he could not find it in print."

"Why, of course, that would explain it. Have you read anything else in this message, Mr. Holmes ?"

"There are one or two indications, and yet the utmost pains have been taken to remove all clues. The address, you observe, is printed in rough characters. But the *Times* is a paper which is seldom found in any hands but those of the highly educated. We may take it, therefore, that the letter was composed by an educated man who wished to pose as an uneducated one, and his efforts to conceal his own writing suggest that his writing might be known, or come to be known, by you. Again, you will observe that the words are not gummed on in an accurate line, but that some are much higher than others. 'Life,' for example, is quite out of its proper place. That may point to carelessness or it may point to agitation and hurry upon the part of the cutter. On the whole I incline to the latter view, since the matter was evidently important, and it is unlikely that the composer of such a letter would be careless. If he were in a hurry it opens up the interesting question why he should be in a hurry, since any letter posted up to

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early morning would reach Sir Henry before he would leave his hotel. Did the composer fear an interruption—and from whom ?"

"We are coming now rather into the region of guesswork," said Dr. Mortimer.

"Say, rather, into the region where we balance probabilities and choose the most likely. Now, you would call it a guess, no doubt, but I am almost certain that this address has been written in a hotel."

"How in the world can you say that ?"

"If you examine it carefully you will see that both the pen and the ink have given the writer trouble. The pen has spluttered twice in a single word and has run dry three times in a short address, showing that there was very little ink in the bottle. Now, a private pen or ink-bottle is seldom allowed to be in such a state, and the combination of the two must be quite rare. But you know the hotel ink and the hotel pen. Yes, I have very little hesitation in saying that could we examine the hotel waste-paper baskets around Charing Cross until we found the remains of the mutilated *Times* leader we could lay our hands straight upon the person who sent this singular message. Halloa ! Halloa ! What's this ?"

He was carefully examining the foolscap, upon which the words were pasted, holding it only an inch or two from his eyes.

"Well ?"

"Nothing," said he, throwing it down. "It is a blank half-sheet of paper, without even a water-mark. I think we have drawn as much as we can from this curious letter; and now, Sir Henry, has anything else of interest happened to you since you have been in London ?"

"Well, it all depends upon what you think worth reporting."

"Anything out of the ordinary routine of life."

Sir Henry smiled. "I don't know much of British life yet, for I have spent nearly all my time in the States and Canada. But I hope that to lose one of your boots is not part of the ordinary routine of life over here."

"You have lost one of your boots ?"

"Well, mislaid it, anyhow. I put them both outside my door last night, and there was only one in the morning. I could get no sense out of the chap who cleans them. The worst of it is that I only bought the pair last night in the Strand, and I have never had them on."

"If you have never worn them, why did you put them out to be cleaned ?"

"They were tan boots and had never been varnished. That was why I put them out."

"Then I understand that on your arrival in London yesterday you went out at once and bought a pair of boots ?"

"I did a good deal of shopping. Dr. Mortimer here went round with me. You see, if I am to be squire down there I must dress the part, and it may be that I have got a little careless in my ways out West. Among other things I bought these brown boots and had one stolen before ever I had them on my feet."

"It seems a singularly useless thing to steal," said Sherlock. "I confess that I share the belief that it may have been mislaid."

"And, now, gentlemen," said the baronet, "it seems to me that I have spoken quite enough about the little that I know. It is time that you kept your promise and gave me a full account of what we are all driving at."

"Your request is a very reasonable one," Holmes answered. "Dr. Mortimer, I think you could not do better than to tell your story as you told it to us."

Thus encouraged, our scientific friend drew his papers from his pocket and presented the whole case as he had done upon the morning before. Sir Henry listened with the deepest attention.

"Well, I seem to have come into an inheritance with a vengeance," said he when the long narrative was finished. "Of course, I've heard of the hound ever since I was in the nursery. It's the pet story of the family, though I never thought of taking it seriously before. But as to my uncle's death—well, it all seems boiling up in my head, and I can't get it clear yet. You don't seem quite to have made up your mind whether it's a case for a policeman or a clergyman."

"Precisely."

"And now there's this affair of the letter to me at the hotel. I suppose that fits into its place."

"It seems to show that someone knows more than we do about what goes on upon the moor," said Dr. Mortimer.

"And also," said Holmes, "that someone is not ill-disposed towards you, since they warn you of danger."

"Do you mean danger from this family fiend or do you mean danger from human beings ?"

"Well, that is what we have to find out."

"Whichever it is, my answer is fixed. There is no devil in hell, Mr. Holmes, and there is no man upon earth who can prevent me from going to the home of my own people, and you may take that to be my final answer." His dark brows knitted and his face flushed to a dusky red as he spoke. It was evident that the fiery temper of the Baskervilles was not extinct in this their last representative. "Meanwhile," said he, "I have hardly had time to think over all you have told me. I should like to have a quiet hour by myself to make up my mind. It's half-past eleven now and I am going back right away to my hotel. Suppose you and your friend, Dr. Watson, come round and lunch with us at two."

"Is that convenient to you, Watson ?"

"Perfectly."

"Then you may expect us. Shall I have a cab called ?"

"I'd prefer to walk, for this affair has flurried me rather."

"I'll join you in a walk, with pleasure," said Dr. Mortimer.

We heard the steps of our visitors descend the stair and the bang of the front door. In an instant Holmes had changed from the languid dreamer to the man of action.

"Your hat and boots, Watson, quick ! Not a moment to lose !" We hurried together down the stairs and into the street. Dr. Mortimer and Baskerville were still visible about two hundred yards ahead of us in the direction of Oxford Street.

Holmes quickened our pace until we had decreased the distance which divided us by about half. Then, still keeping a hundred yards behind, we followed into Oxford Street and so down Regent Street. Once our friends stopped and stared into a shop window, upon which Holmes did the same. An

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instant afterwards he gave a little cry of satisfaction and, following the direction of his eager eyes, I saw that a hansom cab with a man inside which had halted on the other side of the street was now proceeding slowly onward again.

"There's our man, Watson! Come along! We'll have a good look at him, if we can do no more."

At that instant I was aware of a bushy black beard and a pair of piercing eyes turned upon us through the side window of the cab. Instantly the trapdoor at the top flew up, something was told to the driver, and the cab flew madly off down Regent Street. Holmes looked eagerly round for another, but no empty one was in sight. Then he dashed in wild pursuit amid the stream of the traffic, but the start was too great, and already the cab was out of sight.

"There now!" said Holmes bitterly as he emerged panting from the tide of vehicles. "Was ever such bad luck and such bad management, too? Watson, if you are an honest man you will record this also and set it against my successes!"

"Who was the man?"

"I have not an idea."

"A spy? A shadow?"

"Well, it was evident from what we have heard that Baskerville has been very closely shadowed by someone since he's been in town. How else could it be known so quickly that it was the Northumberland Hotel which he had chosen?"

While diverted by that speeding cab, Dr. Mortimer and the baronet had vanished. "There is no object in our following them now," said Holmes. "The shadow has departed and will not return. We must see what further cards we have in our hands and play them with decision. Could you swear to that man's face within the cab?"

"I could swear only to the beard."

"And so could I—from which I gather that in all probability it was a false one. A clever man upon so delicate an errand has no use for a beard save to conceal his features. Come in here, Watson!"

He turned into one of the district messenger offices, where he was warmly greeted by the manager. "Ah, Wilson, I see you have not forgotten the little case in which I had the good fortune to help you?"

"No, sir, indeed I have not. You saved my good name, and perhaps my life."

"My dear fellow, you exaggerate. I have some recollection, Wilson, that you had among your boys a lad named Cartwright who showed some ability during the investigation."

"Yes, sir, he is still with us."

"Could you ring him up?—thank you! And I should be glad to have change of this five-pound note."

A lad of fourteen, with a bright, keen face, had obeyed the summons of the manager. He stood now gazing with great reverence at the famous detective.

"Let me have the Hotel Directory," said Holmes.

"Thank you! Now, Cartwright, there are the names of twenty-three hotels here, all in the immediate neighbourhood of Charing Cross. Do you see?"

"Yes, sir."

"You will visit each of these in turn."

"Yes, sir."

"You will begin in each case by giving the outside porter one shilling. Here are twenty-three shillings."

"Yes, sir."

"You will tell him that you want to see the waste-paper of yesterday. You will say that an important telegram has miscarried and that you are looking for it. You understand?"

"Yes, sir."

"But what you are really looking for is the centre page of the *Times* with some holes cut in it with scissors. Here is a copy of the *Times*. It is this page. You could easily recognize it, could you not?"

"Yes, sir."

"In each case the outside porter will send for the hall porter, to whom also you will give a shilling. Here are twenty-three shillings. You will then learn in possibly twenty cases out of twenty-three that the waste of the day before has been burned or removed. In the three other cases you will be shown a heap of paper and you will look for this page of the *Times* among it. The odds are enormously against your finding it. There are ten shillings over in case of emergencies. Let me have a report by wire at Baker Street before evening. And now, Watson, it only remains for us to find out by wire the identity of Cabman, No. 2704, and then we will drop into one of the Bond Street picture galleries and fill in the time until we are due at the hotel."

CHAPTER–IV

HOLMES had the power of detaching his mind at will. For two hours the strange business in which we had been involved appeared to be forgotten, and he was entirely absorbed in the pictures of the modern Belgian masters. He would talk of nothing but art, of which he had the crudest ideas, from our leaving the gallery until we found ourselves at the Northumberland Hotel.

"Sir Henry Baskerville is upstairs expecting you," said the clerk. "He asked me to show you up at once when you came."

As we came round the top of the stairs we met Sir Henry himself. His face was flushed with anger as he held an old and dusty boot in one of his hands. So furious was he that he was hardly articulate and, when he did speak, it was in a much broader Western dialect than any which we had heard from him in the morning.

"Seems to me they are playing me for a sucker in this hotel!" he exclaimed. "They'll find they've started in to monkey with the wrong man unless they are careful. By thunder, if that chap can't find my missing boot there will be trouble. I can take a joke with the best, Mr. Holmes, but they've got a bit over the mark this time."

"Still looking for your boot?"

"Yes, sir, and mean to find it."

"But, surely, you said that it was a new brown boot?"

"So it was, sir. And now it's an old black one."

"What! You don't mean to say——?"

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"That's just what I do mean to say. I only had three pairs in the world—the new brown, the old black, and the patent leathers which I am wearing. Last night they took one of my brown ones, and to-day they have sneaked one of the black. Well, have you got it ? Speak out, man, and don't stand staring !"

An agitated German waiter had appeared upon the scene. "No, sir; I have made inquiry all over the hotel, but I can hear no word of it."

"Well, either that boot comes back before sundown or I'll see the manager and tell him that I go right straight out of this hotel."

"It shall be found, sir—I promise you that if you will have a little patience it will be found."

"Mind it is, for it's the last thing of mine I'll lose in this den of thieves. Well, well, Mr. Holmes, you'll excuse my troubling you about such a trifle ——"

"I think it's well worth troubling about. And in connection with your case, I can say we hold several threads in our hands already. The odds are that one or other of them will guide us to the truth."

We were joined by Dr. Mortimer and had a pleasant luncheon in which little was said of the business which had brought us together. It was in the private sitting-room to which we afterwards repaired that Holmes asked Sir Henry what were his intentions.

"To go to Baskerville Hall at the end of the week."

"I think that decision is a wise one," said Sherlock. "I have ample evidence that you are being dogged in London. Did you know that you were followed this morning from my house ?"

Dr. Mortimer started violently. "Followed ! By whom ?"

" That, unfortunately, is what I cannot tell you. Have you among your neighbours or acquaintances on Dartmoor any man with a full, black beard ?"

"No—or, let me see—why, yes. Barrymore, Sir Charles's butler, is a man with a full, black beard."

"Ha ! Where is Barrymore ?"

"He is in charge of the Hall."

"We had best ascertain if he is really there, or if by any possibility he might be in London. Pray get me a telegraph form. 'Is all ready for Sir Henry ?' That will do. Address to Mr. Barrymore, Baskerville Hall. What is the nearest telegraph office ? Grimpen. Very good, we will send a second wire to the postmaster, Grimpen : 'Telegram to Mr. Barrymore to be delivered into his own hand. If absent, please return wire to Sir Henry Baskerville, Northumberland Hotel !' That should let us know before evening whether Barrymore is at his post in Devonshire or not."

"By the way, Dr. Mortimer, who is this Barrymore, anyhow ?" asked Sir Henry.

"He is the son of the late caretaker. They have looked after the Hall for four generations now. So far as I know, he and his wife are as respectable a couple as any in the county."

"At the same time," said the baronet, "it's clear enough that so long as there are none of the family at the Hall these people have a mighty fine home and nothing to do."

"That is true."

"Did Barrymore profit at all by Sir Charles's will ?" asked Holmes.

"He and his wife had five hundred pounds each."

"Ha ! Did they know that they would receive this ?"

"Yes; Sir Charles was very fond of talking about the provisions of his will."

"That is very interesting."

"I hope," said Dr. Mortimer, "that you do not look with suspicious eyes upon everyone who received a legacy from Sir Charles, for I also had a thousand pounds left to me."

"Indeed ! And anyone else ?"

"There were many insignificant sums to individuals, and a large number of public charities. The residue all went to Sir Henry."

"And how much was the residue ?"

"Seven hundred and forty thousand pounds."

Holmes raised his eyebrows. "I had no idea that so gigantic a sum was involved," said he.

"Sir Charles had the reputation of being rich, but we did not know how very rich he was until we came to examine his securities. The total value of the estate was close on to a million."

"Dear me ! It is a stake for which a man might well play a desperate game. And one more question, Dr. Mortimer. Supposing that anything happened to our young friend here—you will forgive the unpleasant hypothesis !—who would inherit the estate ?"

"Since Rodger Baskerville, Sir Charles's younger brother, died unmarried, the estate would descend to the Desmonds, who are distant cousins. James Desmond is an elderly clergyman in Westmoreland."

"Thank you. These details are all of great interest. Have you met Mr. James Desmond ?"

"Yes; he once came down to visit Sir Charles. He is a man of venerable appearance and of saintly life. I remember that he refused to accept any settlement from Sir Charles, though he pressed it upon him."

"And this man of simple tastes would be the heir to Sir Charles's thousands."

"He would be the heir to the estate because that is entailed. He would also be the heir to the money unless it were willed otherwise by the present owner, who can, of course, do what he likes with it."

"And have you made your will, Sir Henry ?"

"No, Mr. Holmes, I have not. I've had no time, for it was only yesterday that I learned how matters stood. But in any case I feel that the money should go with the title and estate. That was my uncle's idea. How is the owner going to restore the glories of the Baskervilles if he has not money enough to keep up the property ? House, land, and dollars must go together."

"Quite so. Well, Sir Henry, I am of one mind with you as to the advisability of your going down to Devonshire without delay. There is only one provision which I must make. You certainly must not go alone."

"Dr. Mortimer returns with me."

"But Dr. Mortimer has his practice to attend to, and his house is miles away from yours. With all the goodwill in the world, he may be unable to help you. No, Sir Henry, you must take with you someone, a trusty man, who will be always by your side."

"Is it possible that you could come yourself, Mr. Holmes ?"

"If matters came to a crisis I should endeavour

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to be present in person; but you can understand that, with my extensive consulting practice, it is impossible for me to be absent from London for an indefinite time."

"Whom would you recommend, then ?"

Holmes laid his hand upon my arm. "If my friend would undertake it there is no man who is better worth having at your side when you are in a tight place. No one can say so more confidently than I."

The proposition took me completely by surprise, but before I had time to answer, Baskerville seized me by the hand and wrung it heartily.

"Well, now, that is real kind of you, Dr. Watson," said he. "You see how it is with me, and you know just as much about the matter as I do. If you will come down to Baskerville Hall and see me through I'll never forget it."

The promise of adventure had always a fascination for me, and I was complimented by the words of Holmes and by the eagerness with which the baronet hailed me as a companion.

"I will come, with pleasure," said I. "I do not know how I could employ my time better."

"And you will report very carefully to me," said Holmes. "When a crisis comes, as it will do, I will direct how you shall act. I suppose that by Saturday night all might be ready ?"

"Would that suit Dr. Watson ?"

"Perfectly."

"Then on Saturday, unless you hear to the contrary, we shall meet at the ten-thirty train from Paddington."

We had risen to depart when Baskerville gave a cry of triumph, and diving into one of the corners of the room he drew a brown boot from under a cabinet.

"My missing boot !" he cried.

"May all our difficulties vanish as easily !" said Sherlock Holmes.

"My missing boot !" cried Sir Henry Baskerville.

"But it is a very singular thing," Dr. Mortimer remarked. "I searched this room carefully before lunch."

"And so did I," said Sir Henry. "Every inch of it."

Holmes sat in silence in the cab as we drove back to Baker Street, and I knew from his drawn brows and keen face that his mind, like my own, was busy endeavouring to frame some scheme into which all these strange and apparently disconnected episodes could be fitted. All afternoon and late into the evening he sat lost in tobacco and thought.

Just before dinner two telegrams were handed in. The first ran :

Have just heard that Barrymore is at the Hall.

BASKERVILLE.

The second :

Visited twenty-three hotels as directed, but sorry to report unable to trace cut sheet of Times.

CARTWRIGHT.

"There go two of my threads, Watson. There is nothing more stimulating than a case where everything goes against you. We must cast round for another scent. Even Cabman 2704 did not help much but he may later on. He called, said his bearded fare gave his name as 'Sherlock Holmes' and ordered him suddenly to speed to Waterloo Station. The cabman had no idea that Sherlock Holmes was shadowing his 'Sherlock Holmes.' Really, Watson, this time we've got a foeman worthy of our steel."

Sir Henry and Dr. Mortimer were ready upon the appointed day, and we started as arranged for Devonshire. Mr. Sherlock Holmes drove with me to the station and gave me his last parting injunctions and advice. "I will not bias your mind suggesting theories or suspicions, Watson," said he; "I wish you simply to report facts in the fullest possible manner to me."

"What sort of facts ?" I asked.

"Anything which may seem to have a bearing however indirect upon the case, and especially the relations between young Baskerville and his neighbours, or any fresh particulars concerning the death of Sir Charles. One thing only appears to be certain, and that is that Mr. James Desmond, who is the next heir, is an elderly gentleman of a very amiable disposition. I really think that we may eliminate him entirely from our calculations. There remain the people who will actually surround Sir Henry upon the moor."

"Would it not be well in the first place to get rid of this Barrymore couple ?"

"By no means. You could not make a greater mistake. If they are innocent it would be a cruel injustice, and if they are guilty we should be giving up all chance of bringing it home to them. No, no, we will preserve them upon our list of suspects. Then there is a groom at the Hall, if I remember right. There are two moorland farmers. There is our friend, Dr. Mortimer, whom I believe to be entirely honest, and there is his wife, of whom we know nothing. There is this naturalist, Stapleton, and there is his sister who is said to be a young lady of attractions. There is Mr. Frankland, of Lafter Hall, who is also an unknown factor, and there are one or two other neighbours. These are the folk who must be your very special study."

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CHAPTER–V

THE journey was a swift and pleasant one, and I spent it in making the more intimate acquaintance of my two companions and in playing with Dr. Mortimer's spaniel. In a very few hours the brown earth had become ruddy, and red cows grazed in well-hedged fields where the lush grasses spoke of a richer, if damper, climate. Young Baskerville stared eagerly out of the window and cried aloud with delight as he recognized the familiar features of the Devon scenery.

"I've been over a good part of the world since I left it, Dr. Watson," said he; "but I have never seen a place to compare with it."

"I never saw a Devonshire man who did not swear by his county," I remarked. "You were very young when you last saw Baskerville Hall, were you not ?"

"I was in my teens at the time of father's death and had never seen the Hall, for he lived in a little cottage on the South Coast. Thence I went straight to a friend in America. I tell you it is all as new to me as it is to you, and I'm as keen as possible to see the moor."

"Are you ? Then your wish is granted, for there is your first sight of the moor," said Dr. Mortimer, pointing out of the carriage window.

Over the green squares of the fields and the low curve of a wood there rose in the distance a gray, melancholy hill, with a strange jagged summit, dim and vague in the distance, like some fantastic landscape in a dream. Baskerville sat for a long time, his eyes fixed upon it, and I read upon his eager face how much it meant to him, this first sight of that strange spot where the men of his blood had held sway so long and left their mark so deep.

The train pulled up at a small wayside station and we all descended. Outside, a wagonette with a pair of horses was waiting. Our coming was evidently a great event, for station-master and porters clustered round us to carry our luggage. It was a sweet, simple country spot, but behind the peaceful and sunlit countryside there rose ever, dark against the evening sky the long, gloomy curve of the moor, broken by the jagged and sinister hills.

The wagonette swung round into a side road, and we curved upward through deep lanes worn by centuries of wheels, high banks on either side, heavy with dripping moss and fleshy ferns. Bronzing bracken and mottled bramble gleamed in the light of the sinking autumn sun. Still steadily rising, we passed over a narrow granite bridge and skirted a noisy stream which gushed swiftly down, foaming and roaring amid the gray boulders. Both road and stream wound up through a valley dense with scrub oak and fir.

An outlying spur of the moor lay in front of us. On the summit, hard and clear like an equestrian statue upon its pedestal, was a mounted soldier, dark and stern, his rifle poised ready over his forearm. He was watching the road along which we travelled.

"What is this, Perkins ?" asked Dr. Mortimer of our driver.

"There's a convict escaped from Princetown, sir. He's been out three days now, and the warders

"There's a convict escaped from Princetown, sir."

watch every road, but they've had no sight of him yet. The farmers about here don't like it, sir, and that's a fact. You see, it isn't like any ordinary convict. This is a man that would stick at nothing."

"Who is he, then ?"

"Selden, the Notting Hill murderer."

I remembered the case well, for it was one in which Holmes had taken an interest on account of the peculiar ferocity of the crime. The commutation of his death sentence had been due to some doubts as to his complete sanity. Our wagonette had topped a rise and in front of us rose the huge expanse of the moor, mottled with gnarled, craggy cairns and tors. A cold wind swept down from it and set us shivering. Somewhere on that desolate plain was lurking this fiendish man, hiding in a burrow like a wild beast, his heart full of malice against the race which had cast him out. It completed the grim effect of the barren waste, the chilling wind, and the darkling sky. Even Baskerville fell silent and pulled his overcoat more closely around him.

The road grew bleaker and wilder as now and then we passed a cottage, walled and roofed with stone, with no creeper to break its harsh outline. Suddenly we looked down into a cuplike depression, patched with stunted oaks and firs, twisted and bent by the fury of years. Two high, narrow towers rose over the trees. The driver pointed with his whip and said, "Baskerville Hall."

Its master had risen and was staring with flushed cheeks and shining eyes. A few minutes later..

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we had reached the lodge-gates, a maze of fantastic tracery in wrought iron, with weather-bitten pillars on either side, blotched with lichens, and surmounted by the boars' heads of the Baskervilles. The lodge was a ruin of black granite and bared ribs of rafters, but facing it was a new building, half constructed, the first fruit of Sir Charles's occupancy.

Through the gateway we passed into the avenue where the wheels were again hushed amid the leaves, and the old trees shot their branches in a sombre tunnel over our heads. Sir Henry shuddered as he looked up the long, dark drive to where the house glimmered like a ghost at the farther end. "It's no wonder my uncle felt as if trouble were coming on him in such a place as this," said he. "It's enough to scare any man. I'll have a row of electric lamps up here inside of six months."

The avenue opened into a broad expanse of turf, and the house lay before us. In the fading light I could see that the centre was a heavy block of building from which a porch projected. The whole front was draped in ivy, with a patch clipped bare here and there where a window or a coat of arms broke through the dark veil. From this central block rose the twin towers, ancient, crenellated, and pierced with many loopholes. To right and left of the turrets were more modern wings of black granite. A dull light shone through heavy mullioned windows, and from the high chimneys which rose from the steep, high-angled roof there sprang a single black column of smoke.

"Welcome, Sir Henry! Welcome to Baskerville Hall!"

A tall man had stepped from the shadow of the porch to open the door of the wagonette. The figure of a woman was silhouetted against the yellow light of the hall. She came out and helped the man to hand down our bags.

"You don't mind my driving straight home, Sir Henry?" said Dr. Mortimer. "My wife is expecting me."

"Surely you will stay and have some dinner?"

"No, I must go. I shall probably find some work awaiting me. I would stay to show you over the house, but Barrymore will be a better guide. Good-bye, and never hesitate night or day to send for me if I can be of service."

The wheels died away down the drive while Sir Henry and I turned into the hall, and the door clanged heavily behind us. In the great old-fashioned fireplace behind the high iron dogs a log-fire crackled and snapped. Sir Henry and I held out our hands to it, for we were numb from our long drive. Then we gazed round us at the high thin window of old stained glass, the oak panelling, the stags' heads, the coats of arms upon the walls, all dim and sombre in the subdued light of the central lamp.

"It's just as I imagined it," said Sir Henry. "Is it not the very picture of an old family home? To think that this should be the same hall in which for five hundred years my people have lived."

I saw his dark face lit up with a boyish enthusiasm as he gazed about him. The light beat upon him where he stood, but long shadows trailed down the walls and hung like a black canopy above him. Barrymore had returned from taking our luggage to our rooms. He stood in front of us now with the subdued manner of a well trained servant. He had a square black beard and pale, distinguished features.

"Dinner will be ready in a few minutes, sirs," he announced. "You will find hot water in your rooms. My wife and I will be happy, Sir Henry, to stay with you until you have made your fresh arrangements, but you will understand that under the new conditions this house will require a considerable staff."

"What new conditions?"

"I only meant, sir, that Sir Charles led a very retired life, and we were able to look after his wants. You would, naturally, wish to have more company, and so you will need changes in your household."

"Do you mean that your wife and you wish to leave?"

"Only when it is quite convenient to you, sir."

"But your family have been with us for several generations. I should be sorry to begin my life here by breaking an old family connection."

I seemed to discern some signs of emotion upon the butler's white face. "I feel that also, sir, and so does my wife. But to tell the truth, sir, we were both very much attached to Sir Charles and his death gave us a shock and made these surroundings very painful to us. I fear that we shall never again be easy in our minds at Baskerville Hall."

"But what do you intend to do?"

"I have no doubt, sir, that we shall succeed in establishing ourselves in some business. Sir Charles's generosity has given us the means to do so. And now, sir, perhaps I had best show you to your rooms."

A square balustraded gallery ran round the top of the old hall, approached by a double stair. From this central point two long corridors extended the whole length of the building, from which all the bedrooms opened. My own was in the same wing as Baskerville's and almost ext door to it. These rooms appeared to be much more modern than the central part of the house, and the bright paper and numerous candles did something to remove the sombre impression which our arrival had left upon my mind.

But the dining-room which opened out of the hall was a place of shadow and gloom. It was a long chamber with a step separating the dais where the family sat from the lower portion reserved for their dependants. At one end a minstrel's gallery overlooked it. Black beams shot across above our heads, with a smoke-darkened ceiling beyond them. A dim line of ancestors, from the Elizabethan knight to the buck of the Regency, stared down upon us and daunted us by their silent company. We talked little, and I for one was glad when the meal was over and we were able to retire into the modern billiard-room.

"My word, it isn't a very cheerful place!" said Sir Henry. "I don't wonder that my uncle got a little jumpy if he lived all alone in such a house as this. However, if it suits you, we will retire early, and perhaps things may seem more cheerful in the morning."

I drew aside my curtains before I went to bed and looked out from my window. It opened upon the grassy space which lay in front of the hall door. Beyond, two copses of trees moaned and swung in a rising wind. A half moon broke through the rifts of racing clouds and I saw, beyond a broken fringe of rocks, the long, low curve of the melancholy moor. I closed the curtain, feeling that my last impression was in keeping with the rest.

And yet it was not quite the last. I found myself weary and yet wakeful, tossing restlessly from side to side, seeking sleep which would not come. Far away a chiming clock struck out the quarters of the hours, but otherwise a deathly

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silence lay upon the old house. Then suddenly, in the very dead of the night, there came a sound to my ears, clear, resonant, and unmistakable. It was the sob of a woman, the muffled, strangling gasp of one who is torn by an uncontrollable sorrow. I sat up in bed and listened intently. The noise could not have been far away and was certainly in the house. For half an hour I waited with every nerve on the alert, but there came no other sound save the chiming clock and the rustle of the ivy on the wall.

The fresh beauty of the following morning did something to efface from our minds the grim impression which had been left upon both of us by our first experience of Baskerville Hall. As Sir Henry and I sat at breakfast the sunlight flooded in through the high mullioned windows, throwing watery patches of colour from the coats of arms which covered them.

"I guess it is ourselves and not the house that we have to blame!" said the baronet. "We were tired with our journey and chilled by our drive, so we took a gray view of the place."

"And yet it was not entirely a question of imagination," I declared. "Did you happen to hear someone, a woman I think, sobbing in the night?"

"That is curious, for when I was half asleep I did fancy that I heard something of the sort. I waited quite a time, but there was no more of it, so I concluded that it was all a dream."

"I heard it distinctly, and I am sure that it was really the sob of a woman."

He rang for Barrymore promptly and asked him whether he could account for our experience. It seemed to me that the pallid features of the butler turned a shade paler still as he listened to his master's question.

"There are only two women in the house, Sir Henry," he answered. "One is the scullery-maid, who sleeps in the other wing. The other is my wife, and I can answer for it that the sound could not have come from her."

And yet he lied as he said it, for it chanced that after breakfast I met Mrs. Barrymore in the long corridor with the sun full upon her face. She was a large, impassive, heavy-featured woman with a stern set expression of mouth. But her telltale eyes were red and glanced at me from between swollen lids. It was she, then, who wept in the night, and if she did so her husband must know it. Yet he had taken the obvious risk of discovery in declaring that it was not so. Why had he done this? And why did she weep so bitterly?

Already round this pale-faced, handsome, black-bearded man there was gathering an atmosphere of mystery and of gloom. It was he who had been the first to discover the body of Sir Charles, and we had only his word for all the circumstances which led up to the old man's death. Was it possible that it was Barrymore, after all, whom we had seen in the cab in Regent Street? The beard might well have been the same.

How could I settle the point? Obviously the first thing to do was to see the Grimpen postmaster and find whether the test telegram had really been placed in Barrymore's own hands. Be the answer what it might, I should at least have something to report to Holmes.

Sir Henry had numerous papers to examine after breakfast, so that the time was propitious for my excursion. It was a pleasant walk of four miles along the edge of the moor, leading me at last to a small gray hamlet in which two larger buildings, which proved to be the inn and the house of Dr. Mortimer, stood high above the rest. The postmaster, who was also the village grocer, had a clear recollection of the telegram.

"Certainly, sir," said he, "I had the telegram delivered to Mr. Barrymore exactly as directed."

"Who delivered it?"

"My boy here. James, you delivered that telegram to Mr. Barrymore at the Hall last week, did you not?"

"Yes, father, I delivered it."

"Into his own hands?" I asked.

"Well, he was up in the loft at the time, so that I could not put it into his own hands, but I gave it to Mrs. Barrymore and she promised to deliver it at once."

It seemed hopeless to pursue the inquiry any farther then. It was clear that, in spite of Holmes's ruse, we had no proof that Barrymore had not been in London all the time. But what interest could he have in persecuting the Baskerville family? I thought of the strange warning clipped out of the leading article of the *Times*. Was that his work or was it possibly the doing of someone who was bent upon counteracting his schemes?

I prayed, as I walked back along the gray, lonely road, that Holmes might soon come here to take this heavy burden of responsibility from my shoulders.

Suddenly my thoughts were interrupted by the sound of running feet behind me and by a voice which called me by name. I turned, expecting to see Dr. Mortimer, but to my surprise it was a stranger. He was a small, slim, clean-shaven, prim-faced man; flaxen-haired and lean jawed, between thirty and forty years of age, dressed in a gray suit and wearing a straw hat. A tin box for botanical specimens hung over his shoulder and he carried a green butterfly net in one of his hands.

CHAPTER—VI

OU will, I am sure, excuse my presumption, Dr. Watson, said he as he came panting up to where I stood. "Here on the moor we are homely folk and do not wait for formal introductions. I am Stapleton, of Merripit House."

"Your net and box would have told me as much," said I, "for I knew that Mr. Stapleton was naturalist. But how did you know me?"

"I have been calling on Mortimer, and he pointed you out to me from the window of his surgery. As our road lay the same way I thought that I would overtake you and introduce myself. I trust that Sir Henry is none the worse for his journey?"

"He is very well, thank you."

"We were all rather afraid that after the sad death of Sir Charles the new baronet might refuse to live here. It is asking much of a wealthy man to come down and bury himself in a place of this kind. Sir Henry has, I suppose, no superstitious fears in the matter?"

"I do not think that [illegible]

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"Of course you know the legend of the fiend dog which haunts the family ?"

"I have heard it."

"It is extraordinary how credulous the peasants are about here ! Any number of them are ready to swear that they have seen such a creature upon the moor." He spoke with a smile, but I seemed to read in his eyes that he took the matter more seriously. "The story took a great hold upon the imagination of Sir Charles, and his nerves were so worked up that the appearance of any dog might have had a fatal effect upon his diseased heart. Have you any better explanation ? Or has Mr. Sherlock Holmes ?"

That name took away my breath for an instant, but a glance at Stapleton's placid face showed that no surprise was intended. "It's useless for us to pretend that we do not know you, Dr. Watson," said he. "If you are here, then it follows that Mr. Sherlock Holmes is interesting himself in the matter, and I am naturally curious to know what view he may take."

"I am afraid that I cannot answer that question."

"May I ask if he is going to honour us with a visit himself ?"

"He cannot leave town at present. He has other cases."

"What a pity ! He might throw some light on that which is so dark to us. But as to your own researches, if there is any possible way in which I can be of service I trust that you will command me. If I had any indication of the nature of your suspicions or how you propose to investigate the case, I might perhaps even now give you some aid or advice."

"I assure you that I am simply here upon a visit to my friend, Sir Henry, and that I need no help of any kind."

We had come to a point where a narrow grassy path struck off from the road and wound across the moor. From over a distant rise there floated a gray plume of smoke.

"A moderate walk along this moor-path brings us to Merripit House," said he. "Perhaps you will spare an hour that I may have the pleasure of introducing you to my sister."

My first thought was that I should be by Sir Henry's side. But then I remembered the pile of papers and bills with which his study table was littered. And Holmes had expressly said that I should study the neighbours upon the moor. I accepted Stapleton's invitation, and we turned together down the path.

"It's a wonderful place, the moor," said he. "I have only been here two years. The residents would call me a newcomer. But my tastes led me to explore every part of the country round, and I should think that there are few men who know it better than I do."

"Is it hard to know ?"

"Very hard. You see, for example, this great plain to the north here, with the queer hills breaking out of it. Do you observe anything remarkable about that ?"

"It would be a rare place for a gallop."

"You would naturally think so and such a thought has cost several their lives before now. You notice those bright green spots scattered thickly over it ?"

"Yes, they seem more fertile than the rest." Stapleton laughed.

"That is the great Grimpen Mire," said he. "A false step yonder means death to man or beast. Only yesterday I saw one of the moor ponies wander into it. He never came out. I saw his head for quite a long time craning out of the boghole, but it sucked him down at last. Even in dry seasons it is a danger to cross it, but after these autumn rains it is awful. And yet I can find my way to the very heart of it and return alive. By George, there is another of those miserable ponies !"

Something brown was rolling and tossing among the green sedges. Then a long, agonized, writhing neck shot upward and a dreadful cry echoed over the moor. It turned me cold with horror, but my companion's nerves seemed to be stronger than mine.

"It's gone !" said he. "The mire has him. Two in two days, and many more perhaps, for they get in the way of going there in the dry weather and never know the difference until the mire has them in its clutches. It's a bad place, the great Grimpen Mire."

"And you say you can penetrate it ?"

"Yes, there are one or two paths which a very active man can take. I have found them out."

"But why should you wish to go into so horrible a place ?"

"Well, you see the hills beyond ?" They are really islands cut off on all sides by the impassable mire, which has crawled round them in the course of years. That is where the rare plants and the butterflies are."

"I shall try my luck some day."

He looked at me with a surprised face. "For God's sake put such an idea out of your mind," said he. "Your blood would be upon my head."

"Halloa !" I cried. "What is that ?"

A long, low moan, indescribably sad, swept over the moor. It filled the whole air, and yet it was impossible to say whence it came. From a dull murmur it swelled into a deep roar, and then sank back into a melancholy, throbbing murmur.

Stapleton looked at me with a curious expression in his face. "The peasants say it is the Hound of the Baskervilles calling for its prey. I've heard it once or twice before, but never quite so loud."

I looked round, with a chill in my heart. Nothing stirred over the vast expanse save a pair of ravens, which croaked loudly from a tor behind us.

"You are an educated man. You don't believe such nonsense as that ?" said I. "What do you think is the cause of so strange a sound ?"

"Bogs make queer noises sometimes. It's the mud settling, or the water rising, or something."

"No, no, that was a living voice."

"Well, perhaps it was. Did you ever hear a bittern booming ? It's a very rare bird—practically extinct—in England now, but all things are possible upon the moor. Yes, I should not be surprised to learn that what we have heard is the cry of the last of the bitterns."

"It's the weirdest, strangest thing that I've ever heard."

"Yes, it's an uncanny place altogether. Look

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at the hillside yonder. What do you make of those ?"

The whole steep slope was covered with gray circular rings of stone, a score of them at least. "What are they ? Sheep-pens ?"

"No, they are the homes of our ancestors. Prehistoric man lived thickly on the moor and, as no one in particular has lived there since, we find all his little arrangements exactly as he left them. Neolithic man grazed his cattle on these slopes, and he learned to dig for tin when the bronze sword began to supersede the stone axe. Look at the great trench in the opposite hill. That is his mark. Oh, excuse me an instant ! It is surely Cyclopides."

A moth had fluttered across our path, and Stapleton was rushing in pursuit of it. The creature flew straight for the great mire, and my acquaintance never paused for an instant, bounding from tuft to tuft behind it, his green net waving in the air.

I was standing watching his pursuit with a mixture of admiration and fear lest he lose his footing in the quagmire when I heard the sound of steps and, turning, found a woman near me upon the path. She had come from the direction of Merripit House.

I could not doubt that this was the Miss Stapleton of whom I had been told, since I had heard someone describe her as being a beauty. She had a proud, finely cut face, so regular that it might have seemed impassive were it not for the sensitive mouth and the beautiful dark, eager eyes. With her perfect figure and elegant dress she was, indeed, a strange apparition upon a lonely moorland path. Her eyes were on her brother as I turned, and then she quickened her pace towards me.

"Go back !" she said. "Go straight back to London, instantly !"

I could only stare at her in stupid surprise. Her eyes blazed at me.

"Go back !" she said. "Go straight back to London"

"Why should I go back ?" I asked. I've only just come here."

"Man, man !" she cried. "Can you not tell when a warning is for your own good ? Go back to London tonight ! Hush, my brother is coming ! Not a word of what I have said. Would you mind getting that orchid for me among the mare's-tails yonder ?"

Stapleton had abandoned the chase and come back to us breathing hard. "Hallca, Beryl !" said he, and it seemed to me that the tone of his greeting was not altogether a cordial one.

"Well, Jack, you are very hot."

"Yes, I was chasing a Cyclopides. What a pity that I should have missed it !" He spoke unconcernedly, but his small light eyes glanced incessantly from the girl to me.

"You have introduced yourselves, I can see."

"Yes. I was telling Sir Henry that it was rather late for him to see the true beauties of the moor."

"Why, who do you think this is ?"

"I imagine that it must be Sir Henry Baskerville."

"No, no," said I. "Only a humble commoner, but his friend. My name is Dr. Watson."

A flush of vexation passed over her expressive face. "We have been talking at cross-purposes," said she.

"Why, you had not very much time for talk," her brother remarked with the same questioning eyes.

"I talked as if Dr. Watson were a resident instead of being merely a visitor," said she. "It cannot much matter to him whether it is early or late for the orchids. But you will come on, will you not, and see Merripit House ?"

A short walk brought us to it, a bleak moorland house, once the farm of some grazier in the old prosperous days, but now put into repair and turned into a modern dwelling. An orchard surrounded it, but the trees, as is usual upon the moor, were stunted and nipped, and the effect of the whole was mean and melancholy. We were admitted by a strange wizened, rusty-coated old manservant, who seemed in keeping with the house. Inside, however, there were large rooms furnished with an elegance in which I seemed to recognize the taste of the lady. As I looked from their windows at the interminable granite-flecked moor rolling unbroken to the farthest horizon I could not but marvel at what could have brought this educated man and beautiful woman to live in such a place.

"Queer spot to choose, is it not ?" said he as if in answer to my thought. "And yet we manage to make ourselves fairly happy, do we not Beryl ?"

"Quite happy," said she, but there was no ring of conviction in her words.

"I had a school," said Stapleton. "It was in the north country. The work to a man of my temperament was mechanical and uninteresting, but the privilege of living with youth, of helping to mould those young minds, and of impressing them with one's own character and ideals was very dear to me. However, the fates were against us. A serious epidemic broke out and three of the boys died. The school never recovered from the blow, and much of my capital was swallowed up. And yet, if it were not for the loss of the charming companionship of the boys, I could rejoice over my own misfortune for, with my strong

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find an unlimited field of work here, and my sister is as devoted to Nature as I am. All this, Dr. Watson, has been brought upon your head by your expression as you surveyed the moor out of our window."

"It certainly did cross my mind that it might be a little dull—less for you, perhaps, than for your sister."

"No, no, I am never dull," said she quickly.

"We have books, we have our studies, and we have interesting neighbours. Dr. Mortimer is a most learned man in his own line. Poor Sir Charles was also an admirable companion. We knew him well and miss him more than I can tell. Do you think that I should intrude if I were to call this afternoon and make the acquaintance of Sir Henry ?"

"I am sure that he would be delighted."

"Then perhaps you would mention that I propose to do so. We may in our humble way do something to make things more easy for him until he becomes accustomed to his new surroundings. Will you come upstairs, Dr. Watson, and inspect my collection of *Lepidoptera* before lunch with us ?"

But I was eager to get back to my charge. I resisted all pressure to stay for lunch, and set off upon my return journey.

Before I had reached the main road I was astonished to see Miss Stapleton sitting upon a rock by the side of the track.

"I have run all the way in order to cut you off, Dr. Watson," said she breathlessly. "I must not stop, or my brother may miss me. I wanted to say to you how sorry I am about the stupid mistake I made in thinking that you were Sir Henry. Please forget the words I said, which have no application whatever to you."

"But I can't forget them, Miss Stapleton," said I. "I am Sir Henry's friend, and his welfare is a very close concern of mine. Tell me why it was that you were so eager that he should return to London."

"A woman's whim, Dr. Watson. When you know me better you will understand that I cannot always give reasons for what I say or do."

"No, no. I remember the thrill in your voice. I remember the look in your eyes. Please, please, be frank with me, Miss Stapleton. Tell me then what it was you meant, and I will promise to convey your warning to Sir Henry."

An expression of irresolution passed for an instant over her face, but her eyes hardened again when she answered. "You make too much of it, Dr. Watson. My brother and I were very much shocked by the death of Sir Charles. We knew him very intimately, for his favourite walk was over the moor to our house. I was distressed therefore when another member came to live here, and I felt that he should be warned of the danger which he will run. That was all which I intended to convey."

"I would ask you one more question, Miss Stapleton. If you meant no more than this when you first spoke to me, why should you not wish your brother to overhear what you said ? There is nothing to which he, or anyone else, could object."

"My brother is very anxious to have the Hall inhabited, for he thinks that it is for the good of the poor folk upon the moor. He would be very angry if he knew that I had said anything which might induce Sir Henry to go away. But I have done my duty now and I will say no more. I must get back, or he will miss me and suspect that I have seen you. Good-bye !" She turned and had disappeared in a few minutes among the scattered boulders, while I, with my soul full of vague fears, pursued my way to Baskerville Hall.

CHAPTER—VII

FROM this point onward I will follow the course of events by transcribing my own letters to Sherlock Holmes which lie before me on the table.

BASKERVILLE HALL,
OCTOBER 13th.

My Dear Holmes :

My previous letters and telegrams have kept you pretty well up-to-date as to all that has occurred in this most Godforsaken corner of the world. The longer one stays here the more does the spirit of the moor sink into one's soul, its vastness, and also its grim charm. When you are once out upon its bosom you have left all traces of modern England behind you, but, on the other hand, you are conscious everywhere of the homes and the work of the pre-historic people. On all sides of you as you walk are the houses of these forgotten folk, with their graves and the huge monoliths which are supposed to have marked their temples. If you were to see a skin-clad, hairy man crawl out from the low door, fitting a flint-tipped arrow on to the string of his bow, you would feel that his presence there was more natural than your own.

If you have not had any report within the last few days it is because until today there was nothing circumstance occurred; but, first, I must keep you in touch with other factors in the situation.

One is the escaped convict upon the moor. There is strong reason now to believe that he has got away, which is a considerable relief to the lonely householders of this district. A fortnight has passed since his flight, during which he has not been seen and nothing has been heard of him.

We are four able-bodied men in this household, so that we could take good care of ourselves, but I confess that I have uneasy moments when I think of the Stapletons. They live miles from any help. There are one maid, an old manservant, the sister, and the brother, the latter not a very strong man. Both Sir Henry and I were concerned at their situation, and it was suggested that Perkins the groom should go over to sleep there, but Stapleton would not hear of it.

Our friend, the baronet, begins to display a considerable interest in our fair neighbour. It is not to be wondered at, for she is very fascinating. There is something tropical and exotic about her which forms a singular contrast to her unemotional brother. Yet he also gives the idea of hidden fires. He has certainly a very marked influence over her, for I have seen her continually glance at him as she talked as if seeking approbation for what she said.

Stapleton came to call upon Baskerville on that first day, and the very next morning he took us both

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Hugo is supposed to have had its origin. It was an excursion of some miles across the moor to a place which is so dismal that it might have suggested the hound story. Sir Henry was much interested and asked Stapleton more than once whether he did really believe in the supernatural. Stapleton was guarded in his replies. He told us of similar cases where families had suffered from some evil influence.

On our way back we stayed for lunch at Merripit House, and it was there that Sir Henry made the acquaintance of Miss Stapleton. From the first moment that he saw her he appeared to be strongly attracted by her, and I am much mistaken if the feeling was not mutual. He referred to her again and again on our walk home. They dine here tonight. One would imagine that such a match would be very welcome to Stapleton, and yet I have more than once caught a look of the strongest disapprobation in his face when the baronet has been paying some attention to his sister.

By the way, your instructions never to allow Sir Henry to go out alone will become much more onerous if a love affair be added to our difficulties.

The other day Dr. Mortimer lunched with us. He has been excavating a barrow at Long Down and has got a prehistoric skull which fills him with great joy. The Stapletons came in afterwards, and the doctor took us to the yew alley at Sir Henry's request to show us exactly how everything occurred upon that fatal night.

One other neighbour I have met since I wrote last. This is Mr. Frankland, of Lafter Hall, who lives some four miles to the south of us. He is elderly, red-faced, white haired, and choleric. His passion is for the British law, and he has spent a large fortune in litigation. He fights for the mere pleasure of fighting and is equally ready to take up either side of a question. He is said to have about seven lawsuits upon his hands at present. Apart from that he seems a kindly, good-natured person. Being an amateur astronomer, he has an excellent telescope with which he lies upon the roof of his house and sweeps the moor all day in the hope of catching a glimpse of the escaped convict. There are rumours that he intends to prosecute Dr. Mortimer for opening a grave without the consent of the next of kin because he dug up the neolithic skull.

And now, having brought you up-to-date on the escaped convict, the Stapletons, Dr. Mortimer, and Frankland of Lafter Hall, let me end on that which is most important and tell you more about the Barrymores, and especially about the surprising development of last night.

First of all about the test telegram which you sent from London in order to make sure that Barrymore was really here. I have already explained that the testimony of the postmaster shows that the test was worthless. I told Sir Henry how the matter stood, and he at once had the butler up and asked him whether he received the telegram himself. Barrymore said that he had.

"Did the boy deliver it into your own hands ?" asked the baronet.

Barrymore looked surprised, and considered for a little time. "No," said he, "I was in the box-room at the time, and my wife brought it up to me."

"Did you answer it yourself ?"

"No; I told my wife what to answer and she went to write it."

In the evening he recurred to the subject of his own accord. "I could not quite understand the object of your questions this morning, Sir Henry," said he. "I trust that they do not mean that I have done anything to forfeit your confidence ?"

Sir Henry assured him that it was not so and gave him a considerable part of his old wardrobe, the London outfit having now all arrived.

Mrs. Barrymore is of interest to me. She is a heavy, solid person, intensely respectable, and inclined to be puritanical. You could hardly conceive a less emotional subject. Some deep sorrow gnaws ever at her heart. Sometimes I wonder if she has a guilty memory which haunts her, and sometimes I suspect Barrymore of being a domestic tyrant.

Last night's incident brings all my suspicions to a head. You are aware that I am not a very sound sleeper and, since I have been in this house, my slumbers have been lighter than ever. About two in the morning, I was aroused by a stealthy step passing my room. I rose, opened my door, and peeped out. A long black shadow was trailing down the corridor. It was thrown by a man who walked softly down the passage with a candle held in his hand. I could merely see the outline, but his height told me that it was Barrymore.

I waited until he had passed out of sight and then I followed him. When I came round the balcony he had reached the end of the farther corridor, and I could see from the glimmer of light through an open door that he had entered one of the rooms. All these rooms are unfurnished and unoccupied, so that his expedition became more mysterious than ever. The light shone steadily as if he were standing motionless. I crept down the passage as noiselessly as I could and peeped round the corner of the door.

Barrymore was crouching at the window with the candle held against the glass. His profile was half turned towards me, and his face seemed to be rigid with expectation as he stared out in the blackness of the moor. For some minutes he stood watching intently. Then he gave a groan and put out the light. Instantly I made my way back to my room, and very shortly came the stealthy steps passing once more upon their return journey.

Long afterwards when I had fallen into a light sleep I heard a key turn somewhere in a lock, but I could not tell whence the sound came. What it all means I cannot guess, but there is some secret business going on in this house of gloom which sooner or later we shall get to the bottom of.

* * *

SECOND REPORT OF DR. WATSON
BASKERVILLE HALL,
OCTOBER 15th.

My Dear Holmes :

If I was compelled to leave you without much news during the early days of my mission you must acknowledge that I am making up for lost time.

Before breakfast I went down the corridor and examined the room in which Barrymore had been on the night before. The western window through which he had stared so intently has one peculiarity above all other windows in the house—it commands the nearest outlook on to the moor. There is an opening between two trees which enables one to look right down upon it. It follows that Barrymore, since only this window would serve the purpose, must have been looking out for something or somebody upon the moor. The night was very dark, so that I can

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hardly imagine how he could have hoped to see anyone. It had struck me that it was possible that some love intrigue was on foot. That would have accounted for his stealthy movements and also for the uneasiness of his wife. The man is a striking-looking fellow, well equipped to steal the heart of a country girl, so that this theory seemed to have something to support it. That opening of the door which I had heard after I returned to my room might mean that he had gone out to keep some clandestine appointment.

I had an interview with the baronet in his study after breakfast, and I told him all that I had seen. He was less surprised than I had expected.

"I knew that Barrymore walked about nights, and I had a mind to speak to him about it," said he. "Two or three times I have heard his steps in the passage, just about the hour you name."

"Perhaps then he pays a visit every night to that particular window," I suggested.

"Perhaps he does. If so, we should be able to shadow him and see what it is that he is after."

"Then we shall do it together tonight."

And now for a most significant detail: the baronet has been in communication with the architect who prepared the plans for Sir Charles, so that we may expect great changes to begin here soon. It is evident that our friend means to spare no pains or expense to restore the grandeur of his family home. When it is renovated and refurnished, all that he will need will be a wife to make it complete. And there are pretty clear signs that this will not be wanting if the lady is willing, for I have seldom seen a man more infatuated with a woman than he is with Miss Stapleton. Yet the course of true love does not run as smoothly as one would expect under the circumstances. Today, for example, its surface was broken by a very unexpected ripple.

After our conversation, Sir Henry put on his hat and prepared to go out. I did the same.

"What, are *you* coming, Watson?" he asked, looking at me in a curious way.

"That depends on whether you are going on the moor," said I.

"Yes, I am."

"Well, you know what my instructions are."

Sir Henry put his hand upon my shoulder with a pleasant smile. "My dear fellow," said he, "Holmes, with all his wisdom, did not foresee some things which have happened since I have been on the moor. You understand? I am sure that you are the last man in the world who would wish to be a spoil-sport. I must go alone."

It put me in a most awkward position. I was at a loss what to do and, before I had made up my mind, he picked up his cane and was gone. Soon after, I set off in the direction of Merripit House. I hurried along the road without seeing anything of Sir Henry, until I came to the point where the moor path branches off. There I mounted a hill from which I could command a view. Thence I saw him at once. He was on the moor path, about a quarter of a mile off, and a lady was by his side who could only be Miss Stapleton. They were deeply absorbed in conversation, when I was suddenly aware that I was not the only witness of their interview.

A wisp of green floating in the air caught my eye, and another glance showed me that it was carried on a stick. It was Stapleton with his butterfly-net. He was much closer to the pair than I was, and he appeared to be moving in their direction. At this instant Sir Henry drew Miss Stapleton to his side. His arm was round her, but it seemed to me that she was straining away from him. Next moment I saw them spring apart. Stapleton was running wildly towards them, his net dangling behind him. He gesticulated with excitement in front of the lovers.

What the scene meant I could not imagine, but it seemed to me that Stapleton was abusing Sir Henry who offered explanations. The lady stood by in silence. Finally Stapleton turned upon his heel and beckoned in a peremptory way to his sister. The baronet stood for a minute looking after them, and then he walked slowly back the way that he had come, the very picture of dejection.

I was deeply ashamed to have witnessed so intimate a scene without my friend's knowledge. I ran down the hill therefore and met him at the bottom. His face was flushed.

"Halloa, Watson! Where have you dropped from?"

I explained everything to him: how I had found it impossible to remain behind, how I had followed him, and how I had witnessed what had occurred. For an instant his eyes blazed, but my frankness disarmed his anger, and he broke at last into a rather rueful laugh.

"By thunder, the whole countryside seems to have been out to see me do my wooing—and a mighty poor wooing at that! Where had you engaged a seat?"

"I was on the hill."

"Quite in the back row, eh? But her brother was well up to the front. Did you see him come out at us."

"Yes, I did."

"Did he ever strike you as being crazy?"

"I can't say that he ever did."

"I dare say not. I always thought him sane enough until today, but you can take it from me that either he or I ought to be in a strait-jacket. He came running at us with a face like a mad man. He was white with rage, his eyes blazing with fury. What was I doing with the lady? How dared I offer her attentions which were distasteful to her? Did I think that because I was a baronet I could do what I liked? If he had not been her brother I should have known better how to answer him. As it was I told him that my feelings towards his sister were such as I was not ashmed of, and that I hoped that she might honour me by becoming my wife. That seemed to make the matter no better, so then I lost my temper, too; and answered him rather more hotly than I should perhaps, considering that she was standing by. So it ended by his going off with her, as you saw. Just tell me what it all means, Watson, and I'll owe you more than ever I can hope to pay."

I tried one or two explanations, but, indeed, I was completely puzzled myself.

However, our conjectures were set at rest by Stapleton himself that very afternoon. He came to offer apologies for his rudeness and, after a long private interview with Sir Henry, the upshot of their conversation was that the breach is quite healed. We are to dine at Merripit House next Friday as a sign of it.

"I don't say now that he isn't a crazy man," said Sir Henry, "but I must allow that no man could make a more handsome apology than he has done."

"Did he give any explanation of his conduct?"

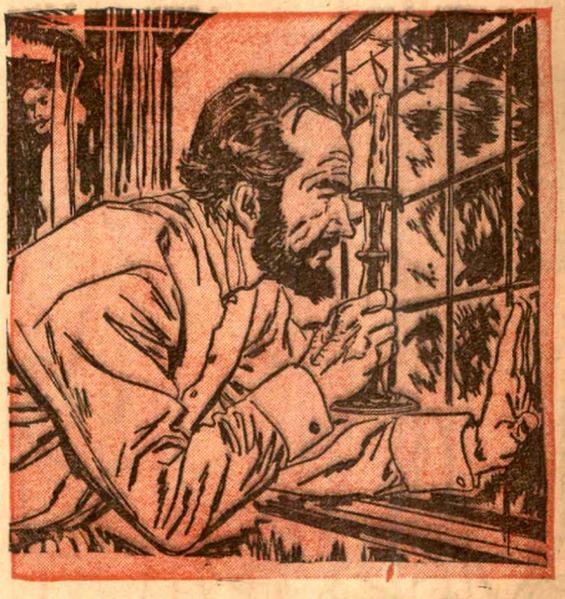
"His sister is everything in his life, he says.

That is natural enough, and I am glad that he should understand her value. They have always been together and the thought of losing her was really terrible to him. If she had to leave him he had rather it was to a neighbour like myself than to anyone else. But in any case it was blow to him, and it would take him some time before he could prepare himself to meet it. He would withdraw all opposition if I would promise to let the matter rest for three months and to be content with cultivating the lady's friendship during that time without claiming her love. This I promised, and so the matter rests."

So there is one of our small mysteries cleared up. It is something to have touched bottom anywhere in this bog in which we are floundering. And now I pass on to another thread which I have extricated out of the tangled skein, the mystery of the sobs in the night, of the tear-stained face of Mrs. Barrymore, of the secret journey of the butler to the western lattice window. All these things have been thoroughly cleared by one night's work.

I have said "by one night's work," but, in truth, it was by two nights' work, for on the first we drew a blank. The next night Sir Henry and I lowered the lamp and sat smoking cigarettes without making the least sound. One struck, and two, and we had almost for the second time given it up in despair when in an instant we both sat bolt upright in our chairs. We had heard the creak of a step in the passage.

Very stealthily we heard it pass until it died away in the distance. Then the baronet gently opened the door and we set out in pursuit. Already our man had gone round the gallery, and the corridor was all in darkness. Softly we stole along until we had come into the other wing. We were just in time to catch a glimpse of the tall, black-bearded figure, his shoulders rounded, as he tiptoed down the passage. Then he passed through the same door as before, and the light of the candle framed it in the darkness and shot one single yellow beam across the gloom of the corridor. We shuffled cautiously towards it, trying every plank before we dared to put our whole weight upon it. We had left boots behind, but even so, the old boards creaked beneath our tread. It seemed impossible that he should fail to hear our approach. However, the man is rather deaf. When at last we reached the door and peeped through we found him crouching at the window, candle in hand, his white, intent face pressed against the pane, exactly as I had seen him two nights before.



We found him crouching at the window, candle in hand, his white face pressed against the pane.

CHAPTER—VIII

SIR Henry walked into the room and Barrymore sprang up from the window and stood, livid and trembling, before us. His dark eyes were full of astonishment as he gazed from the baronet to me.

"What are you doing here, Barrymore ?"

"Nothing, sir." His agitation was so great that he could hardly speak. "It was the window, sir. I go round at night to see that they are fastened."

"On the second floor ?"

"Yes, sir, all the windows."

"Look here, Barrymore," said Sir Henry sternly, "we have made up our minds to have the truth out of you. Come, now ! No lies ! What were you doing at that window ?"

The butler wrung his hands together like one who is in the last extremity of doubt and misery. "Don't ask me, Sir Henry—don't ask me ! I give you my word, sir, that it is not my secret, and that I cannot tell it."

I took the candle from the trembling hand of the butler and observed, "He must have been holding it as a signal. Let us see if there is any answer." I held it as he had done, and stared out into the darkness. Then I gave a cry of exultation, for a tiny pin-point of yellow light suddenly transfixed the dark veil.

"There it is !" I cried.

"No, no, sir, it is nothing—nothing at all !" the butler broke in; "I assure you, sir———"

"Move your light across the window, Watson !" cried the baronet. "See, the other moves also ! Now, you rascal, do you deny that it is a signal ? Come, speak up ! Who is your confederate ?"

Barrymore's face became defiant. "It is my business, and not yours. I will not tell."

"Then you leave my employment right away."

"Very good, sir. If I must I must."

"And you go in disgrace. By thunder, you may well be ashamed of yourself ! Your family has lived with mine for over a hundred years under this roof, and here I find you deep in some dark plot against me."

"No, no, sir; no, not against you !" It was a woman's voice and Mrs. Barrymore, more horror-

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struck than her husband, was standing at the door.

"We have to go, Eliza. This is the end of it. You can pack our things," said the butler.

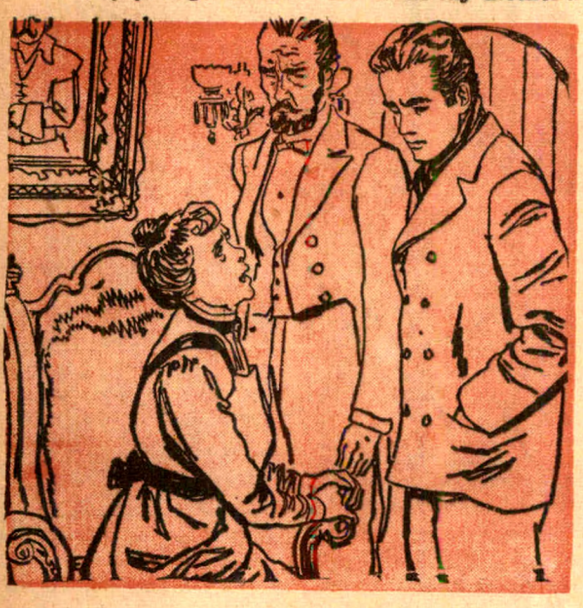
"Oh, John, John, have I brought you to this ? It is my doing, Sir Henry—all mine."

"Speak out, then ! What does it mean ?"

"My brother is starving on the moor. We can't let him perish at our very gates. The light is a signal to him that food is ready———"

"Then your brother is———"

"The escaped convict, sir. My name was Selden, and he is my younger brother. He broke my mother's



"The escaped convict, sir—Selden, the criminal."

heart and dragged our name in the dirt. But to me, sir, he was always the little curly-headed boy that I had nursed and played with years ago. That was why he broke prison, sir. He knew that I was here and that we could not refuse to help him. When he dragged himself here one night, with the warders hard at his heels, what could we do ? We took him in and fed him and cared for him. Then you returned, sir, and my brother thought he would be safer on the moor than anywhere else, so he lay in hiding there. But every second night we made sure if he was still there by putting a light in the window, and if there was an answer my husband took some bread and meat to him. Every day we hoped that he was gone, but as long as he was there we could not desert him. That is the whole truth, and you will see that if there is blame in the matter it does not lie with my husband but with me."

"Is this true, Barrymore ?"

"Yes, Sir Henry. Every word of it."

"Well, I cannot blame you for standing by your own wife. Forget what I have said. Go to your room, you two, and we shall talk further about this matter in the morning."

When they were gone we looked out of the window again. Sir Henry had flung it open. Far away in the black distance there still glowed that one tiny point of yellow light.

"How far do you think it is ?" asked the baronet.

"Not more than a mile or two off."

"Well, it cannot be far if Barrymore had to carry out the food to it. And the convict is waiting beside that candle. By thunder, Watson, I am going out to capture him !"

"I will go with you," said I.

"Get your revolver and put on your boots. The sooner we start the better."

In five minutes we were on our way. Now and then the moon peeped out, but clouds were driving over the face of the sky and, just as we came out on the moor, a thin rain began to fall. The light still burned steadily in front.

"Are you armed ?" I asked.

"I have a hunting-crop."

"We must close in on him rapidly, for he is said to be a desperate fellow. We shall take him by surprise."

"I say, Watson," said the baronet, "what would Holmes say to this ? How about that hour of darkness in which the power of evil is exalted ?"

As if in answer to his words there rose suddenly out of the vast gloom of the moor that strange cry which I had heard upon the borders of the great Grimpen Mire. It came with the wind through the silence of the night, a long deep mutter, then a rising howl, and then the sad moan in which it died away. Again and again it sounded, the whole air throbbing with it, strident, wild, and menacing. The baronet caught my sleeve and his face glimmered white through the darkness.

"My God, what's that, Watson ?"

"I don't know. It's a sound they have on the moor. I heard it once before."

"Watson," exclaimed the baronet, "it was the cry of a hound !"

My blood ran cold in my veins, for there was a break in his voice which told of the sudden horror which seized him. "Come now, Watson, didn't you think yourself that it was a hound ?"

"Stapleton was with me when I heard it last. He said it might be the call of a strange bird."

"No, no, it was a hound. My God, can there be some truth in all these stories ? You don't believe them, do you, Watson ?"

"No, no."

"And yet it was one thing to laugh about it in London, and it is another to stand out here on the moor and hear such a cry as that. And my uncle ! There was the footprint of the hound beside him as he lay. I don't think that I am a coward, Watson, but that sound seemed to freeze my very blood. Feel my hand !"

It was as cold as a block of marble

"I don't think I'll get that cry out of my head. What do you advise that we do now ?" asked Sir Henry.

"Shall we turn back ?"

"No, by thunder ! We have come out to get our man, and we will do it. We after the convict, and a hellhound after us. Come on !"

We stumbled slowly along, with the black loom of the craggy hills around us, and the yellow speck of light burning steadily in front. Sometimes the glimmer seemed to be far away upon the horizon and sometimes it might have been within a few

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yards of us. But at last we could see whence it came, and then we knew that we were indeed very close. A guttering candle was stuck in a crevice of the rocks which flanked it on each side so as to keep the wind from it and also to prevent it from being visible, save in the direction of Baskerville Hall.

"What shall we do now ?" whispered Sir Henry.

"Wait here. He must be near his light. Let us see if we can get a glimpse of him."

The words were hardly out of my mouth when we both saw him. Over the rocks, in the crevice of which the candle burned, there was thrust out an evil yellow face, a terrible animal face, all seamed and scored. Foul with mire, with a bristling beard, and hung with matted hair, it might well have belonged to one of those old savages who dwelt in the burrows on the hillsides. The light beneath him was reflected in his small, cunning eyes which peered fiercely to right and left through the darkness like a crafty savage who has heard the steps of the hunters.

Something had evidently aroused his suspicions. Any instant he might dash out the light and vanish in the darkness. I sprang forward, and Sir Henry did the same. The convict screamed out a curse and hurled a rock that splintered against the boulder which had sheltered us. I caught one glimpse of his short, squat, strongly built figure as he turned to run. At the same moment the moon broke through the clouds. We rushed over the brow of the hill, and there was our man springing over the stones with the agility of a mountain goat.

We were both swift runners and in fairly good condition, but we soon found we had no chance of overtaking him. We saw him in the moonlight until he was only a small speck. We stopped and sat panting on two rocks.

And it was then that a most strange and unexpected thing occurred. We had risen from our rocks and were turning to go home. The moon was low upon the right, and the jagged pinnacle of a granite tor stood up against the lower curve of its silver disc. There, outlined as black as an ebony statue on that shining background, I saw the figure of a man. He stood with legs a little separated, his arms folded, his head bowed. He might have been the very spirit of that terrible place. He was not the convict. This man was far from the place where the latter had disappeared. Besides, he was a much taller man. With a cry of surprise I pointed him out but in the instant I turned to grasp Sir Henry's arm the man was gone.

I wished to go in that direction and search the tor, but the baronet's nerves were still quivering and he was not in the mood for fresh adventures. He had not seen that lonely man upon the tor. "A warder, no doubt," he remarked later. "The moor has been thick with them since this fellow escaped." Well, perhaps his explanation may be the right one, but I should like to have some further proof of it.

* * *

EXTRACT FROM DR. WATSON'S DIARY

So far I have been able to quote from the reports which I have forwarded during these early days to Holmes. Now I have arrived at a point where I am to abandon this method and trust to my recollections, aided by the diary which I kept at the time. I proceed, then, from the morning which followed our abortive chase of the convict.

October 16th. A dull and foggy day with a drizzle of rain. The house is banked in with rolling clouds, which rise now and then to show the dreary curves of the moor. It is melancholy outside and in.

This morning after breakfast, Barrymore asked leave to speak with Sir Henry, and they were closeted in his study some little time. Sitting in the billiard-room I more than once heard the sound of voices raised. After a time the baronet opened the door and called for me.

"Barrymore considers that he has a grievance," he said.

The butler was standing very pale but very collected before us. "I may have spoken too warmly, sir," said he, "and if I have, I am sure that I beg your pardon. At the same time, I was very much surprised when I heard you two gentlemen come back this morning and learned that you had been chasing Selden."

"But the man is a public danger," said the baronet. "You only have to get a glimpse of his face to see that. Look at Mr. Stapleton's house, for example, with no one but himself to defend it. There's no safety for anyone until Selden is under lock and key."

"He'll break into no house, sir. I give you my solemn word upon that," protested Barrymore. "But he will never trouble anyone in this country again. I assure you, Sir Henry, that in a very few days the necessary arrangements will have been made and he will be on his way to South America. For God's sake, sir, I beg of you not to let the police know that he is still on the moor. They have given up the chase there, and he can lie quiet until the ship is ready for him. You can't tell on him without getting my wife and me into trouble, so I beg you, sir, to say nothing to the police."

"But how about the chance of his holding someone up before he goes ?" demanded Sir Henry.

"He would not do anything so mad, sir. To commit a crime would show where he was hiding."

"That is true," said the baronet. "Well, Barrymore——"

"God bless you, sir, and thank you from my heart ! It would have killed my poor wife had he been taken again."

"I guess we are aiding and abetting a felony, Watson ? But, after what we have heard, I don't feel as if I could give the man up. All right, Barrymore, you can go."

The man turned, but he hesitated and then came back. "You've been so kind to us, sir, that I should like to do the best I can for you in return. I know something, Sir Henry, but it was long after the inquest that I found it out. I've never breathed a word about it yet to a mortal man. It's about poor Sir Charles's death. I know why he was at the gate at that hour. It was to meet a woman."

"And the woman's name ?" asked Sir Henry.

"I can't give you the name, sir, but I can give you the initials. They were L.L."

"How do you know this, Barrymore ?"

"Well, Sir Henry, your uncle had a letter that morning. He had usually a great many letters but that morning, as it chanced, there was only this one letter, so I took the more notice of it. It was from Coombe Tracey, and it was addressed in a woman's

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hand. I thought no more of the matter, and never would have done had it not been for my wife. Only a few weeks ago she was cleaning out Sir Charles's study—it had never been touched since his death—and she found the ashes of a burned letter in the back of the grate. The greater part of it was charred to pieces, but one end of a page hung together, and the writing could still be read. It seemed to us to be a postscript, and it read : 'Please, please, as you are a gentleman, burn this and be at the gate by ten o'clock.' Beneath it were signed the initials L.L."

"Have you got that slip ?"

"No, sir, it crumbled all to bits soon after we moved it."

"And you have no idea who L.L. is ?"

"No, sir, but if we could lay our hands upon her we should know more about Sir Charles's death."

"I cannot understand, Barrymore, how you came to conceal this important information."

"Well, sir, we were both very fond of Sir Charles, and—and it's well to go carefully when there's a lady in the case. Even the best of us——"

"Very good, Barrymore, you can go." When the butler left us Sir Henry turned to me. "Well, Watson, what do you think of this new light ?"

CHAPTER-IX

OCTOBER 17th. All day today the rain poured down, rustling on the ivy and dripping from the eaves. In the evening I put on my waterproof and walked far upon the sodden moor, the rain beating upon my face and the wind whistling about my ears. God help those who wander into the great mire now, for even the firm uplands are becoming a morass. Nowhere was there any trace of that lonely man whom I had seen on the same spot two nights before.

As I walked back I was overtaken by Dr. Mortimer driving over a rough moorland track which led from the outlying farmhouse of Foulmire. He insisted upon my climbing into his dog-cart for a lift homeward. I found him much troubled over the disappearance of his little spaniel. It had wandered onto the moor and had never come back. I gave him such consolation as I might, but I do not fancy that he will see his little dog again.

"By the way, Mortimer," said I as we jolted along the rough road, "I suppose there are few people living within driving distance of this whom you do not know ?"

"Hardly any, I think."

"Can you, then, tell me the name of any woman whose initials are L.L. ?"

He thought for a few moments. "There is Laura Lyons—but she lives in Coombe Tracey. She is Frankland's daughter."

"What ! Old Frankland the crank ?"

"Exactly. She married an artist named Lyons, who came sketching on the moor. He deserted her. The fault from what I hear may not have been entirely on one side. Her father refused to have anything to do with her because she had married without his consent and perhaps for one or two other reasons as well. So, between the old sinner and the young one the girl has had a pretty bad time."

"How does she live ?"

"I fancy old Frankland allows her a pittance, but it cannot be more, for his own affairs are cossiderably involved. Her story got about, and several people here did something to help her earn an honest living. Stapleton for one, and Sir Charles for another. I gave her a trifle myself. It was to set her up in a typewriting business."

I have only one other incident to record. This was my conversation with Barrymore just now, which gives me one more strong card which I can play in due time. Mortimer had stayed to dinner, and he and the baronet played ecarte afterwards. The butler brought me my coffee into the library, and I took the chance to ask him a few questions.

"Well," said I, "has this precious relation of yours departed, or is he still lurking out yonder ?"

"I don't know, sir. I've not heard of him since I left out food for him last, and that was three days ago."

"Did you see him then ?"

"No, sir, but the food was gone when next I went that way."

"Then he was certainly there ?"

"So you would think, sir, unless it was the other man who took it."

I sat with my coffee cup halfway to my lips. "You know that there is another man then ?"

"Yes, sir; there is another man upon the moor."

"How do you know of him ?"

"Selden told me of him, sir, a week ago or more. I don't like it Dr. Watson—I tell you straight, sir, that I don't like it."

"Now, listen to me, Barrymore ! I have come here with no object except to help your master. Tell me, frankly, what it is that you don't like."

Barrymore hesitated for a moment. "It's all these goings-on, sir," he cried at last. "Look at Sir Charles's death ! The noises at night. There's not a man would cross the moor after sundown if he was paid for it. Look at this stranger hiding out yonder, watching and waiting ! What's he waiting for ? What does it mean ?"

"About this stranger," said I. "Can you tell me anything about him ? What did Selden say ?"

"Selden saw him once or twice, but he is a deep one and gives nothing away. At first he thought that he was the police, but soon he found that he had some lay of his own. A kind of gentleman he was, as far as he could see, but what he was doing he could not make out."

"And where did he say that he lived ?"

"Among the stone huts where the old folk used to live. Selden found out that he has got a lad who works for him and brings all he needs. I dare say he goes to Coombe Tracey for what he wants."

* * *

A DELICATE INTERVIEW

The recent extract from my private diary has brought my narrative up to October 18, a time when these strange events began to move swiftly towards their terrible conclusion. I had no opportunity to tell the baronet what I had learned about Mrs. Lyons, for Dr. Mortimer remained with him at cards until it was very late. At breakfast, however, I informed him about my discovery and asked him whether he would care to accompany me to Coombe

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Tracey. At first he was eager to come, but on second thoughts it seemed to both of us that if I went alone the results might be better. So I left Sir Henry behind and drove off upon my new quest.

When I reached Coombe Tracey I told Perkins to put up the horses, and I had no difficulty in finding Mrs. Laura Lyons in her rooms which were central and well appointed. A maid showed me in and as I entered the sitting-room a lady, sitting before a typewriter, arose with a smile of welcome. Her face fell, however, when she saw that I was a stranger. She sat down again and asked me the object of my visit.

The first impression left by Mrs. Lyons was one of extreme beauty. Her eyes and hair were of the same rich hazel colour, and her cheeks, though freckled, were flushed with the exquisite bloom of the brunette, the dainty pink which lurks at the heart of the sulphur rose. Admiration was, I repeat, the first impression. But the second was criticism. There was something subtly wrong with the face, some hardness, perhaps, of eye; some looseness of lip which marred its perfect beauty. But these, of course, are after-thoughts. At the moment I was simply conscious that I was in the presence of a very handsome woman, and that she was asking me the reasons for my visit.

"I have the pleasure," said I, "of knowing your father."

It was a clumsy introduction, and the lady made me feel it. "There is nothing in common between my father and me," she said. "I owe him nothing, and his friends are not mine. If it were not for the late Sir Charles Baskerville and some other kind hearts I might have starved for all that my father cared."

"It was about the late Sir Charles that I have come here to see you."

"What can I tell you about him ?" she asked, and her fingers played nervously over the stops of her typewriter.

"Did you correspond with him ?"

She looked up with an angry gleam in her hazel eyes. "What is the object of these questions ?" she asked sharply.

"The object is to avoid a public scandal."

She was silent and her face was still very pale. At last she said softly, "Well, I'll answer; what are your questions ?"

"Did you write to Sir Charles ?"

"I certainly wrote to him once or twice to acknowledge his generosity."

"Have you ever met him ?"

"Yes, once or twice, when he came into Coombe Tracey."

"But if you saw him so seldom and wrote so seldom, how did he know enough about your affairs to be able to help you ?"

She met my difficulty with the utmost readiness. "There were several gentlemen who knew my sad situation. One was Mr. Stapleton, a neighbour and intimate friend of Sir Charles's. It was through him that Sir Charles learned about my affairs."

"Did you ever write to Sir Charles asking him to meet you ?" I continued.

Mrs. Lyons flushed with anger again. "Certainly not !"

"Not on the very day of his death ?"

The flush faded in an instant, and a deathly face was before me. Her dry lips could not speak the "No" which I saw rather than heard.

"Surely your memory deceives you," said I. "I could even quote a passage of your letter. It ran : 'Please, please, as you are a gentleman, burn this letter, and be at the gate by ten o'clock.' "

I thought that she had fainted, but she recovered herself by a supreme effort, gasping, "Is there no such thing as a gentleman ?"

"You do Sir Charles an injustice. He *did* burn the letter. But sometimes a letter may be legible even when burned. You acknowledge now that you wrote it ?"

"Yes, I did," she cried, pouring out her soul in a torrent of words. "I did write it. Why should

"Yes, I did," she cried. "I did write it."

I deny it ? I have no reason to be ashamed of it. I wished him to help me. I believed that if I had an interview I could gain his help, so I asked him to meet me."

"But why at such an hour ?"

"Because I had only just learned that he was going to London next day and might be away for months. There were reasons why I could not get there earlier."

"But why a rendezvous in the garden instead of a visit to the house ?"

"Do you think a woman could go alone at that hour to a bachelor's house ?"

"Well, what happened when you did get there ?"

"I never went. I swear it to you on all I hold sacred. I never went. Something intervened to prevent my going."

"What was that ?"

"That is a private matter. I cannot tell it."

"Mrs. Lyons," said I at the close of the inconclusive interview, "you are putting yourself in a very false position by not telling all that you know. If I have to call in the police you will see how seriously you are compromised. If your position is

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innocent, why did you in the first instance deny having written to Sir Charles upon that date ?"

"Because I feared that some false conclusion might be drawn from it. The matter is a very private one."

"The more reason why you should avoid a public investigation."

"I will tell you, then. If you have heard anything of my unhappy history you will know that I made a rash marriage. My life has been one incessant persecution from a husband I abhor. The law is upon his side, and every day I am faced by the possibility that he may force me to live with him. At the time I wrote that letter to Sir Charles I had learned that there was a prospect of my regaining my freedom if certain expenses could be met. It meant everything to me—everything. I knew Sir Charles's generosity, and I thought that if he heard the story from my own lips he would help me."

"Then how is it that you did not go ?"

"Because I received help in the interval from another source."

"Why, then, did you not write to Sir Charles and explain this ?"

"So I should have done had I not read of his death in the paper next morning."

The woman's story hung coherently together. I could only check it by finding if she had, indeed, instituted divorce proceedings against her husband at or about the time of the tragedy.

But first I must turn back to that other clue which was to be sought for among the stone huts upon the moor. So I drove back and noted how hill after hill showed traces of the ancient people. Barrymore's only indication had been that the stranger lived in one of these abandoned huts, and many hundreds of them are scattered over the moor. But I had my own experience for a guide since it had shown me the man standing upon the summit of Black Tor. That, then, should be the centre of my search. From there I should explore every hut upon the moor until I lighted upon the right one, and find out, at the point of my revolver if necessary, who he was and why he had dogged us so long. He might slip away from us in the crowd of Regent Street, but it would puzzle him to do so upon the lonely moor. On the other hand, if I should find the hut and its tenant should not be within it I must remain there, however long the vigil, until he returned. Holmes had missed him in London. It would indeed be a triumph for me if I could run him to earth.

Luck had been against us again and again in this inquiry, but now at last it came to my aid. And the messenger of good fortune was none other than Mr. Frankland standing outside his garden gate that opened on to the highroad along which I travelled.

"Good-day, Dr. Watson," cried he with unwonted good humour, "you must really give your horses a rest and come in to have a glass of wine and to congratulate me."

I was anxious to send Perkins and the wagonette home, and the opportunity was a good one. I alighted and sent a message to Sir Henry that I should walk over in time for dinner. Then I followed Frankland into his dining-room.

"It's a great day for me, sir—one of the red-letter days of my life !" he cried with many chuckles. "I have brought off a double event. I have established a right of way through the centre of old Middleton's park, slap across it, sir, within a hundred yards of his own front door. What do you think of that ? We'll teach these magnates that they cannot ride roughshod over the rights of the commoners, confound them ! And I've closed the wood where the Fernworthy folk used to picnic. These infernal people seem to think that there are no rights of property, and that they can swarm where they like with their papers and their bottles. Both cases decided, Dr. Watson, and both in my favour. I haven't had such a day since I had Sir John Morland for trespass because he shot in his own warren."

"Did it do you any good ?"

"None, sir, none. I am proud to say that I had no interest in the matter. I act entirely from a sense of public duty. I have no doubt, for example, that the Fernworthy people will burn me in effigy tonight. But I could tell them what they are dying to know."

I had been casting round for some excuse to get away from his gossip, but now I began to wish to hear more of it. "Some poaching case, no doubt ?" said I with an indifferent manner.

"Ha, ha, my boy, a very much more important matter than that ! What about the convict on the moor ?"

I started. "You don't mean that you know where he is ?" said I.

"I may not know exactly where he is, but I'm quite sure that I could help the police lay their hands on him. Has it never struck you that the way to catch that man was to find out where he got his food and so trace it to him ?"

He certainly seemed to be getting uncomfortably near the truth. "No doubt", said I; "but how do you know that he is anywhere upon the moor ?"

"I know it because I have seen with my own eyes the messenger who takes him his food."

My heart sank for Barrymore. It was a serious thing to be in the power of this spiteful old busybody. But his next remark took a weight from my mind.

"You'll be surprised to hear that his food is taken to him by a child. I see him every day through my telescope upon the roof."

Here was luck indeed ! And yet I suppressed all appearance of interest. A child ! Barrymore had said that our unknown was supplied by a boy. It was on his track, and not upon the convict's, that Frankland had stumbled.

"I should say that it was much more likely that it was the son of one of the moorland shepherds taking out his father's dinner," I remarked.

"Indeed, sir !" said he, pointing out over the moor. "Do you see that Black Tor over yonder ? Well, do you see the low hill beyond with the thornbush upon it ? It is the stoniest part of the whole moor. Is that a place where a shepherd would be likely to take his station ? Your suggestion, sir, is a most absurd one."

I meekly answered that I had spoken without knowing all the facts. My submission pleased him and led him to further confidences.

"You may be sure, sir, that I have very good grounds before I come to an opinion. I have seen

the boy again and again with his bundle. Every day, and sometimes twice a day, I have been able—but wait a moment, Dr. Watson. Do my eyes deceive me, or is there at the present moment something moving upon that hillside ?"

It was several miles off, but I could distinctly see a small dark dot against the dull green and gray.

"Come, sir, come !" cried Frankland, rushing upstairs. "You will see with your own eyes and judge for yourself."

The telescope, mounted upon a tripod, stood upon the flat leads of the house. Frankland clapped his eye to it and gave a cry of satisfaction.

"Quick, Dr. Watson, quick, before he passes over the hill !"

There he was, sure enough, an urchin with a little bundle upon his shoulder, toiling slowly up the hill. When he reached the crest he looked round him with a furtive air, as one who dreads pursuit. Then he vanished over the hill.

"Well ! Am I right ? But not one word will the constables have from me, and I bind you to secrecy also, Dr. Watson. Not a word ! You understand !"

"Just as you wish."

Then I left him to hunt for that boy.

CHAPTER—X

THE sun was already sinking when I reached the summit of the hill. The barren scene, the sense of loneliness, and the urgency of my task all struck a chill into my heart. The boy was nowhere to be seen. But down beneath me in a cleft of the hills there was a circle of the old stone huts, and in the middle of them there was one which retained sufficient roof to act as a screen against the weather. At last my foot was on the threshold of the stranger's hiding place.

A vague pathway among the boulders led to the dilapidated opening which served as a door. All was silent within. Throwing aside my cigarette, I closed my hand upon the butt of my revolver and looked in. The place was empty.

But there were ample signs that I had not come upon a false scent. This was certainly where the man lived. A litter of empty tins showed that the place had been occupied for some time, and I saw, as my eyes became accustomed to the checkered light, a pannikin and a half-full bottle of spirits standing in the corner. In the middle of the hut a flat stone served the purpose of a table, and upon this stood a small cloth bundle—the same, no doubt, which I had seen through the telescope upon the shoulder of the boy. Beneath it lay a sheet of paper with writing upon it. This was what I read, roughly scrawled in pencil : "Dr. Watson has gone to Coombe Tracey."

It was I, then, and not Sir Henry, who was being dogged by this secret man ! He had not followed me himself, but he had set an agent—the boy, perhaps—upon my track, and this was his report. Possibly I had taken no step since I had been upon the moor which had not been observed and reported. If there was one report there might be others, but there was none. Nor could I discover any sign which might indicate the intentions of the man who lived in this singular place, save that he must be of Spartan habits and cared little for the comforts of life.

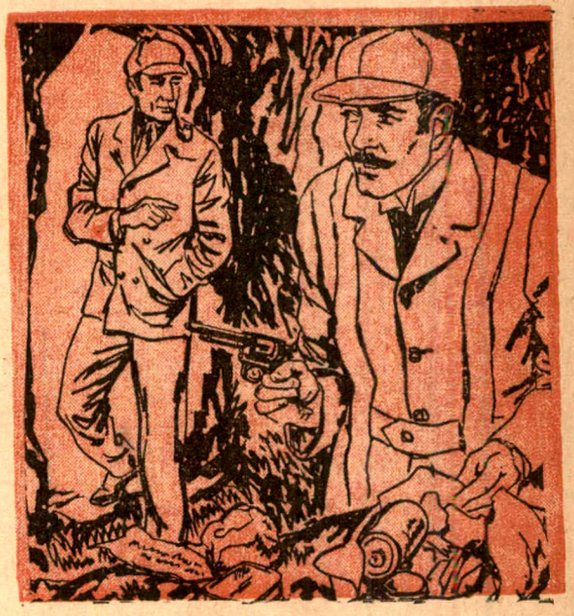
Outside the sun was sinking low and the west was blazing with scarlet and gold. All was sweet and mellow in that evening light as with tingling nerves but fixed purpose, I sat in the dark recess of the hut and waited for the coming of its tenant.

And then at last I heard him. Far away came the sharp clink of a boot striking upon a stone, coming nearer and nearer. I shrank back into the darkest corner and cocked the pistol in my pocket, determined not to discover myself until I had an opportunity of [illegible] of the stranger. There was a long pause which showed that he had stopped. Then once more the footsteps approached and a shadow fell across the opening of the hut.

"It's a lovely evening, my dear Watson," said a well-known voice. "I really think that you will be more comfortable outside than in."

For a moment or two I sat breathless, hardly able to believe my ears. Then my senses and my voice came back to me. "Holmes !" I cried—"Holmes !"

"Come out," he said, "and please be careful with the revolver".



"Come out," he said, "be careful with the revolver."

His gray eyes danced with amusement as they fell upon my astonished features. In his tweed suit and cloth cap he looked like any tourist upon the moor, and he had contrived, with that catlike love of personal cleanliness which was one of his characteristics, that his chin should be as smooth and his linen as perfect as if he were in Baker Street.

"I never was more glad to see anyone in my life," said I as I wrung him by the hand.

"Or more astonished, eh ?"

"Well, I must confess to it."

"The surprise was not all on one side, I assure you. I had no idea that you had found my associate

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retreat, still less that you were inside it, until I was within twenty paces of the door."

"My footprint, I presume ?"

"No, Watson; I fear that I could not undertake to recognize your footprint amid all the footprints of the world. If you seriously desire to deceive me you must change your tobacconist; for when I see the stub of a cigarette marked Bradley, Oxford Street, I know that my friend Watson is in the neighbourhood." He paused, then said, "So you actually thought that I was the criminal ?"

"I did not know who you were, but I was determined to find out."

"Excellent, Watson ! And how did you localize me ? You saw me, perhaps, on the night of the convict hunt, when I was so imprudent as to allow the moon to rise behind me ?"

"Yes, I saw you then."

"And you have no doubt searched all the huts until you came to this one ?"

"No, your boy had been observed, and that gave me a guide where to look."

"The old gentleman with the telescope, no doubt. I could not make it out when first I saw the light flashing upon the lens." He rose and peeped into the hut. "Ha, I see that Cartwright has brought up some supplies. What's this paper ? So you have been to Coombe Tracey, have you ?"

"Yes."

"To see Mrs. Laura Lyons ?"

"Exactly."

"Well done ! Our researches have evidently been running on parallel lines, and when we unite our results I expect we shall have a fairly full knowledge of the case."

The sun had set and the air turned chill, so we withdrew into the hut for warmth. There, sitting together in the twilight, I told Holmes of my conversation with the lady. So interested was he that I had to repeat some of it twice before he was satisfied.

"This is most important," said he when I had concluded. "It fills up a gap which I had been unable to bridge in this most complex affair. You are aware, perhaps, that a close intimacy exists between this lady and the man Stapleton ?"

"I did not know of a close intimacy."

"There can be no doubt about the matter. They meet, they write, there is a complete understanding between them. Now, this puts a very powerful weapon into our hands. If I could only use it to detach his wife."

"His wife ?"

"I am giving you some information now, in return for all that you have given me. The lady who has passed here as Miss Stapleton is in reality his wife."

"Good heavens, Holmes ! Are you sure of what you say ? How could he have permitted Sir Henry to fall in love with her ?"

"Sir Henry's falling in love could do no harm to anyone except Sir Henry. He took particular care that Sir Henry did not *make* love to her, as you have yourself observed. I repeat that the lady is his wife and not his sister."

"But why this elaborate deception ?"

"Because he foresaw that she would be very much more useful to him in the character of a free woman."

All my unspoken instincts, my vague suspicions, suddenly took shape and centred upon the naturalist. "It is he, then, who dogged us in London ?"

"So I read the riddle."

"And the warning—it must have come from her !"

"Exactly."

"But are you sure of this, Holmes ? How do you know the woman is his wife ?"

"Because he so far forgot himself as to tell you a true piece of autobiography upon the occasion when he first met you, and I dare say he has many a time regretted it since. He *was* once a schoolmaster in the north of England. Now, there is no one more easy to trace than a schoolmaster. Investigation showed me that a school had come to grief under atrocious circumstances, and that the man who owned it—the name was different—had disappeared with his wife. The descriptions agreed. When I learned that the missing man was devoted to entomology the identification was complete."

The darkness was rising, but much was still hidden by the shadows.

"But where does Mrs. Laura Lyons come in ?" I asked.

"That is one of the points upon which your own researches have shed a light. Your interview with the lady has cleared the situation very much. I did not know about a projected divorce between herself and her husband. In that case, regarding Stapleton as an unmarried man, she counted no doubt upon becoming his wife."

"And when she is undeceived ?"

"Why, then we may find the lady of service. It must be our first duty to see her—both of us—tomorrow. Don't you think, Watson, that you are away from your charge rather long ? Your place should be at Baskerville Hall."

The last red streaks had faded in the west and night had settled upon the moor. A few faint stars were gleaming in a violent sky.

"One last question, Holmes," I said as I rose. "Surely there is no need of secrecy between you and me. What is the meaning of it all ? What is he after ?"

Holmes's voice sank as he answered : "It is murder, Watson—refined, cold-blooded, deliberate murder. Do not ask me for particulars. My nets are closing upon him, even as his are upon Sir Henry, and with your help he is already almost at my mercy. There is but one danger which can threaten us. It is that he should strike before we are ready to do so. Another day—Hark !"

A terrible scream—a prolonged yell of horror and anguish burst out of the silence of the moor. That frightful cry turned the blood to ice in my veins. Holmes had sprung to his feet, and I saw his dark, athletic outline at the door, his shoulders stooping, his head thrust forward, his face peering into the darkness. "Hush !" he whispered. "Hush !"

The cry had been loud on account of its vehemence, but it had pealed out from somewhere far

on on the shadowy plain. Now it burst upon our ears, nearer, louder, more urgent than before.

"Where is it ?" Sherlock whispered; and I knew from the thrill of his voice that he, the man of iron, was shaken to the soul. "Where is it. Watson ?"

"There, I think." I pointed into the darkness.
"No, there !"

Again the agonized cry swept through the silent night, louder and much nearer than ever. And a new sound mingled with it, a deep, muttered rumble, musical and yet menacing.

"The hound !" cried Holmes. "Come, Watson, come Great heavens, if we are too late !"

He had started running swiftly over the moor, and I followed at his heels. But now from somewhere immediately in front of us there came one last despairing yell, and then a dull, heavy thud. We halted and listened. Not another sound broke the heavy silence of the windless night.

I saw Holmes put his hand to his forehead like a man distracted. He stamped his feet upon the ground. "He has beaten us, Watson. We are too late."

"No, no, surely not !"

"Fool that I was to hold my hand. And you, Watson, see what comes of abandoning your charge ! But, by Heaven, if the worst has happened we'll avenge him."

Blindly we ran through the gloom, blundering against boulders, forcing our way through gorse bushes, panting up hills and rushing down slopes, heading always in the direction whence those dreadful sounds had come.

A low moan had fallen upon our ears. There it was again upon our left ! On that side a ridge of rocks ended in a sheer cliff which overlooked a stone-strewn slope. On its jagged face was spread-eagled some dark, irregular object. As we ran towards it the vague outline hardened into a definite shape. It was a prostrate man face downward upon the ground, the head doubled under him at a horrible angle. The gleam of the match which Sherlock struck shone upon the ghastly pool which widened slowly from the skull of the victim. And it shone upon something else which turned our hearts faint within us—the body of Sir Henry Baskerville !

We caught the one clear glimpse of it, then the match flickered out, even as the hope had gone out of our souls.

"The brute ! the brute !" I cried with clenched hands. "Oh, Holmes, I shall never forgive myself for having left him to his fate."

"I am more to blame than you, Watson. In order to have my case complete, I have thrown away the life of my client. It is the greatest blow which has befallen me in my career. But how could I know—how *could* I know—that he would risk his life alone upon the moor in the face of all my warnings ?"

Then as the moon rose we climbed to the top of the rocks over which Sir Henry had fallen, and gazed over the shadowy moor, half silver and half gloom. Far away, miles off, in the direction of Grimpen, a single steady yellow light was shining. It could only come from the lonely abode of the Stapletons. I shook my fist at it as I gazed.

"Why should we not seize him at once ?"

"Our case is not complete. The fellow is cunning to the last degree. It is not what we know, but what we can prove. If we make one false move the villain may escape."

"What can we do ?"

"There will be plenty for us to do tomorrow."

Together we made our way down the precipitous slope and approached the body, black and clear against the silvered stones. Tears blurred my eyes as I said, "We must send for help, Holmes ! We cannot carry him all the way to the Hall—Good heavens, are you mad ?"

He had uttered a cry and bent over the body. Now he was dancing, laughing and wringing my hand, shouting, "A beard ! A beard ! The man has a beard !"

CHAPTER–XI

A BEARD ? I asked in astonishment.

"It's not the baronet—it is—why, it's my neighbour, the convict !"

With feverish haste we had turned the body over, and that beard was pointing up to the cold, clear moon. It was indeed the same face which had glared upon me in the light of the candle from over the rock—the face of Selden, the criminal.

Then in an instant it was all clear to me. I remembered how the baronet had told me that he had handed his old wardrobe to Barrymore who had passed it on to Selden.

"Then the clothes have been the poor devil's death," said Holmes. "It's clear enough that the hound has been laid on from some article of Sir Henry's—the boot which was abstracted in the hotel, in all probability—and so ran this man down. There is one very singular thing, however : How came Selden, in the darkness, to know that the hound was on his trail ?"

"He heard him".

"To hear a hound upon the moor would not frighten a hard man like this convict into such a paroxysm of terror that he would risk recapture by screaming wildly for help. By his cries he must have run a long way after he knew the animal was on his track. How did he know ? How——" Sherlock stopped abruptly, then said softly, "Halloa, Watson, what's this ? It's the man himself, by all that's wonderful and audacious ! Not a word to show your suspicions—not a word !"

A figure was approaching; I saw the dull red glow of a cigar. The moon shone upon him, and I could distinguish the dapper shape and jaunty walk of the naturalist. He stopped when he saw us, and then came on again.

"Why, Dr. Watson, that's not you, is it ? You are the last man that I should have expected to see out on the moor at this time of night. But, dear

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me, what's this ? Somebody hurt ? Not—don't tell me that it is our friend Sir Henry !" He hurried past me and stooped over the dead man.

"Who—who's this ?" he stammered.

"Who — who's this ?" Mr. Stapleton stammered.

"It's Selden, the man who escaped from Princetown."

Stapleton turned a ghastly face upon us, but by a supreme effort he had overcome his amazement and his disappointment. "Dear me ! What a shocking affair ! How did he die ?"

"He appears to have broken his neck by falling over these rocks. My friend and I were strolling on the moor when we heard a cry," I said.

"I heard a cry also. That was what brought me out. I was uneasy about Sir Henry."

"Why about Sir Henry in particular ?" I could not help asking.

"Because I had suggested that he should come over. When he did not come I was surprised, and I naturally became alarmed for his safety when I heard those cries. By the way"—his eyes darted from my face to Holmes's—"did you hear anything else besides a cry ?"

"No," said Sherlock; "did you ?"

"No."

"What do you mean, then ?"

"Oh, you know the stories about a phantom hound, said to be heard at night upon the moor. I was wondering if there were any evidence of such a sound."

"We heard nothing of the kind," said I. "No doubt that anxiety and exposure have driven him off his head. He rushed about the moor in a crazy state and eventually fell and broke his neck."

"That seems the most reasonable theory," said Stapleton, and he gave a sigh which I took to indicate his relief. "What do you think about it, Mr. Holmes ?"

My friend bowed his compliments. "You are quick at identification," said he.

"We have been expecting you in these parts since Dr. Watson came down. You are in time to see a tragedy."

"Yes, indeed. I will take an unpleasant remembrance back to London with me tomorrow."

"I hope your visit has cast some light upon those occurrences which have puzzled us ?"

Holmes shrugged his shoulders. "One cannot always have the success for which one hopes. An investigator needs facts and not legends or rumours. It has not been a satisfactory case."

Stapleton still looked hard at him. Then he turned to me to say, "I would suggest carrying this poor fellow to my house, but it would give my sister such a fright that I do not feel justified in doing it. I think that if we put something over his face he will be safe until morning."

And so it was arranged. Resisting Stapleton's offer of hospitality, Holmes and I set off to Baskerville Hall, leaving the naturalist to return alone. Looking back we saw the figure moving slowly away over the broad moor, and Sherlock said, "We're at close grips at last. What a nerve the fellow has ! How he pulled himself together in the face of what must have been a paralyzing shock when he found that the wrong man had fallen a victim to his plot. We have never had a foeman more worthy of our steel."

Sir Henry was more pleased than surprised to see Sherlock Holmes, for he had for some days been expecting that recent events would bring him down from London. He did raise his eyebrows, however, when he found that my friend had neither any luggage nor any explanation of its absence. Between us we soon supplied his wants, and then over a belated supper we explained to the baronet as much of our experience as it seemed desirable that he should know. But first I had the unpleasant duty of breaking the news to Barrymore and his wife. To him it may have been an unmitigated relief, but she wept bitterly in her apron. To all the world he was the man of violence, half animal and half demon; but to her he always remained the child who had clung to her hand.

"I've been moping in the house all day since Watson went off in the morning," said the baronet. "If I hadn't sworn not to go about alone I might have had a more lively evening, for I had a message from Stapleton asking me over there.

"I have no doubt that you would have had a more lively evening," observed Holmes drily.

"But how about the case ?" asked the baronet. "Have you made anything out of the tangle ?"

"I think that I shall be in a position to make the situation rather more clear to you before long. There are several points upon which we still want light."

"Well," said Sir Henry, "Watson and I heard the hound on the moor, so I can swear that it is not all empty superstition. I had something to do with dogs when I was out West, and I know one when I hear one. If you can muzzle that one and chain him I'll be ready to swear you are the greatest detective of all time."

"I think I will do that if you will give me your help without question. If you will do this I think the chances are that our little problem will soon be solved. I have no doubt——"

He stopped suddenly and stared fixedly up over my head into the air. "What is it ?" we both cried.

"Excuse the admiration of a connoisseur," said he as he waved his hand towards the line of portraits

We are three

Gour Dutt

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which covered the opposite wall. "Watson won't allow that I know anything of art, but—these are a really very fine series of portraits."

"Well, I'm glad to hear you say so," said Sir Henry, glancing with some surprise at my friend. "Barrymore has been coaching me in the names. I think I can say my lessons fairly well."

"Who is the gentleman with the telescope ?"

"That is Rear-Admiral Baskerville, who served under Rodney in the West Indies."

"And this Cavalier opposite to me—the one with the black velvet and the lace ?"

"Ah, he is the cause of all the mischief, the wicked Hugo, who started the Hound of the Baskervilles !"

Holmes said little more, but the picture of the old roysterer seemed to have a fascination for him, and his eyes were continually fixed upon it during supper. It was not until later, when Sir Henry had gone to his room, that Sherlock led me back into the banqueting-hall, his bedroom candle in hand, and held it up against the time-stained portrait on the wall.

"Do you see anything there ? Is it like anyone you know ?"

"There is something of Sir Henry about the jaw."

"Just a suggestion, perhaps. But wait an instant !" He stood upon a chair, and holding up the light in his left hand, he curved his right arm over the broad hat and round the long ringlets.

"Good heavens !" I cried in amazement. "The face of Stapleton !"

"Ha, you see it now—an interesting instance of a throwback, which appears to be both physical and spiritual. The fellow is a Baskerville—that is evident."

"With designs upon the succession."

"Exactly. This chance of the picture has supplied us with one of our important missing links. We have him, Watson, we have him ! Before to-morrow night he will be fluttering in our net as helpless as one of his own butterflies."

I was up betimes in the morning, but Holmes was afoot earlier still, for I saw him as I dressed, coming up the drive. "Yes, we should have a full day to-day," he remarked. "The nets are all in place, and the drag is about to begin."

"Have you been on the moor already ?"

"I have sent a report from Grimpen to Princetown on the death of Selden. And I have also communicated with young Cartwright, who would certainly have pined away at the door of my hut, as a dog does at his master's grave, if I had not set his mind at rest about my safety. And now to see Sir Henry. Ah, here he is !"

"Good-morning, Holmes," said the baronet. "You look like a general who is planning a battle with his chief of the staff."

"That is the exact situation. Watson was asking for orders."

"And so do I."

"Very good. You are engaged to dine with our friends the Stapletons tonight."

"I hope that you will come also. They are very hospitable people, and I am sure that they would be very glad to see you."

"I fear that Watson and I must go to London."

"To London ?"

"Yes, I think that we should be more useful there at the present juncture."

The baronet's face perceptibly lengthened. "I hoped that you were going to see me through this business. The Hall and the moor are not very pleasant places when one is alone."

"My dear fellow, you must trust me implicitly and do exactly what I tell you. You can tell your friends that we should have been happy to have come with you, but that urgent business required us to be in town. We hope very soon to return to Devonshire. Will you remember to give them that message ?"

"If you insist upon it. But—I have a good mind to go to London with you," said the baronet. "Why should I stay here alone ?"

"Because it is your post of duty. Because you gave me your word that you would do as you were told."

"All right, then, I'll stay."

"One more direction ! I wish you to drive to Merripit House. Send back your trap, however, and let them know that you intend to walk home."

"To walk across the moor ?"

"Yes."

"But that is the very thing which you have so often cautioned me not to do."

"This time you may do it with safety. If I had not every confidence in your nerve and courage I would not suggest it, but it is essential that you do it. And as you value your life do not go across the moor in any direction save along the straight path which leads from Merripit House to the Grimpen Road, and is your natural way home."

"I will do just what you say."

I was much astounded by this programme, though I remembered that Holmes had said to Stapleton on the night before that his visit would terminate next day. So we bade good-bye to our rueful friend, and a couple of hours afterwards we were at the station of Coombe Tracey and had dispatched the trap upon its return journey. A small boy was waiting upon the platform, who asked, "Any orders, sir ?"

"You will take this train to town, Cartwright. The moment you arrive, send a wire to Sir Henry Baskerville, in my name, to say that if he finds the pocketbook which I have dropped he is to send it by registered post to Baker Street."

"Yes, sir."

"And ask at the station office if there is a message for me."

The boy returned with a telegram, which Holmes handed to me. It ran : Wire received. Coming down with unsigned warrant. Arrive five-forty. LESTRADE.

"That is in answer to mine of this morning. He is the best of the professionals, I think, and we may need his assistance. Now, Watson, I think we cannot employ our time better than by calling upon your acquaintance, Mrs. Laura Lyons."

She was in her office and Sherlock opened his interview with a frankness which considerably amazed her. "I am investigating the circumstances which attended the death of the late Sir Charles Baskerville," said he. "My friend, Dr. Watson, has informed me of what you have communicated, and also of what you have withheld in connection with that matter."

"What have I withheld ? she asked defiantly.

"You have confessed that you asked Sir Charles

to be at the gate at ten o'clock. We know that that was the place and hour of his death. You have withheld what the connection is between these events."

"There is no connection."

"In that case the coincidence must indeed be an extraordinary one. But I think that we shall succeed in establishing a connection, after all. Mrs. Lyons, we regard this case as one of murder, and the evidence may implicate not only your friend Mr. Stapleton but his wife as well."

The lady sprang from her chair. "His wife!" she cried. "His wife! He is not a married man. Prove it!!"

Sherlock shrugged his shoulders. "I can do so," said he, drawing some papers from his pocket. "Here is a photograph of the couple taken in York four years ago. It is indorsed 'Mr. and Mrs. Vandeleur,' but you will have no difficulty in recognizing him, and her also, if you know her by sight. Here are three written descriptions by trustworthy witnesses of Mr. and Mrs. Vandeleur, who at that time kept St. Oliver's private school. Read them and see if you can doubt the identity of these people."

She glanced at them, and then looked up at us with the set, rigid face of a desperate woman, then said, "This man had offered me marriage on condition that I could get a divorce from my husband. He has lied to me, and why—why? I imagined that all was for my own sake. But now I see that I was never anything but a tool in his hands. Ask me what you like; there is nothing which I shall hold back. One thing I swear to you, and that is that when I wrote the letter I never dreamed of any harm to the old gentleman, who had been my kindest friend."

"I entirely believe you, madam," said Holmes. "The sending of that letter was suggested to you by Stapleton?"

"He dictated it."

"I presume that the reason he gave was that you would receive help from Sir Charles for the divorce expenses?"

"Exactly."

"And then, after you had sent the letter, he dissuaded you from keeping the appointment?"

"He told me that it would hurt his self-respect that any other man should find the money for such an object and that, though he was a poor man himself, he would devote his last penny to removing the obstacles which divided us."

"And then you heard nothing until you read the reports of the death in the paper?"

"No."

"And he made you swear to say nothing about your appointment with Sir Charles?"

"He did. He said that the death was a very mysterious one, and that I should certainly be suspected if the facts came out. He frightened me into remaining silent."

"Quite so. But you had your suspicions?"

She hesitated and looked down. "I knew him," she said. "But if he had kept faith with me I should always have done so with him."

"I think that on the whole you have had a fortunate escape," said Sherlock. "You have had him in your power; he knew it, and yet you are alive. We must wish you good-morning now, Mrs. Lyons, and it is probable that you will very shortly hear from us again."

CHAPTER—XII

ONE of Sherlock's defects — if, indeed, one may call it a defect—was that he was exceedingly loath to communicate his full plans to any other person until the instant of their fulfilment. The great ordeal was in front of us; at last we were about to make our final effort, and yet Holmes had said nothing, and I could only surmise what his course of action would be. My nerves thrilled with anticipation when at last the cold wind upon our faces and the dark, void spaces on either side of the narrow road told me that we were back upon the moor once again.

When we passed Frankland's house we knew that we were drawing near to the Hall and to the scene of action. We did not drive up to the door but got down near the gate. The wagonette was paid off and ordered to return to Coombe Tracey, while we started to walk to Merripit House.

"Are you armed, Lestrade?" said Holmes.

The little detective smiled. "As long as I have my trousers I have a hip-pocket, and as long as I have my hip-pocket I have something in it." Then he added, "My word, it does not seem a very cheerful place." The detective glanced at the gloomy slopes and at the huge lake of fog which lay over the Grimpen Mire. "I see the lights of a house ahead of us."

"That is Merripit House, the end of our journey. I must request you walk on tiptoe and not to talk above a whisper."

We moved cautiously along the track as if we were bound for the house, but Holmes halted us when we were about two hundred yards from it.

"This will do," said he. "These rocks upon the right make an admirable screen."

"We are to wait here."

"Yes, we shall make our little ambush here. Get into this hollow, Lestrade. You have been inside the house, have you not, Watson? Can you tell the position of the rooms? What are those latticed windows at this end?

"I think they are the kitchen windows."

"And the one beyond, which shines so brightly?"

"That is certainly the dining-room."

"The blinds are up. You know the lie of the land best. Creep forward quietly and see what they are doing—but for heaven's sake don't let them know that they are being watched!"

I tiptoed down the path and stooped behind the low wall which surrounded the stunted orchard. Creeping in its shadow I reached a point whence I could look straight through the uncurtained window.

There were only two men in the room, Sir Henry and Stapleton. They sat with their profiles towards me on either side of the round table. Both were smoking cigars, and coffee and wine were in front of them. Stapleton was talking with animation, but the baronet looked pale and distrait.

As I watched them Stapleton rose and left the room, while Sir Henry filled his glass again and leaned back in his chair, puffing at his cigar. I

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heard the creak of a door and the crisp sound of boots upon gravel. The steps passed along the path on the other side of the wall under which I crouched. Looking over, I saw the naturalist pause at the door of an outhouse in the corner of the orchard. A key turned in a lock, and as he passed in there was a curious scuffling noise from within. He was only a minute or so inside, and then I heard the key turn once more and he passed me and reentered the house. I saw him rejoin his guest, and I crept quietly back to where my companions were waiting.

"You say, Watson, that the lady is not there ?" Holmes asked when I had finished my report. "Where can she be, then, since there is no light in any other room except the kitchen ?"

The dense, white fog was drifting slowly in our direction and banked itself up like a wall on that side of us, low but thick and well defined. Holmes muttered impatiently, "It's moving towards us, Watson—the one thing upon earth which could have disarranged my plans. His life may depend upon his coming out before the fog is over the path."

The night was clear and fine above us. The stars shone cold and bright, while a half-moon bathed the whole scene in a soft, uncertain light. Broad bars of golden light from the lower windows stretched across the orchard. One of them was suddenly shut off. The servants had left the kitchen. There only remained the lamp in the dining-room where the two men still chatted over their cigars.

Every minute that white woolly plain which covered one half the moor was drifting closer and closer to the house. Already the first thin wisps of it were curling across the golden square of the lighted window. Holmes struck his hand passionately upon the rock in front of us. "If he isn't out in a quarter of an hour the path will be covered. In half an hour we won't be able to see our hands in front of us."

"Shall we move farther back upon higher ground ?"

"Yes, I think it would be as well."

So we fell back before the fog-bank until we were half a mile from the house, and still that dense white sea, with the moon silvering its upper edge, swept slowly and inexorably on.

"We are going too far," said Holmes. "At all costs we must hold our ground where we are." He dropped on his knees and clapped his ear to the ground. "Thank God, I think that I hear him coming."

A sound of quick steps broke the silence of the moor. Crouching among the stones we stared intently at the silver-tipped bank in front of us. The steps grew louder, and through the fog, as though through a curtain, there stepped the man whom we were awaiting. He looked round him in surprise as he emerged into the clear, starlit night. Then he came swiftly along the path, passed close to where we lay, and went on up the slope behind us. As he walked he glanced continually over either shoulder, like a man who is ill at ease.

"Hist !" sounded Holmes, and I heard the sharp click of a cocking pistol. "Look out ! It's coming."

There was a thin, crisp, continuous patter from somewhere in the heart of that crawling bank. The cloud was within fifty yards of where we lay, and we glared at it, all three, uncertain what horror was about to break. I was at Holmes's elbow, and I glanced for an instant at his face. It was pale and exultant, his eyes shining brightly in the moonlight. But suddenly they started forward in a rigid, fixed stare, and his lips parted in amazement. At the same instant Lestrade gave a yell of terror and threw himself face downward upon the ground. I sprang to my feet, my inert hand grasping my pistol, my mind paralyzed by the dreadful shape which had sprung out from the shadows. A hound it was, an enormous coal-black hound, but not such a hound as mortal eyes have ever seen. Fire burst

A hound such as mortal eyes have never seen.

from its open mouth, its eyes glowed with a smouldering glare, its muzzle and hackles and dewlap were outlined in flickering flame. Never in the delirious dream of a disordered brain could anything more savage, more appalling, more hellish be conceived.

With long bounds the huge black creature was leaping down the track, following hard upon the footsteps of our friend. So paralyzed were we by the apparition that we allowed him to pass before we had recovered our nerve. Then Holmes and I both fired together, and the creature gave a hideous howl, which showed one at least had hit him. He did not pause, however, but bounded onward. Far away on the path we saw Sir Henry looking back, his face white in the moonlight, his hands raised in horror, glaring helplessly at the frightful thing which was hunting him down.

But that cry of pain from the hound had blown all our fears to the winds. If he was vulnerable he was mortal, and if we could wound him we could kill him. Never have I seen a man run as Holmes ran that night. In front of us we flew up the

SHERLOCK HOLMES ● THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES

track we heard scream after scream from Sir Henry and the deep roar of the hound. I was in time to see the beast spring upon its victim, hurl him to the ground, and worry at his throat. The next instant Holmes had emptied five barrels of his revolver into the creature's flank. With a last howl of agony and a vicious snap in the air, it rolled upon its back, four feet pawing furiously, and then fell limp upon its side. I stooped, panting, and pressed my pistol to the dreadful, shimmering head, but it was useless to press the trigger. The giant hound was dead.

Sir Henry lay insensible where he had fallen. We tore away his collar and saw there was no wound and that the rescue had been in time. Already our friend's eyelids shivered as he made a feeble effort to move. Lestrade thrust his flask between the baronet's teeth, and two frightened eyes were looking up at us.

"My God !" he whispered. "What was it ? What was it ?"

"It's dead, whatever it is," said Holmes. "We've laid the family ghost once and forever."

In mere size and strength it was a terrible creature which was lying stretched before us. It was not a pure bloodhound and it was not a pure mastiff; but it appeared to be a combination of the two—gaunt, savage, and as large as a small lioness. Even now, in the stillness of death, the huge jaws seemed to be dripping with a bluish flame and the small, deep-set, cruel eyes were ringed with fire. I placed my hand upon the glowing muzzle, and as I held them up my own fingers smouldered and gleamed in the darkness.

"Phosphorus," I said.

"A cunning preparation of it," said Holmes, sniffing at the dead animal. "There is no smell which might have interfered with his power of scent. We owe you a deep apology, Sir Henry, for having exposed you to this fright. I was prepared for a hound, but not for such a creature as this. And the fog gave us little time to receive him."

"You have saved my life. Now, help me stand up. What do you propose to do ?"

"To leave you here. If you will wait, one or the other of us will go back with you to the Hall. The rest of our work must be done, and every moment is of importance. We have our case; now we only want our man," said Sherlock. "It's a thousand to one against our finding him at the house," he declared as we retraced our steps swiftly down the path. "Those shots must have told him that the game was up."

"We were some distance off, and this fog may have deadened them."

"He followed the hound to call him off—of that you may be certain. No, no, he's gone by this time! But we'll search the house and make sure."

The front door was open, so we rushed in and hurried from room to room to the amazement of a doddering old manservant, who met us in the passage. There was no light save in the dining-room, but Holmes caught up the lamp and left no corner of the house unexplored. No sign could we see of the man whom we were chasing. On the upper floor, however, one of the bedroom doors was locked.

"There's someone in here," cried Lestrade. "I can hear a movement. Open this door !"

Holmes struck the door just over the lock with the flat of his foot and it flew open. Pistol in hand, we all three rushed into the room.

But there was no sign within it of that desperate and defiant villain. Instead we were faced by an object so strange and so unexpected that we stood for a moment staring at it in amazement.

The room had been fashioned into a small museum, and the walls were lined by a number of glass-topped cases full of that collection of butterflies and moths the formation of which had been the relaxation of this complex and dangerous man. In the centre of this room there was an upright beam, which had been placed at some period as a support for the old worm-eaten baulk of timber which spanned the roof. To this post a figure was tied, so swathed and muffled in the sheets which had been used to secure it that one could not for the moment tell whether it was that of a man or a woman. One towel passed round the throat and was secured at the back of the pillar. Another covered the lower part of the face, and over it two dark eyes—eyes full of grief and shame and a dreadful questioning—stared back at us.

In a flash we tore off the gag, unswathed the bonds, and Mrs. Stapleton sank upon the floor in front of us. As her beautiful head fell upon her chest I saw the clear red weal of a whiplash across her neck.

"The brute !" cried Holmes. "Here, Lestrade, put her in the chair ! She has fainted."

She opened her eyes again. "Is he safe ?" she asked. "Has Sir Henry escaped ? Is he safe ?"

"Yes."

"And the hound ?"

"It is dead."

She gave a long sigh of satisfaction. "Thank God ! Thank God ! Oh, that villain ! See how Stapleton has treated me !" She shot her arms out from her sleeves, and we saw with horror that they were mottled with bruises. "But this is nothing—

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nothing ! It is my mind and soul that he has tortured and defiled." She broke into passionate sobbing as she spoke.

"You bear him no goodwill, madam," said Holmes. "Tell us then where we shall find him."

"There is but one place," she answered. "There is an old tin mine on an island in the heart of the mire. It was there that he kept his hound and prepared a refuge."

The fog-bank lay like white wool against the window. Holmes held the lamp towards it. "See," said he. "No one could find his way into the Grimpen Mire tonight."

She laughed and clapped her hands in merriment. "He may find his way in, but never out," she said. "How can he see the guiding wands tonight ? We planted them together, he and I, to mark the pathway through the mire."

It was evident that all pursuit was in vain until the fog lifted. Meanwhile we left Lestrade in the house while Holmes and I went back with the baronet to Baskerville Hall. The story of the Stapletons could no longer be withheld from him. He took the blow bravely when he learned the truth about the woman he had loved. However, the shock of the night's adventures had shattered his nerves and soon he lay delirious in a high fever under the care of Dr. Mortimer. The two of them were destined to travel together round the world before Sir Henry had become once more the hale, hearty man that he had been before he became master of that ill-omened estate.

And now I come rapidly to the conclusion of this singular narrative, in which I have tried to make the reader share those dark fears and vague surmises which clouded our lives so long and ended in so tragic a manner. On the morning after the death of the hound the fog lifted and we were guided by Mrs. Stapleton to the point where they had found a pathway through the bog. It helped us realize the horror of this woman's life when we saw the eagerness and joy with which she laid us on her husband's track. We left her standing upon the thin peninsula of firm, peaty soil which tapered out into the widespread bog. From the end of it a small wand planted here and there showed where the path zigzagged from tuft to tuft of rushes among those green-scummed pits and foul quagmires which barred the way to the stranger.

Once only we saw a trace that someone had passed that perilous way before us. From amid a tuft of cotton-grass which bore it up out of the slime some dark thing was projecting. Holmes sank to his waist as he stepped from the path to seize it, and had we not been there to drag him out he could never have set his foot upon firm land again. He held an old black boot in the air. "Meyers, Toronto," was printed on the leather inside.

"It's worth a mud bath," said he. "It's our friend Sir Henry's missing boot."

"Thrown there by Stapleton in his flight."

"Exactly. He retained it in his hand after using it to set the hound upon the track. He fled when he knew the game was up, still clutching it. And he hurled it away at this point of his flight. We know at least that he came so far in safety."

But more than that we were never destined to know, though there was much which we might surmise. There was no chance of finding footsteps in the mire, for the rising mud oozed swiftly in upon them. As we reached firmer ground beyond the morass we all looked eagerly for them. But no slightest sign of them ever met your eyes. If the earth told a true story, then Stapleton never reached that island of refuge towards which he struggled through the fog upon that last night. Somewhere in the heart of the great Grimpen Mire, down in the foul slime of the huge morass which had sucked him in, this cold and cruel-hearted man is forever buried.

Many traces we found of him in the bog-girt island where he had hid his savage ally. A huge driving-wheel and a shaft half-filled with rubbish showed the position of an abandoned mine. Beside it were the crumbling remains of the cottages of the miners, driven away no doubt by the foul reek of the surrounding swamp. In one of these a staple and chain with a quantity of gnawed bones showed where the animal had been confined. A skeleton with a tangle of brown hair adhering to it lay among the debris.

"A dog !" said Holmes. "By Jove, a curly-haired spaniel. Poor Mortimer will never see his pet again. Well, I do not know that this place contains any secret which we have not already fathomed. In an emergency he could keep the hound in the out-house at Merripit, but it was always a risk, and it was only on the day designed to climax his efforts that he dared do it.

"Incidentally," continued Sherlock, "my inquiries show that the family portrait did not lie, and that this so-called Stapleton was indeed a Baskerville, the son of Rodger Baskerville, the younger brother of Sir Charles, who fled with a sinister reputation to South America, where he was said to have died unmarried. But he had one child whose real name is the same as his father's. He married Beryl Garcia, a Costa Rican beauty, and having embezzled public money, he changed his name to Vandeleur, and fled to England where he established a school in the east of Yorkshire which failed. The Vandeleurs found it convenient to change their name to Stapleton, and he brought the remains of his fortune, his schemes for the future, and his taste for entomology to the south of England. I learn at the British Museum that the name of Vandeleur has been permanently attached to a certain moth which he had been the first to describe."

After a pause, Holmes concluded, "I said it in London, Watson, and I say it again now, that never yet have we helped to hunt down a more dangerous man than he who is lying yonder" — he swept his long arm towards the huge mottled expanse of green-splotched bog which stretched away until it merged into the russet slopes of the moor.

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SOME PAST LUMINARIES OF WEST BENGAL

By Dr. B. C. LAW

M.A., L.L.B., Ph.D., D.Litt., Hony. F.R.A.S. Hony. Member, Paris Asiatic Society.

WEST BENGAL in the 18th and 19th centuries saw many eminent persons who made themselves famous in different spheres of life. It can boast of the first Bengalee officiating Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court in Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter, the first Indian Peer and the first Indian Governor of a British Indian province, and the first Law Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council in Lord S. P. Sinha, the first Bengalee Divisional Commissioner in Sir Romesh Chunder Dutt, the first Bengalee Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University in Sir Gooroodas Banerjee, the first Bengalee Sheriff of Calcutta in Rajah Digambar Mittra, the first Bengalee Port Commissioner in Maharaja Durga Charan Law, the first Bengalee Member of the Indian Civil Service in Satyendranath Tagore, the first Bengalee graduate of the Calcutta University in Bankim Chandra Chatterjee with Jadu Basu, the first Bengalee Justice of the Peace in Dwarkanath Tagore, grandfather of the poet Rabindranath, the first Indian Barrister in Ganendra Mohan Tagore, son of Prasanna Kumar Tagore, the first Indian High Commissioner in Sir Atul Chatterjee, the first Bengalee President of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in Rajah Rajendralal Mittra and the first Bengalee President of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishat in Sir Ramesh Chunder Dutt.

West Bengal is also proud of distinguished educationists, linguists, authors, poets, novelists, art critics, dramatists, experts in music, scientists, medical men, journalists, jurists, politicians, patriots, public men, philanthropists, patrons of learning, social and religious reformers, spiritualists, and merchants. In the following pages a brief account of some of the educationists, authors, linguists, poets, novelists, art-critics, scientists, jurists, and judges is given.

* * * *

RADHAKANTO DEB, who was born in Calcutta in 1784, the great grandson of Rajah Nabakrishna, Persian Secretary to Lord Clive, was an ardent student of Sanskrit literature. He tried to spread English education among his countrymen. He also advocated women's education. He was held in high respect by his countrymen for his exemplary character and unselfish devotion to literature. He is best known for his excellent and comprehensive Sanskrit Dictionary *Sabdakalpadruma.*

* * * *

RAM GOPAL GHOSE, who was born in Calcutta in 1815, received his English education from Derozio. He was the joint editor of *Jnanannesvana* and established a society for the acquisition of general knowledge. He placed the *Bengal Spectator,* a weekly publication, under the editorial charge of his friend Peary Chand Mitra. His deep interest in the cause of education is apparent from the support he rendered to David Hare. When the question of sending four students of the Medical College to England to complete their education was raised by Goodeve, Ram Gopal warmly supported him. The prejudice against crossing the sea was very strong at that time. Apprehending that the courage of the students might fail at the last moment, he stayed with them on board the ship the whole night before their departure to cheer up and encourage them and did not leave them until they had actually started. He was much in favour of women's education and sent his daughter to the girls' school established by Drinkwater Bethune. He was not only a man of culture but also showed his zeal and ardour in public matters. He took a most prominent part in every political movement of the day. He was the first to establish a society in England for political movement with the help of Mr. Adams, for the purpose of drawing the attention of the British public to Indian questions. He was distinguished for his great oratorical power. In 1864 when the Government of Bengal desired to remove the burning ghat from Nimtollah, he made an eloquent speech setting forth the grievances of

his countrymen. As a promoter of education, a patriot, a politician, a speaker, a social reformer, a successful merchant and a man of character, Ram Gopal was one of the foremost men of his time and did much for the advancement and enlightenment of the Hindu society.

* * * *

RAMTANU LAHIRI, who was born in 1813, was a free student of the school founded by David Hare now known as Hare School. He was a pupil of Derozio. Ram Gopal Ghose, Rev. K. M. Banerjee, Raja Digambar Mittra, Russik Mullick and Raja Dakshina Ranjan Mukherjee were his class fellows. He began his life as a teacher. He was a reformer in his days. He was famous for the courage of his opinion, his truthfulness and sincerity of his feelings. He led a blameless life and bore an exemplary character.

* * * *

K. M. BANERJEE, who was born in 1813, was educated at Hindu College. He embraced Christianity in 1832. He published 13 volumes of the *Encyclopædia Bengalensis* in English and Bengali with the help of the then Government. He published his works on the six *darsanas* or the philosophical systems of the Hindus. In recognition of his scholarship, the honorary degree of Doctor of Law was conferred on him. He was not only a man of culture but also an able administrator. He managed the Sunderban property of his son-in-law.

* * * *

PEARY CHAND MITRA, who was born in Calcutta in 1814, was a literary veteran, a devoted worker, a distinguished author, a clever wit, an earnest patriot and an enthusiastic spiritual enquirer. In advanced years he became a theosophist. He contributed many articles to the *Bengal Spectator*, *Bengal Harkara*, the *Englishman*, the *Indian Field*, the *Patriot*, etc. He worked hard for the improvement of women's education. He was the author of *Ramaranjika*, *Abhedi* and *Adhyatmika*. He used to write his books under pseudonym of Tek Chand Thakur. His *Alalergharer Dulal* or the *spoilt child* surpassed all his works in literary power and sense of humour. He was one of the founder members of the British Indian Association. His life was one of public usefulness. He was a true cosmopolitan in spirit but in manners a gentleman.

* * * *

MAHARSHI DEBENDRA NATH TAGORE, who was born in 1818, was educated at the Hindu College. In 1839 he founded the *Tattvabodhinisabha*. Its journal the *Tattvabodhini Patrika* contains many valuable and useful articles. Debendra Nath was an orator of repute. His stirring appeals to the human heart served to reclaim many a wanderer from the path of duty. His impassioned eloquence led greatly to the success of his high mission as a reviver of religion. He formally joined the Brahmo Samaj in 1842 and in the following year he introduced the Brahmic covenant. After the failure of Union Bank he showed a conspicuous sense of integrity by taking on his shoulder the debts which he could have repudiated as not personal. The consequence was grave. He was obliged to part with many of his valuable properties to clear the debts. Such a great sacrifice at once raised Maharshi Devendra Nath's reputation for honesty and upright conduct.

* * * *

ISWAR CHANDRA GUPTA was a born poet, famous not only for his witty and alliterative writings, but also for his patriotic themes. Born at Kanchrapara near Calcutta in about 1806, he exhibited his poetic ability and exceptional memory, when he was in his teens. With the aid of Jogendra Mohan Tagore, a grandson of Gopi Mohun Tagore, he started a Bengali Weekly, later a daily, *Samvadaprabhakara*. He helped in editing another newspaper *Samvada Ratnavali* and also published two more short-lived journals. He earned his living entirely by his writings. His contribution to the growth of Bengali literature is invaluable. He translated into Bengali a number of Sanskrit religious texts. He travelled many years to collect data on the life and work of the literary figures of ancient Bengal and published a number of valuable works, based on them.

* * * *

PANDIT ISWAR CHANDAR VIDYASAGAR, who was born in 1820, was educated at Calcutta Sanskrit College. He was the head *pandit* of the College of Fort William. In 1851 he became the Principal of the Calcutta Sanskrit College. In the Act of Incorporation of the Calcutta University established in 1857, he was named one of its first Fellows. The life of this eminent Bengalee may be studied from different aspects : (1) as an educationist, (2) as an author and editor of various publications, (3) as a social reformer and (4) as a philanthropist. He combined a fearless independence of character with great gentleness and simplicity of a child in his dealings with people of all classes. He was a stern disciplinarian and a model of patience and perseverance in literary work. He toiled with remarkable zeal and intelligence as a Government officer. His Sanskrit grammar in Bengali and his Bengali books are of immense educational value. He published a Bengali version of the *Betal Panchavimsati* which is regarded as a model of excellent style. He supported his advocacy of women's education by quotations from the ancient *sastras* and he co-operated with Drinkwater Bethune in the establishment of a girls' school and secured pupils for it from respectable families. He started the Metropolitan Institution in 1864 to impart higher and lower English education. He was an orthodox Hindu. He started widow-marriage movement and the anti-polygamy movement. The Hindu Widow Marriage Act was passed in 1856 and the first widow marriage took place in the same year. Iswar Chandra had a very soft heart. He had a firm faith in the ultimate triumph of truth and justice.

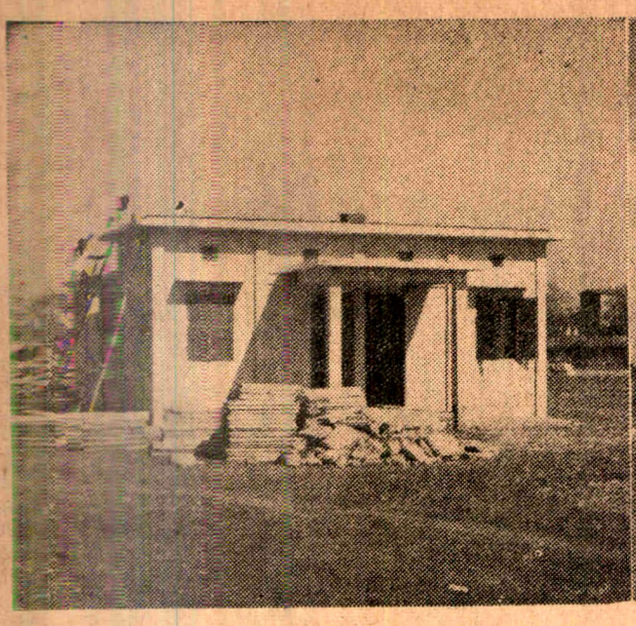
* * * *

BHUDEB MUKHERJEE, who was born in 1825, was eminent in his generation for his literary ability and character. He was a man of great strength of mind. He studied the Vedanta philosophy for some years at Benares. He then came back to his Chinsurah home in the District of Hooghly and established a *Chatuspathi* for Sanskrit learning. Among his writings *Parivarik-Prabandha*, *Samajik-Prabandha*, *Achara Prabandha* bear testimony to his wide culture, critical acumen and clear understanding of our Indian thought, liberal views on social subjects and his thorough grasp of eastern and western philosophy. He was never frivolous: his personal influence was elevating and his conversation was grave but cheerful, instructive and suggestive. In the opinion of the distinguished historian, Sir Roper Lethbridge, "Vidyasagar was the very ideal of a high-minded, benevolent and intellectual Brahmin of the old school; Krista Das was the model of the kindly, clever, versatile man of the world. But Bhudeb in his later years seemed to me to combine some of the best qualities of both these great men." The *Education Gazette* and the *Siksadarpana* or the 'Mirror of Teaching' were edited by him.

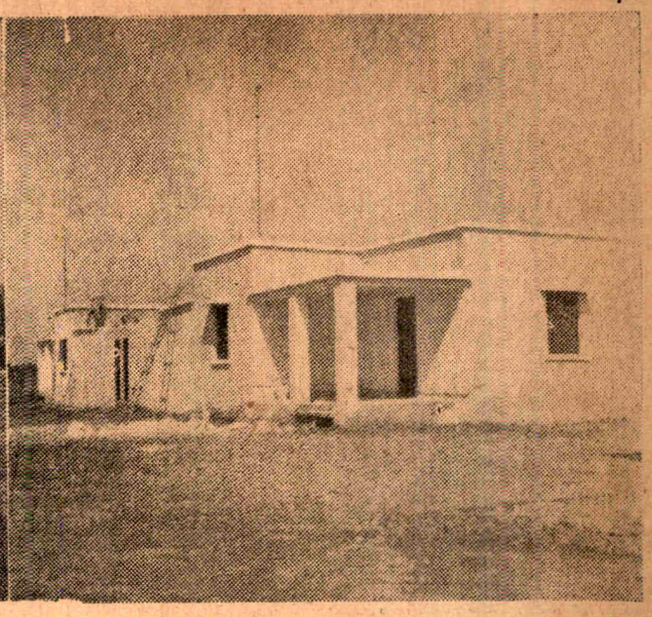
* * * *

RAJAH RAJENDRA LAL MITRA, who was born in 1824 at Sura in the suburbs of Calcutta, was a good Sanskrit and Persian scholar. He was at first a Medical student. He gave up the study of Medicine

(Continued on Page 77)



View of the 2-roomed house out of country bamboo reinforcement



View of the 2-roomed house out of stabilised - soil.

Trends Of Low-Cost-Housing In India

By A. N. KERR, Engineer.

The writer of the article has made an extensive research on the line of Low-Cost-Housing and thinks "Improved proportion of materials" and "new method of design and construction" as stated in this article will be able to tackle successfully the vital problem of Low-Cost-Housing in India.

THE problem of tropical housing is of great importance. Half the population of the world lives in this region under sub-standard conditions. In large cities there is congestion all round and slums are numerous while in villages where 85 per cent of the population lives, accommodation is meagre and all civic amenities are generally absent. The accommodation generally consists of a tiny room shared by men, women and children. Tuberculosis, pneumonia and cholera etc., cannot be controlled. Sleep is often impossible. The morality question arises. Ventilation and light are inadequate, floors are dirty and muddy, roofs are low, dirty and inflammable. The lack of sanitation is almost always dangerous to health. The water supply is inconvenient and frequently contaminated.

The problem of improving these conditions is complex both from social and economic aspects. During the last world war there has been considerable devastation which was fought on the soil of some of the countries of the region. In some other parts there have been intense political changes which necessitated the movement of population on a large scale, rendering millions of people homeless.

The past few years during and after the last world war have seen a steep rise in the cost of living. Building costs have gone up by about 300 per cent or so, more than the increase in the cost of living. The building industry in India to-day is quite a major undertaking and it also involves a large number of labour force, machinery, capital and plays a significant part in all phases of our life. All types of building activity in housing, multi-purpose [illegible], roads, irrigation, transportation etc., call for a fair proportion of the national expenditure. We are at present in the midst of a vast development programme, and we can say it is just the beginning of rapid urbanisation, especially in industrial areas. An ever increasing need for houses is being felt, and now organised attempts are being made in India to tackle the problem of Low-Cost-Housing on a national scale.

But this attempt will be a modest one if the general price index of all the building materials are low.

Building costs to-day are about 300 per cent as high as they were in 1939, which is quite justifiable from the point of view of rise in the general price index. Unless the cost of living index comes down wages cannot be reduced and therefore cost of production will remain high.

HIGH BUILDING COST

The housing costs in India are still higher because of high price of raw materials including steel and cement. The prices of the bricks, sand, and stone aggregate are also higher, due to high price of coal and transport charges which have to be added to the costs of productions at the brick fields and quarry sites. The important factor, therefore, which has a bearing on the price of building materials is Railway transport. I think the Government should temporarily reduce the freight for carriage of building materials by the railways as a subsidy or concession for solving the acute housing problem in India, which in order of priority is only next to food. Unfortunately this transport stands in the way of reducing the cost of the building. I may mention here that in almost all the cases, the cost of mate-

(Continued On Page 75)

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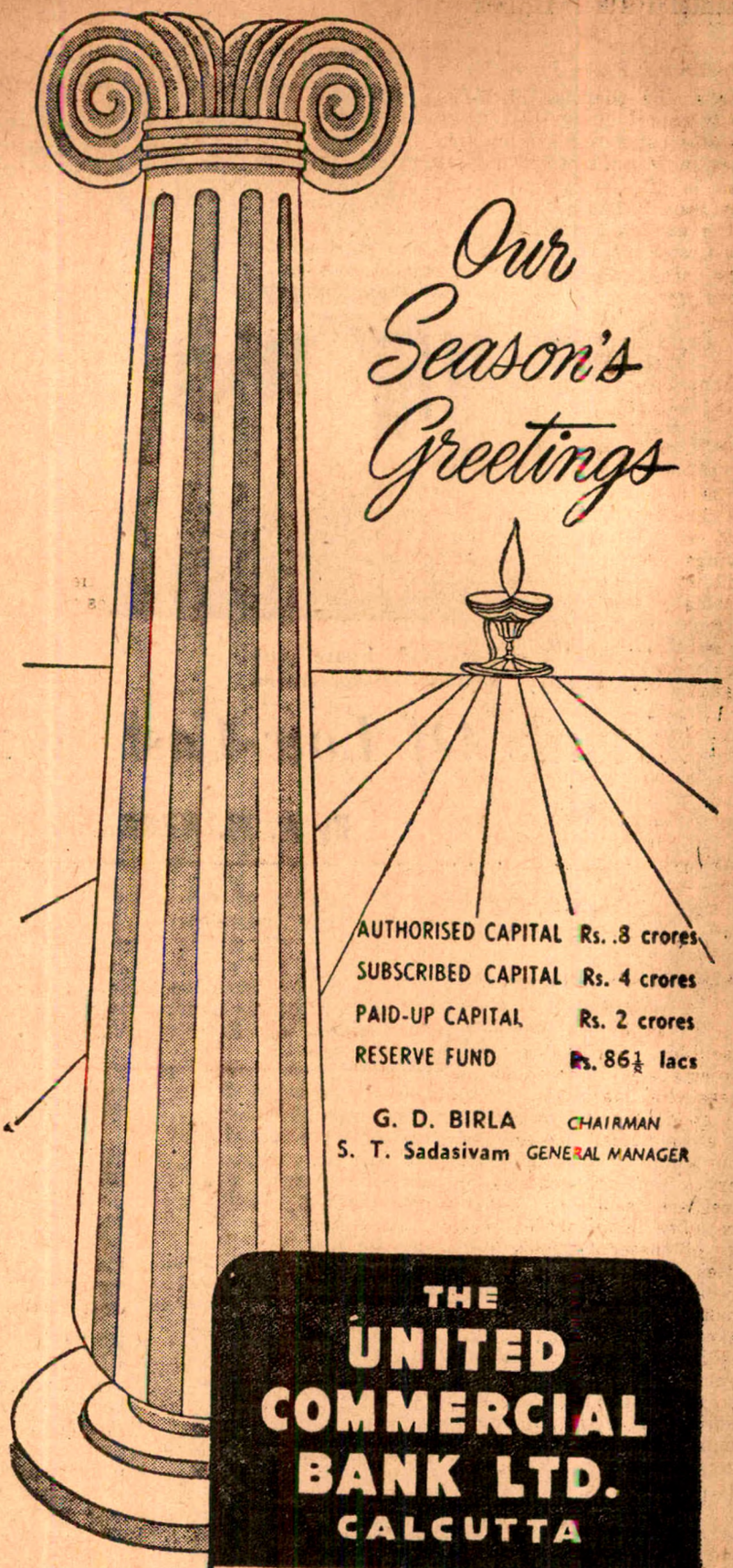

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(Continued From Page 73)

rials at the quarries, brick-fields or at factory, and the transport charges of the said materials at the site of construction are practically the same or sometimes more. Therefore, my appeal to the Government is, if they want to tackle this problem, that they should reduce the cost of the Railway freights in the way as I suggested above and I am sure this Low-Cost-House building could be possible on a large scale. Besides the transport cost as stated above lowering of building cost can be effected by:—

(a) Improvement of convertional building materials.
(b) Improved properties of materials.
(c) New method of design and construction standardisation of building components and their production.
(d) Mechanisation of construction techniques.
(e) Ancillary services for sanitation etc.

The cost of building materials comes to 70% to 75% of the total cost of the building. Considerable savings, therefore can be effected by economising on building materials alone.

Many new materials have been developed in various countries of the world and a large measure of prefabrication has been recommended in the building industry in order to speed up construction of urgently needed structures.

Basically it is correct to say that architects, engineers, and builders all over the world still largely favour the use of conversional materials used and tested over many years, namely cement, steel, sand, stone aggregate and bricks. Fortunately for the building industry, these materials are available in all parts of country, although transport by Railways or lorries is involved. None of these has to be imported in this country with the exception of steel and cement. Once the new proposed steel plant comes to production, we will be self-sufficient in steel also.

PAUCITY OF MATERIALS

In India there are thousands of building projects started without a complete survey of our material resources of this country, and even the priority projects are hindered in execution due to want of these vital materials. It is obvious that in order to lay good concrete for a cubic ft. of cement consumed in a particular project two cubic ft. of sand and four cubic ft. of stone chips are required. It also very often happens that permits for cement and steel are issued to the consumers, almost five to six times in quantities greater than actual availability of these materials in our country. The authorities issuing these permits are not aware of the actual stock position or production capacity in our country with the result that a wild goose chase takes place for the acquisition of these materials leading to very undesirable practices. Various other types of cement suited to the varying needs of different constructions are envisaged for production in India, and attempts are also being made in the country to produce cement using such waste products from Industrial plants as blast furnace slags etc.

The use of bamboo should be encouraged as a substitute for steel in reinforcing concrete and as building materials for walling etc. Attempts since some time past, have been made, in different parts of the world, to replace steel by some other more locally available and cheaper materials. Studies undertaken in Germany and India show that bamboo could be successfully used to replace the steel in concrete specially in building construction. These materials should be treated before they are used for building purposes. As the bamboo absorbs considerable quantity of water and consequently expands in volume it shrinks and reduces in volume when allowed to dry. Such changes are highly undesirable. Moreover, the differential thermal expansion between the concrete and the bamboo makes it unsuitable for use in concrete constructions. In my opinion this material could be used in Low-Cost-House building after proper treatment as suggested below :

(a) Cutting the bamboos at proper age and their proper seasoning.
(b) Seasoning the bamboo under mother earth or in the water.
(c) In the scientific way the impregnation of the bamboo with various solutions and other surface treatments to make bamboo waterproof and unaffected by the harmful effects mentioned above. A coat of resin dissolved in alcohol with a subsequent coat of white lead has proved highly beneficial.

LIGHTWEIGHT AGGREGATES

The light weight aggregates lead to the reduction of the deadweight of the structure and reduce difficulties in handling. This could be used in structures mostly as non-load bearing members like partition walls etc. This aggregate could be classified as follows :—

(a) Naturally occurring aggregates.
(b) Aggregates obtained as by-products of industries such as air cooled slags, cinders, saw dust etc.
(c) Specially manufactured aggregates, such as foamed blast furnace slags, and those manufactured by heating certain clays and slates etc.

In India there is good scope for manufacture of light weight aggregates, specially, from our vast resources of clays, shells, slates and blast furnace slags. The blast furnace slag quenched with water also gives a good result as aggregate for concrete.

Lime has been extensively used in our country 35 years back for the building industry in India. I see no reason why we should not use more lime for Low-Cost-Housing, than we do now to save cement. When the resources of our cement in our country is limited, the lime could be used in place of cement. This can be done if the quantity of lime is standardised, like that of cement, and powdered lime is sold in sealed waterproof paper bags of standared weight. The Indian Standard Institution can be asked to draw up a standard specification of calcined dry powdered lime which can be slaked before use in mortar and plaster work as well as in lime concrete. For large works pan-mortar can be used for mixing lime mortar in requisite proportion of sand and 'soorkey' and so on.

NEW CONSTRUCTION METHOD

While considering the question of economy in building costs, the main factor is economic design. New concepts in design have been successfully adopted in other parts of the countries such as prestressed concrete or concrete in shells in roofs that has resulted in considerable saving of materials. The specification should be modest, so that, the use of indigenous materials and locally available raw materials and manufactured goods is practicable.

The stabilised soil has great potentialities in many areas of the region. The improved properties of soil is an ideal material for Low-Cost-Housing. The soil is stabilised by mixing the proper quantity of soil with cement which varies from 8% to 15% by volume of the compacted mixture depending on the nature of the soil. The soil having a colloidal or clay content requires more cement. When the pro-

(Continued on Page 93)

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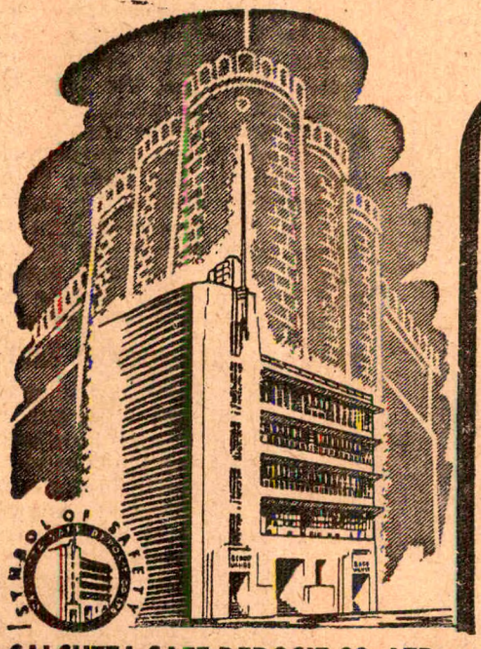

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SOME PAST LUMINARIES OF WEST BENGAL

(Continued From Page 72)

and prepared himself for Law. He gave up the pursuit of Law in disgust. The Law examination papers of the year in which he appeared were stolen and the examination was declared null and void. His notable contributions entitled *Buddha-Gaya, History of the Antiquities of Orissa,* The *Indo-Aryans, Nepalese Buddhist Literature,* etc. are monuments of extensive and patient research, deep erudition and sound reasoning. He started the *Vividharthasangraha,* a Bengali Magazine and the *Rahasyasandarbha.* He was the first Bengalee President of the Asiatic Society of Bengal founded by Sir William Jones. In recognition of his services to literature and archæology he was granted a special monthly pension of Rs. 500/-. The University of Calcutta conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Law.

* * * *

DINABANDHU MITRA was born in a village in the district of Nadia in 1829. After educating himself he took service in the Post and Telegraph Department. For his meritorious service the title of Rai Bahadur was conferred on him by the British Government. He was not only a dramatist but a poet. He closely came in contact with the celebrated poet Iswar Gupta. He used to write poems in the *Prabhakara* Magazine of Gupta. He made his name by writing the drama *Nildarpana.* It was translated into English by Mr. Long in 1860, who had to undergo imprisonment for translating it. Then he wrote *Nabin Tapasvini, Sadhabar Ekadasi, Lilavati, Kamalekamini, Jamaibarik,* etc. He was a great comic writer. He died in 1873.

* * * *

MICHÆL MADHUSUDAN DUTT was born at Sagardari in the Jessore district, which was then included in the 24-Parganas. In 1843 he was converted to Christianity. He made himself famous as a writer of prose and verse in English. He had knowledge of Greek, Hebrew, Latin, French, German and Italian. He was the creator of Bengali blank verse and he gave the first impetus to the creation of national drama and national theatre. Maharaja Sir Jatindra Mohun Tagore and Pratap Chandra and Iswar Chandra of Paikpara Raj family were his patrons. His masterpiece *Meghanadbadh-kavya* has immortalised him. His *Brojangana-kavya, Birangana-kavya, Krishnakumari* were his later productions. He was kind and charitable even in his straitened circumstances.

* * * *

LAL BEHARI DAY was born at Sona Palasi, a village in the district of Burdwan in 1826. In 1843 he was converted to Christianity. He is famous for his English style which is inimitable. He ably conducted the Bengali Journal *Arunodaya* and the English Journals *Indian Reformer* and *Friday Review.* His *Peasant Life* and *Folk Tales of Bengal* will be remembered for many generations to come.

* * * *

BANKIM CHANDRA CHATTERJEE was born in 1838 at Kantalpara in the 24-Parganas. He was the first Indian to take the B.A. degree in 1858 with Jadu Bose. His *Durgeshnandini* was his first attempt at Bengali novel-writing. In the *Indian Field* newspaper edited by Kishori Chand Mitra he wrote a serial story called *Rajmohan's Wife.* About 1873 he started the *Bangadarsana,* a monthly, devoted to criticisms and original articles. His *Kapalkundala, Bisavriksa, Krishnakanter Will, Chandrasekhar, Debichaudhurani, Rajsingha, Anandamath,* etc., are really important contributions to Bengali literature.

* * * *

RAMESH CHANDRA DUTT, who was born in Calcutta in the wellknown Dutta family of Rambagan, was noted for his fine literary works in Bengali as well as in English. He was the first among his countrymen to be the Commissioner of a Division in 1894. His devotion to culture was so very great that he taught Indian History in the University College of London. He completed a Bengali transiation of the *Rigveda* and wrote a number of excellent novels in Bengali e.g., *Madhavi-kankan, Bangavijeta, Jeevanprabhat, Jeevansandhya, Sangsar* and *Samaj.* Among his English works *Civilisation of Ancient India* is a notable contribution. He was the first President of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishat. He was an eminent member of the Indian Civil Service during the British Rule in India.

* * * *

HARAPRASAD SASTRI was born at Naihati in 1853. He was the Principal of the Calcutta Sanskrit College. He was a great Sanskritist and a well-known writer, editor, and translator. His descriptive catalogues of Sanskrit manuscripts are very useful. His *Valmikir Jai, Kanchanmala, Benermeye, Baudhyagano-doha,* are some of his notable contributions. He wrote thought-provoking articles in many well-known Journals of the east and west. He was well-versed in Mahayana Buddhism. Dr. Rajendralal Mitra found in him a very ardent and laborious helpmate. His unrivalled knowledge of Sanskrit literature and his highly critical acumen made him great. He was honoured by the Government of his time as well as by the learned academic societies and University.

* * * *

KALIPRASANNA SINGHA was born in Calcutta in 1840. His Bengali translation of the Sanskrit *Mahabharata* was a *monumental* work. The *Vidyotsahini, Samatattvaprakasika* and *Vividarthasamgraha* were some of the magazines conducted by him. He was the contemporary of Michæl Madhusudan.

* * * *

RABINDRANATH TAGORE, who was born in Calcutta in 1861, was a poet of international repute and was the first Indian to have won the Nobel Prize. His *Geetanjali* was his masterpiece. He showed his skill in every branch of literature, be it prose, poetry, short-story, novel, drama and even discourses on social, political, economic and educational matters. For some time he edited the *Bangadarsana* founded by Bankim Chandra. His lofty idealism drew largely and freely both on the ancient spiritual heritage of India and the new light of humanism shed by the dynamic civilisation of the west. He learnt Sanskrit from his father. He could enchant his audience with melodious recitation from the great Epics. His versatility knew no bounds. His songs mostly tuned to his own notations constitute a distinct school of music. He was honoured both by the East and the West.

* * * *

GIRISH CHANDRA GHOSH was a great dramatist and an actor also. He was born in Calcutta in 1843. He lost his parents at an early age. He started a theatre at Baghbazar where *Sadhabar Ekadasi* was staged. He successfully played the part of Nimchand. He was connected with several other theatres of his time e.g., National theatre, Star theatre, Minerva theatre and Classic theatre. He was the Manager of the Kohinoor theatre for some time. He wrote several Pauranic, historical and social dramas and

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Biological Aspects *Of* FAMILY PLANNING

By S. S. SARKAR

FAMILY planning is likely to increase steadily in urban literate societies. Its biological pros and cons, however, appear to be unknown to the mass, although they appear to be almost overwhelmed with all sorts of literature on the subject.

It will, therefore, be not out of place to examine how far family can be planned and whether human interference in our reproductive lives can override the hidden powers of nature. It should, first of all, be emphasized that family planning does not mean total control of children, rather raise a few of them according to the will and economy of the parents. It obviously means spacing of children and the complete control of unwanted children. In other words, pregnancy has to be controlled and initiated according to will. While the former, *i.e.* control of pregnancy is to a certain extent possible with the modern methods available, it is comparatively difficult to initiate a pregnancy whenever one desires it. We will discuss these two points from the biological angle.

UNWANTED CHILDREN

It appears that children are in the majority of cases unwanted; they appear as a matter of chance. An idea of it will be obtained from the reports of the western countries. Dr. Eliot Slater writes: "In the families studied by Mrs. Woodside and me, the families that planned to those that did not were as 5 : 2; and yet in the planning families about one child in three was the result of an accident. Taking all families together there were more children that were accidental than had been planned".

That child birth is an accident will be apparent from the following table taken from a later British study on Family Limitation.

TABLE 1

Percentage of success in Family Planning (women who planned a definite number of children at marriage)

	A Birth control not used		B Birth control used				
	1 % with unwanted child	2 Total No. of women	3 % with unwanted child	4 Last pregnancy due to failure of birth control %	5 Control not used in inter-pregnancy period before final pregnancy %	6 Control abandoned in inter-pregnancy period before final pregnancy %	7 Total No. of women
Planners	14	74	24	17	17	43	216
Non-planners	6	367	23	22	30	25	446

The table shows a peculiar feature, firstly in the group A having a lower percentage of unwanted children than that of Group B, and the author of the survey interprets this "successful designing" as due to the sub-fecundity of the women participating in the survey. Turning to group B we find that there is practically no difference between the planners and the non-planners so far as the unwanted children are concerned. An exactly same picture is obtained when the columns 4, 5 and 6 are added up. They yield a percentage of 77 for both the planners and the non-planners.

WANTED CHILDREN

Data on this point are very few. The British survey mentioned above has published some data, shown in Table 2. Obviously this criterion has to be tested with two kinds of women : (1) those who abandoned birth control to have children but without success, and (2) those who did not use birth control but were not pregnant.

TABLE 2

Effect of birth control at the final inter-pregnancy period

Total No. of birth controllers	(1) Birth control abandoned to have a child without success		(2) Birth control not used in final inter-pregnancy period yet had no pregnancy	
	No.	%	No.	%
849	23	3	91	11

It will be seen that only 23 women out of 849 abandoned birth control to have a child without success and thus their families were less than the

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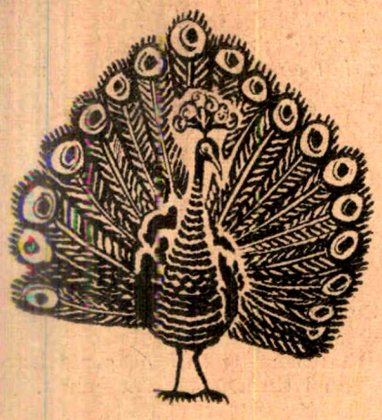

THE Peacock Throne

By Prof. O. C. GANGOLY

AS has been well remarked, the fame of Shah Jahan (1627-1659 A.D.), the Fifth Great Moghul on the Imperial throne of Delhi, rests not on administrative abilities or military achievements, but on the glories of architectural monuments that he set up and the pomp and magnificence that he created in the atmosphere of his court.

The glamour and pageantry, and the lavish and luxurious appointments of his court, dazzled the eyes of his contemporaries as well as those of the foreign visitors and ambassadors, who were greatly impressed by the splendours and brilliance of his architectural creations as well as the grandeur of the appointments and trappings of his daily life.

The Taj, the Moti Masjid, the Diwan-i-Am and Diwan-i-Khas, all invested the atmosphere of Moghul India with dazzling brilliance, achieved by the expenditure of fabulous wealth and material resources, which became a legend, which is recorded in the pages of Bernier and Tavernier with impressive rhetoric, which convey to us the atmosphere of the time, vividly and graphically.

WHOSE IDEA IT WAS

If the Taj has occupied the place of the Seventh Wonder of the World, the Peacock Throne was no less a piece of wonderful craftsmanship, which captured the imagination of the foreign visitors who spread wild stories of its beauty and magnificence. Yet, the history and legend of the Peacock Throne have raised many problems, and queries, which are not easy to answer.

It is said that the idea of constructing the Peacock Throne was conceived by Tamerlane and completed by Shah Jahan as an ancestral ambition, fulfilled by expending enormous sums of money and tons of jewels accumulated during the three previous reigns.

According to Abdul Hamid Lahori, the Court historian, the object of constructing the Peacock Throne was not only to add a romantic grandeur to the royal pageantry but to utilise *"precious jewels of great value which had been accumulated in the Royal Treasury in course of time, so that sight-seers might share the beauty of those products of the mine and ocean, and also that a fresh glory might be added to the Sultanate."*

It is recorded that the great Emperor ordered that the most beautiful jewels worth 86 lakhs of rupees and gold worth fourteen lakhs should be made over to the Superintendent of the Goldsmith's Department for the purpose of making a superbly magnificent throne—5 yards in height, 3½ yards in

length, and 2½ yards in width. It is said that the royal craftsmen took seven years to fulfil the Royal commission.

BERNIER'S ACCOUNT

Bernier has left an eye-witness' record of the impression of this royal furniture:

"The throne was supported by six massy feet, said to be of solid gold, sprinkled over with rubies, emeralds and diamonds. I cannot tell you with accuracy the number or value of this vast collection of precious stones . . . . . but I can assure you that there is a confusion of diamonds as well as other jewels, and that the throne, to the best of my recollection, is valued at four Krores of Rupees . . . . . The construction and workmanship of the throne are not worthy of the materials, but two peacocks, covered with jewels and pearls, are well conceived and executed. They were made by a workman of astonishing powers, a Frenchman by birth, named La Grange, who . . . . . sought refuge in the Great Mogol's court, where he made his fortune" (written at Delhi the first of July 1663).

TAVERNIER'S STORY

J. B. Tavernier, a French dealer in precious stones, was at Agra during the winter of 1640-41. He has left a slightly different description of the Peacock Throne.

> *"The largest throne which is set up in the hall of the first court is in form like one of our field-beds, six feet long and four broad....., the under-part of the canopy is all embroidered with pearls and diamonds, with a fringe of pearls round about. Upon the top of the canopy, which is made like an arch with four panes stands a peacock, with his tail spread, consisting all of sapphires, and other proper coloured stones; the body is of beaten gold, encased with several jewels and a great ruby upon his breast, at which hangs a pearl, that weighs 50 carats. On each side of the peacock stand two nose-gays as high as the bird, consisting of several sorts of flowers all of beaten gold enamelled."*

There are some material differences of details in these descriptions of two eye-witnesses. Bernier says that the throne had *two* peacocks, but Tavernier assures us that there was only *one* peacock. This discrepancy can be explained, if we suppose there were more than *one* Peacock Thrones.

As a matter of fact, Tavernier says, "The Great Mogul has *seven* thrones some set all over with diamonds; others with rubies, emeralds and pearls".

It is not clear if all the seven thrones had Peacocks as decorative effigies, — very probably, they all had Peacock decorations. At least, we have evidence of two with Peacock emblems.

LORD CURZON'S STORY

Now, it is well known that in 1740, the celebrated Nadir Shah had carried away from Delhi a throne with a Peacock's emblem (*Takht-i-Taous*). And it was at one time believed that this throne was still preserved in the Council Chamber of the Shah's Palace at Teheran.

But this legend was exploded by Lord Curzon in his work on Persia (Vol. I, pp. 317-322, 1892). He was able to establish that what had hitherto passed off as the Peacock Throne, was not the famous Indian Throne at all, but a comparatively modern furniture, constructed by Mahammed Hossein Khan, Sadar, or High-priest of Isfahan, for Fateh Ali Shah, when the latter married a Isfahani young lady, whose popular sobriquet (for some unknown reason) was Taous Khanum or the Peacock Lady.

> *"The King is further said to have been so much delighted with the throne that it was made a remarkably prominent feature in the ceremonies that commonly ensue upon marriage."*

In further demolition of the theory of the survival of Nadir Shah's famous loot from Delhi, Lord Curzon alluded to a passage in Fraser's "Khorassan" in which he mentions that an old Kurd tribesman told him in 1822, that *"when Nadir Shah was murdered and his camp plundered, the Peacock Throne and the Tent of Pearls fell into our hands and were torn in pieces and divided on the spot."*

Lord Curzon seems to accept this report. He, however, seems to support the claim of another throne, which, according to him, could be associated with the original throne of Shah Jahan.

TAKHT-I-MARMAR

According to Malcolm (History of Persia, II, p 37) Nadir Shah was so fond of the real Peacock Throne of the Great Moghul — that he had an exact duplicate of it made in other jewels. This is quite distinct and a separate piece from the wedding present of Fateh Ali Shah. It is now known as the Takht-i-Marmar, or white marble throne.

Some writers have supposed this also to be an Indian throne, and to have belonged to Nadir's spoils. But there are other aspirants to be considered as the original throne of Shah Jahan. For, there are two marble pedestals, now distributed between two museums on either side of the Atlantic. One is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and the other belongs to the Metropolitan Museum, New York. They came from the collection of Captain Tytler who was in charge of the Palace — after the capture of Delhi by the British troops — during the Mutiny and they were later on sold by his widow to the two Museums in 1892 and 1908.

These pedestals are supposed to be the survivals of a platform of marble richly inlaid with precious stones, on which the celebrated Peacock Throne once stood. They are small columns 22½ inches high, richly carved with square capitals 11 inches wide. The base is an octagonal strip likewise inlaid. There is no doubt that the style of the decoration is of the time of Shah Jahan, and is in the manner of the *pietra dura* work of the Taj.

These marble pedestals do not claim to be the actual Peacock Throne, but the supporting platform and the richness and beauty of the surviving legs worthily uphold the claim that has been made for them.

SHAH JAHAN'S FATE

There is yet another legend — recently revived. It has been said that Shah Jahan had no chance to sit on his Peacock Throne, as overtaken by his tragic fate he was imprisoned by his rebellious son.

This legend is based on the single testimony of Nicolas Manucci (who was in India between 1653 and 1708) : *"Their year commences on the 22nd March (Nauroz) at which time a great festival is*

(Continued On Page 83)

BIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF FAMILY PLANNING

(Continued From Page 79)

planned size. The effect of (2) class of women is however difficult to explain. Although they desired more children they may have been relying on the sub-fecundity of the growing years and the approaching menopause. From our standpoint, however, the two groups can be combined since both the groups wanted children and failed to obtain them. They make up 14% in a small group of 849 women.

AGE AND FECUNDITY

Age is an extremely important factor for child-bearing in women. Fecundity in women has a peak period and it is usually observed between the ages of 20 and 30. With the increase of age and birth of children fecundity is gradually lowered. The British survey has found in women never practising birth control a pregnancy rate of 45, 23 and 17 per 100 years of exposure for the first five years, the second five years and the third five years respectively. This means that the pregnancy rate is nearly halved in the second five years thus making a fecund woman sub-fecund. Then among all normal men and women there is a certain percentage of involuntary sterile ones. Next to this sterile group comes those sub-fecund ones. Many one-child families belong to this group (those suffering from uterine disorders exempted). We have no methods to diagnose these sterile and sub-fecund women prior to their marriage. Some hereditary anomalies like adipose-genital dystrophy and a few mental disorders, like mongolian imbecility, etc. however indicate sterility.

The importance of age factor in pregnancy will also be apparent from the wide variations in the effective copulations necessary to produce a pregnancy in the various ages. There is only one American study to this effect, which shows that the total coitus rates per pregnancy varies between 288, 298, 381 and 1522 for the age groups, under 20, 20—29, 30—39 and 40—49 respectively. The rate for all ages works up to 351.

Whether continued birth control practices lead to sterility has been a subject of great controversy. The British survey, already mentioned, is of opinion that it "does not appreciably reduce the power to reproduce". Contraception and criminal abortion almost go hand in hand. Reproductive wastage in U.S.A. has been found to be about 20% among contraceptors as against 6.9% among non-contraceptors. American studies, however, indicate a fertility differential which is due to the combined effects of contraception, criminal abortions together with the habit of postponement of marriages. It is difficult to isolate the relative influences of each of the above factors.

THE REMEDY

Family planning should not be resorted to irrespective of age and the family history of the fertility of the woman concerned. For the sake of healthy children birth control should not be used on young mothers. We are not yet competent enough to isolate the different disorders of the endocrines although the close connection of the pituitary gland of the brain with the sexual functions is well established. Feeble-mindedness is said to be increasing in all countries, specially among women. Is it in any way connected with their sexual lives ? Family planning should be used at the higher ages of women, usually after 30, when with the weakening of the biological process of fecundity it is almost a natural process. With the data at our hands, we cannot yet say how far it is effective in spacing children as it involves the risk of not having the wanted child. The risk is greater in the case of sub-fecund women than the fecund ones.

PEACOCK THRONE

(Continued From Page 82)

held, as I have said, (III, 10). The palaces are decked inside and out with high and costly hangings, made by order of Shah Jahan along with the throne, like a Peacock, of which I have spoken (II, 34). This is of great value, and the maker never had the felicity of seating himself upon it. Aurangzib was the first who upon the day of his coronation, had the benefit of ascending this superb seat". (Irvine's Edition, Vol. II).

Manucci has never been regarded as a reliable recorder of facts, and many of his assertions have proved to be bazar gossips with no truthful foundation. No other contemporary record confirms his single assertion, that Shah Jahan, who had the throne made, never sat upon it. On the other hand, Bernier, an eye-witness, has asserted, on first-hand testimony, that Shah Jahan did sit on the famous Peacock Throne. *"Never did I witness a more extraordinary scene. The King appeared seated upon his throne, at the end of the great hall, in the most magnificent attire".*

Then he proceeds to give a description of the throne, which we have quoted above.

PAINTER'S EVIDENCE

In addition to Bernier's eye-witness record, we have another piece of evidence which confirms the fact that Shah Jahan *did* sit on his Peacock Throne. This piece of evidence is a contemporary miniature painting — painted by one of the court-painters of Shah Jahan. The picture here reproduced (Page 81) — is from the Wantage Collection, South Kensington Museum, London. In this picture, we find Shah Jahan actually seated on his celebrated royal throne. That it was one of the Peacock Thrones is proved by the canopy of the throne on which we find two effigies of Peacocks. This will dispose of the canard of Manucci that Shah Jahan never sat on it. The pedestals of the throne (in the picture) appear to resemble the pedestals of marble richly inlaid with jewels, which Captain Tytler's widow sold to the museums. These two pedestals are the only tangible remains of the celebrated throne, of whose legendary magnificence Bernier and Tavernier have left glowing descriptions.

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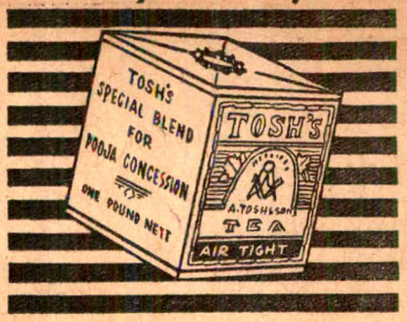

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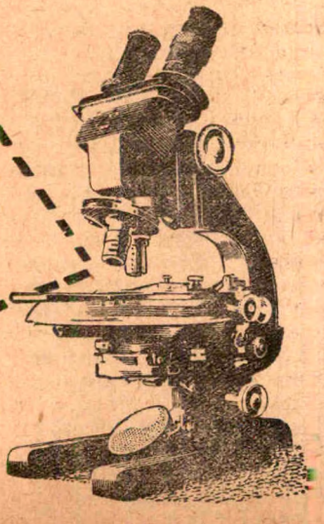

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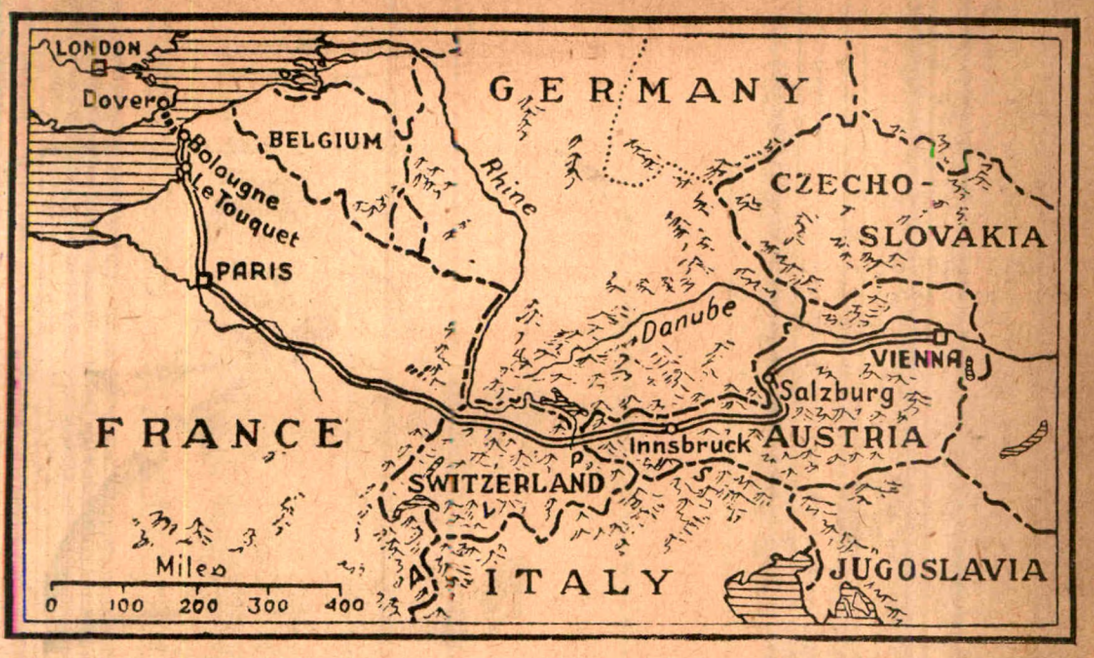

A MOTOR TRIP IN EUROPE

By CHITRITA GUPTA

SUPERSTITION goes that if you start your journey on the first day of a month, you are never to come back. But that holds good only in Bengal, if it holds good at all. So we left England and started for the Continent knowing it was 1st of June. We stopped the night at Dover and had to miss breakfast to be in time to drive in our car in the great womb of a lovely white ferryboat which very smoothly swallowed us all—some five hundred passengers and two hundred cars and bicycles and all. The boat was white as foam, somewhat like the white cliffs of Dover.

Shores of England vanished quickly from our sight and for a while it seemed as if we were in a great ocean, with no signs of land anywhere. But the sea-gulls were all along with us and the flapping of their wings reminded us that appearance is deceptive, and land is quite nearby and that it is only a channel, fairly narrow at this point, which separates England from the rest of the Continent. She was a very fast boat, and soon the French coast peeped out of the horizon through the greyish vagueness of a very sunny morning. Within an hour and a half from the time we started from England, we found ourselves on the land of France, seated in our car amidst long lines of others on the quay, looking at a big signboard written in large letters reminding us that we were in France and that we should have to drive on the right hand side.

The old customs officer gave us a smart little "Namaskar" as he let us off with our car with an all-knowing broad smile.

We did not know Bolougne at all and neither did we care for it much at first sight. So we decided to proceed towards Paris and stop for the night somewhere on the way. The morning was cheerful. We started slowly, letting the others pass by. We knew from sad experience that French drivers are French drivers and it is silly to argue with the We reached Le Touquet, a little town on the co line and decided to halt there for the night. It a lovely little airport and a very favourite place English tourists who cross the channel by air fe and stay there for a week or so to return to Engl with pride and satisfaction that they had spent th leave in France. It is a quaint little place full hotels and shops. We stopped in a small hc overlooking the sea. We could only manage it it was "off season", still we found everything e wonderful except the prices. There were very f people but the shops were still full of cute lit things. But we just kept our eyes off them and r for Paris the next morning as if it would be a better as regards prices. Big cities are really bet in matters of expenses than small popular holic towns as the former cater for the rich as well poor, while the tourists' places are mostly meant those who go there with a view to spend th savings and to think they had a jolly good time

We reached Paris on a rusty afternoon. It not possible to say anything of Paris except that is a big city, and quite dirty. It is so differe from London. Every inch of London except the c portion is planned out with symmetrical houses a parks and squares. But Paris seems to have gro out of her own accord and that is her charm.

NIGHTS IN PARIS

Our plan was still uncertain. Mr. J. B., secretary of the French P.E.N., who came to see in the hotel suggested that we should come back France after the P.E.N. Congress and spend the r of the time there, mostly in the south of Fra near Nice. Mr. J. B. had just come back fr Dacca where he was invited to attend a write

(Continued On Page 8

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(Continued From Page 85)

conference. "You cannot have any real impression of a country in such a short time", I told him, which gave him a point and he then reminded us that we could not see France by spending three nights in Paris. After a long discussion we decided to come back the same way and stay another three nights in Paris, of course not in a hotel, because an empty pocket can never reveal the true charm of a city specially like Paris. He said we must stay at the international club building of the P.E.N. This is only a few steps away from Champs' Elysses and is such a convenient place for writers who come to Paris from all over. He assured me that he would reserve two rooms for us. I remember, on our return, how we enjoyed staying there meeting French writers from California, Esthonia and Morocco, sipping coffee and talking and looking vaguely at the splendid gaiety of floodlit Champs' Elysses. It was such a contrast to London, where everything is closed after nine and even Piccadilly is dumb as dead at ten. But although nights were closed on the streets they were opened for the rich in the night clubs of Soho, and were suffocated for the poor in the ordinary pubs with smell of drinks and shouts of the drunk. But nights in Paris are open to all. Pavements are full of open air Cafes with groups of chairs under coloured umbrellas where any one may walk in and sit down for hours with a cup of Espresso Coffee or a glass of beer or champagne.

VENUS AND MONA LISA

From Paris, according to the A.A. we were to take Road no. 19 which would lead us to the Swiss border. We kept to the right while Parisians flew past us like an incessant throw of rockets. We did not have the slightest ambition to compete with them, on the contrary we were quite satisfied with our oriental speed. Seine kept us company by rolling along with us on the right, controlling her French spirit, and taming her speed by innumerable little bridges hiding here and there in the multitudes of buildings, stripping herself of all her glory as a river and submitting to the wishes of men, by being a mere sewage bearer. We took the Eastern road while from the hind glass of the car my two daughters saw Paris for the last time. The ugly silhouette of the Eiffel Tower stood like a guarding genie, scratching the clear blue sky with a dark deep scar. But the towers of Notre Dam swam in grace, like a pair of black swans on the greyish sea of innumerable clumsy buildings, vaguely shining under the mist of a bright sun.

We passed Louvre a few minutes ago while Lalli shouted goodbye to it. We could not devote much time to it this time just one visit to Mona Lisa, a trifle homage to that curious smile of pride and victory, mixed up together with a little affection with a twist of indulgence from the corner of the eyes revealing a true woman, proud and dignified yet soft with tenderness, like love itself, alluring and yet unapproachable. I never miss a chance of seeing her whenever I happen to be in Paris and try and think whatever she could talk for four years during her sittings before the great artist. Did they really love each other ? Or the expectation of love only ? It is so easy to discuss these things now while it must have been a dead secret in those days and meant such tremendous suffering for them.

But I did not care much for De Millo' Venus. This sculpture is a perfection of feminine form, they say. But I found it terribly commonplace in comparison with the most delicate and graceful female figures of our Ajanta caves. Not only the taste for beauty differs so much in the East and the West but real forms as well.

But letting aside the beautiful past and its wonderful art let us come back to this moving present which was passing quickly in a straight flat run under the wheels of our car, releasing each moment filled up with new land and new atmosphere, with such slow change in the scenery that it hardly showed the change at all. Fields were flat with occasional trees or poor huts but very natural specially to our eyes, while the English countryside is so picturesque that sometimes it seems almost on the point of being not only unnatural but artificial, as if you could frame them and hang them on the walls of your drawing room. I remembered when I first saw them several years ago, from a train while travelling from Liverpool to Bristol. My sore eyes which had its first impressions of England in Liverpool were soothed as they plunged in the oceans of fresh green, swaying in ripples and waves by the wind on both sides of the undulating earth. Big fat cows floated like little sail boats, neat little villages peeped through their pretty little curtains, while mothers pushed their blue eyed babies in lovely prams and men and their wives drove their tractors in their fields. I remembered how I breathed in the smell and drank with ecstasy and joy the beauty as it was held in a cup as it were before my eyes.

We passed many small villages which ran in the opposite direction with processions of different people, men, women, and children. Flickering scenes of French plains came like torrents of water, rushing to our eyes and fast moving away from them.

CARAVAN SHOP

It was a Sunday, and we could only bring some sandwiches and fruits as the children were all for a picnic. Lalli had been shouting for a long time that she was hungry enough to "eat" her picnic now. "The next nice spot," we assured her, "and we stop for a picnic". We could keep our promise very soon and stopped near a farm. There was a piece of lovely green between the hedged farm and the main road. A slim streak of water was bubbling round it. The place was knitted with white spots of daisies and a shaded lane cut it on its end. We brought our car to a halt suddenly. A lonely caravan stood there in another shaded corner. Khuku said it was a caravan shop, which indeed it was. We leaped out of the car and ran to the caravan as we heard music from there. A man was playing records and a woman preparing "Hot dogs" in an oil stove. So Khuku and her daddy finished off their lunch with a round of hot dog each and we all had a super picnic with icecreams as well. Air was fresh and there was a smell of nature everywhere. The sky was cloudless and blue. A long piece of barley field swayed in front of us while the place became full with the enchanting tune of "Moulin Rouge", that was being played from the caravan.

We lay on the grass on our back face to face with a wide blue sky while the little musical man sprayed on little thrills of music, and his big fat woman in a dotted apron served us bottles of cold orangeade, with a broad smile of rustic sympathy.

The run after lunch was flat and uninteresting and the sun being on one side kept on piercing me with its hot rays. We stopped for dinner at a little village, "Trois Maisons". "Three houses", cried Lalli. "Are these for the three bears ?" Quite possible, said her daddy. "But I see many more houses, whom do they belong to I wonder". "Perhaps the bears have grown large families and the houses probably belong to his sons, grandsons etc." "Is that so ?" Lalli widened her eyes and believed. In

(Continued On Page 89)

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(Continued From Page 87)

a moment Lalli had another idea. She started off, "It might be for the three little fairies, daddy," and I could see that soon there would be unending flow of questions and suggestions and so I pushed her a little forward and asked her to catch up with Khuku who was having a little run on the little garden in front of the small restaurant. We went in to try our luck. If it would be anything like it was in the morning we might get poulet Roti. But there was no sign of it though we saw chickens at the backyard of the hotel. Perhaps they were only to lay eggs which we had in our omelette. We thanked our stars, even to get that, with fresh new leaves of vinegared lettuce. It was half past eight but the daylight was still on. We paced around the back-yard of the hotel hand in hand all four of us while the fat red cow stared wildly at the bunch of foreigners. There were heaps of garbage on a corner and a smelly narrow canal flowed beside it. It was not very clean, on the contrary, quite dirty, and full of stench. But still it was a wonderfully peace-ful place and reminded me of our clumsy little vil-lages in the plains of Bengal.

SWISS BEAUTY SPOT

Then the two stops for the French and the Swiss customs to let the officers do their para-phernalia. It seemed so futile and just a show and meant nothing. But there was no way out of it. We always have to succumb to the show of civilisa-tion. The twilight was almost over and we were in the land of Helvetia. We stayed a few nights in a beauty spot of Switzerland on the bank of Rhine. The place was exquisitely decorated and surrounded by a park. We had a wonderfully peace-ful rest there after Paris, listening to the continuous music of the Rhine from our balcony and watching the quaint little town of Germany on the opposite bank.

We started for Vienna with a sweet memory of the country in boxes of Swiss chocolates presented to our daughters by the hotels.

We had to cross Austria right through the Alps, stopping a night in Innsbruck and another at Saltz-burg, two beauty spots of Austria. But these were too commercialised and too expensive for us. We were glad that we did not have to stay there long. We reached the border of Vienna on the 11th after-noon. As we saw long rows of trees, Pines, Chestnuts, Silverbirches and flashes of flowers, yellow and red, we recognised it to be the Viennese woods. We stopped our car, and got down and listened patiently, to find out if we too had the ears to hear the "Tales of the Viennese woods". "Will the fairies come out of the flowers if we keep quiet ?" shouted Lalli. "Yes", I whispered to her, and "so you must keep quiet". We strolled along the shady path strewn with dry leaves which crushed under our feet with a rhythmic murmur. I stopped for a while to hear the music of the forest with an yearning which some times springs up in the mind as if from nowhere and without any specific reason. But our ears were too deafened by the noises of modern cities and our eyes were too blurred with too many artificial brilliances. We could not be absorbed in Nature who of course waited patiently to receive us in her charm. Half our mind was calculating the time and the number of miles that would have to be covered. And just as we turned to move for our car the wonderful forest mocked and smiled at us with the twinkling of a pair of bright black eyes of a squirrel — a brown little squirrel was sitting on its hind legs with a hoisted tail under a chestnut tree and was eating a nut, holding it with its two hands, setting a pair of frivolous eyes on us, with a mixed expression of ridicule and curiosity. We had to bea it in mind and start for the city.

Vienna was lovely and sunny when we reache the city and the hotel booked by the Austrian P.E.N was extremely nice too. The other Indian delegat Dr. Hingorani was already there with the officer i charge of the legation of India — a very competen and nice man and his charming Australian wife.

Some other delegates from other countries cam in about the same time. We were all very anxiou to get ready soon. One of the American delegate perhaps showed a little impatience at the slow spee of the lift. The porter sensed it and remarked "Can't be helped sir, America may have money bu Vienna has time". The American admitted it wit a swear, but had to laugh at it too. As we entere our rooms we found on the table a bunch of flower and a note of welcome, from the Austrian P.E.N How very thoughtful of them !

The session opened next morning. It was grand experience indeed to see and hear the grea litterateurs from the different countries of the worl The sessions were held in a great big hall of theatre decorated with beautiful chandeliers wit cosy cushioned chairs. All the big officials includin the Education Minister and the Mayor were prese to welcome the representatives of world writers.

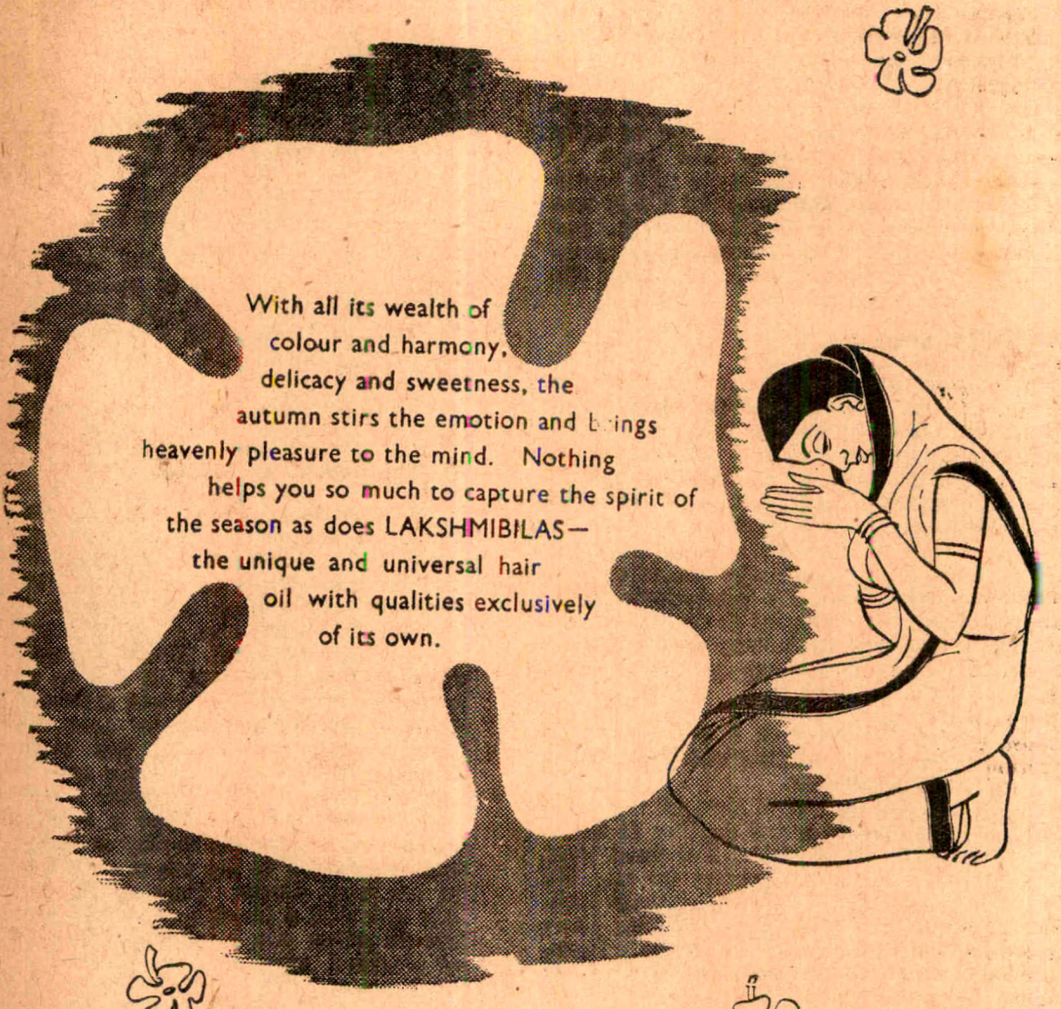
O TEMPORA, O MORES

I remembered the days of Vikramaditya and h gems. It was quite a tradition in our country fo the poets and writers to enjoy royal favour. N only the great kings as the ancient Mauryas, Gupta Kanishka and others, not to speak of Akbar ar Daraseko, it was even quite a fashion in rece times when the small Zaminders used to mainta the tradition of the past. It was an unbroken cha of customs for the kings and aristocrats to provi for the writers and honour them. We know Vidyapati and Joydeb being the court poets. B I am not so sure if it was the case in Europe to I do not know much about other European countri but Shakespeare never had a seat in the Briti Parliament neither did Shelley or Keats. Their far was established in the minds of the people and n in the royal courts. Thus sitting in the cushion box seat with a Greek poet and an American journ list on either side I reflected that though the la of England were more democratic, it also had tendency of being divorced from the social and cu tural sides of the people. The Government mig have been very just, but at the same time they we quite stiff and impersonal. But we were able digest many misrules in the past on account of personal touch and a friendly relation with our a cient kings and rulers.

The sessions were very impressive. Many em nent writers spoke. The theme of discussion w "Theatre as an Expression of Modern Age." It w so interesting to hear the different problems of d ferent countries about the development of drama a the theatre and the characteristic way in which ea spoke. The problem in America was that dram were becoming stereotyped, and developing more psycho-analytical complexes with deep set caus in childhood. The French speaker spoke with s cerity and tried to defend French theatres from t cheap entertainments with which they were alwa associated by the outsiders and laid stress on their trinsic artistic values. Italian speeches were a sincere but trembled with nervous emotion. As th

Continued On Page 9

Spirit of the season



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SOME PAST LUMINARIES OF WEST BENGAL

(Continued from Page 77)

comedies. *Grihalakshmi* was his last drama. He was a disciple of Ram Krishna Paramhamsa. He stood pre-eminent as an actor and dramatist of his age. He may be considered as the father of the Indian stage.

* * * *

DWIJENDRA LAL ROY was born in 1863. After taking his M.A. degree he went to England as a State scholar to study agriculture. He was appointed Deputy Magistrate. In spite of his heavy duties as a State servant he devoted himself to writing poems, dramas, etc. He wrote many well-known dramas, e.g., *Mewar Patan, Durgadas, Rana Pratap, Chandragupta, Shah Jahan, Banganari, Parapare, Vircha,* etc. His famous songs are known as *Amardesa, Amarbhasa, Amarjanmabhumi* and *Bharatvarsa.* He died in May 1913.

* * * *

ABANINDRANATH TAGORE, who belonged to the Tagore family of Calcutta, was an outstanding scholar of art and literature. He was born in 1871. He was accepted as an authority on ancient Indian art techniques. His contribution to juvenile literature and drama is unique. He was fortunate in having many good pupils, who made themselves famous in the domain of fine arts by his able guidance and valuable assistance.

* * * *

SAURINDRA MOHAN TAGORE, the younger brother of Maharajah Sir Jatindramohan Tagore, was a reviver, interpreter, and improver of ancient Indian music. In 1871 he founded the Bengal Music School situated on the Chitpur Road, Calcutta. His *Sangitsara* is a work on the theory of music. His *Jantrakosa* contains a full account in Bengali of the construction of musical instruments of various countries. His Bengali translation of Kalidasa's *Malavikagnimitra* and his English translation of the Sanskrit drama *Venisamhara* are worth perusal.

* * * *

BROJENDRA NATH SEAL was born in Calcutta on the 3rd September 1864. After finishing his brilliant College career he was appointed a Professor of English literature in the City College. He then served as the Principal of Morris College, Nagpur, and then as the Principal of Cooch Behar College. He was one of the best thinkers of his age. He visited England, France and other European countries. He helped Sir P. C. Ray in compiling the second volume of his *History of Hindu Chemistry.* He was subsequently appointed King George Fifth Professor of Philosophy in the University of Calcutta. He wrote his famous work, *Positive Sciences of the Ancient Hindus.* He remodelled the Mysore University according to his ideals. He was closely associated with the Indian Research Institute till his death and used to give valuable suggestions to its energetic Secretary, Sri S. C. Seal. He was aptly described as a moving encyclopædia. His life was dedicated to the quest after truth. He was undoubtedly one of the greatest philosophers of the world. He studied animal psychology, child psychology and abnormal psychology. He was well posted in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon-languages. He had keen interest in mathematics and taste for fine arts and archæology. Rabindranath wrote a poem felicitating his inexhaustible store of knowledge. He was equally praised by Dr. Sadler for his profou erudition and critical judgment. He died sudde on the 3rd December, 1938.

* * * *

HARINATH DEY, born in 1877 at Ariadah Dakshineswara, was a great linguist and a no scholar. West Bengal has not up till now seen a linguist like him. He mastered many langua and his English rendering of some Pali verses p lished in the *Herald* shows his rare skill in tran tion. His interpretations of many knotty points very suggestive and clear. He could easily solve riddles and make difficult matters quite intelligibl

* * * *

ACHARYA PRAFULLA CHANDRA RAY was born 1861 in the district of Khulna which was then cluded in the 24-Parganas. His notable work *Hist of Hindu Chemistry* will immortalise his name the world of scholarship. He was not only a C mist but an industrialist. He was one of the found of the Bengal Chemical and Pharmaceutical Wor He was very charitable and kind to the poor. H his vast erudition and critical judgment he w honoured both by the Government of his time a the Universities.

* * * *

RAMENDRA SUNDAR TRIVEDI, who was born 1864 at Murshidabad, was a great scientist. contribution in Bengali language to the domain science is great. He wrote valuable books entit *Prakriti, Jignasa, Karmakatha, Charitakatha a Vichitraprasanga.*

* * * *

PRASANNA KUMAR TAGORE, who was born 1803, joined the bar of the Sudder Dewani Ada in Calcutta as a pleader. He was a very success practitioner. He was one of the hereditary go nors of the Hindu College. Lord Dalhousie appoi him the clerk-assistant to the Legislative Council the Governor-General, a post in which he sho conspicuous ability. The creation of Tagore P Professorship in the Calcutta University was of his best acts. He was noted for his charity generosity, liberality and public spirit. In 1832 was one of those who expressed his opinion in address to the King of England for the dismissa the appeal of some Hindus against the abolitio Suttee by his Majesty in Council.

* * * *

DWARKA NATH MITTER, who was born in 1 in a village in the Hooghly district, received hi education in the Hooghly College. He was not well acquainted with Mathematics and English also well posted in French. He joined the ba the Sudder Dewani Adalat in 1856. He picke a good practice within a short time. He attra the notice of the two leaders of the bar, Rama Pr Roy and Sambhu Nath Pandit. In 1867 he raised to the Judgeship of the Calcutta High C in his 34th year. His merits were highly appreci by Sir Barnes Peacock, who was then the C Justice. The judgments of Dwarkanath give en evidence of his great learning, ability and rese By his premature death the country was dep of a most learned, upright, able and indepe judge.

* * * *

RAMESH CHANDRA MITTER, who belonged Kayastha family of the 24-Parganas, acquire putation of being one of the soundest lawyers. was offered a seat on the bench of the Calcutta Court after the death of Dwarkanath Mitter. D

ıe absence of Sir Richard Garth he acted as the fficiating Chief Justice. He had to retire from the ench at an early age on account of his ill-health. lis amiable character endeared him to all.

* * * *

SAMBHU NATH PANDIT was a well-known lawyer. Ie was born in 1820 at Bhowanipore in Calcutta. ı 1861 he was appointed a Government pleader. Ie was also a judge of the Calcutta High Court. Ie was the President of the Bhowanipore Brahmo amaj.

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GOOROODAS BANERJEE, who was born in 1844, as a brilliant student of the Calcutta University. e joined the Calcutta High Court bar in 1872, btained Doctorate in Law in 1876 and was appointed agore Law Lecturer in 1878. He was appointed judge of the Calcutta High Court in 1888, which ost he honourably held till his retirement in 1904. e was the first Bengali Vice-Chancellor of the alcutta University. Brought up in penury in early fe he did much for the betterment of the lot of eedy students and himself lived a simple austere fe till his death. His treatise on the *Law of ridhan* is recognised as the authoritative book on e subject. His Bengali book *Karma-o-gnana* won r him immense respect. Not only his positive terest in multifarious literary activities but also s own versatile scholastic attainments were widely cognised.

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SARADA CHARAN MITRA, who was born in 1848 a small but populous village of Panisahala in the strict of Hooghly, was a distinguished graduate of e University of Calcutta. After passing the Law amination he started practising in the Calcutta gh Court. His able arguments on facts frequently cited praise from the bench and the bar. He receiv- invaluable help and advice from Dr. Surya Kumar rvadhikari, who was his *de facto* guardian. He iciated as a judge of the Calcutta High Court and as confirmed in his post on the retirement of Sir oroodas Banerjee. He was deeply interested in ngali literature and in order to be able to serve more devotedly he stepped out of the High Court nch in 1908. He presided over many literary nferences and became President of the Bangiya hitya Parishat more than once. He was also the esident of the Sahityasabha. He published an notated edition of Vidyapati's works. His articles Vidyapati were published in some issues of the *achina Kavya Samgraha* jointly edited by him and ijukta Akshay Kumar Sarkar. He edited the *ayastha Patrika*. He wrote a very interesting ticle on the philology of the Bengali language for C. Mukherjee's magazine. He was an advocate a single script for the whole of India. Before he k his seat permanently as a judge he was deputed the then Government with Mahamahopadhyaya raprasad Sastri to report on the Budh-Gaya dis- te. His report was considered as a monument of rning, industry, and ability, and above all, im- rtiality.

* * * *

RASH BEHARI GHOSH, who was born in a village the Burdwan district, was a brilliant lawyer, a ceful orator, and above all, a great patron of hnical education in India. He started legal prac- e in the Calcutta High Court and in a few years lt up a great reputation in the profession. His course on the *Law of Mortgage in India* delivered the Tagore Law Lecture to the Calcutta Univer- y was acclaimed as highly authoritative. He atly helped in drafting the Civil Procedure Code 1908. Besides his profound knowledge of Law, he was distinguished for his mastery over the English language. After the partition of Bengal under Lord Curzon he came to associate himself with the national political movement and became the President of Indian National Congress in 1908. He made a princely gift of over fifteen lakhs to Calcutta University for technical and scientific education.

* * * *

WOOMESH CHANDRA BONNERJEE, was was born at Kidderpore, a suburb of Calcutta, will long be remembered for his being the first President of Indian National Congress, which had its first session in Bombay in 1885. He developed a keen interest in law when he was employed as a clerk in a solicitor's office. He was a well-known barrister and twice declined the offer of Judgeship of Calcutta High Court. He was the first Indian to be appointed Standing Counsel. He made his mark in the profession during the famous Contempt of Court proceedings against Surendra Nath Banerjea. In 1902 he went to England and carried on legal practice in the Privy Council. He died in England in 1906.

* * * *

ASHUTOSH MOOKERJEE was born in Calcutta in 1864. His father, who was a medical practitioner, hailed from the Hooghly district. Completing his brilliant academic career Ashutosh began practising at the Calcutta High Court. He was appointed a Judge of the Calcutta High Court in 1904 and officiated as Chief Justice in 1920. A brilliant scholar, an eminent jurist and a flourishing lawyer he made his deepest impress as a devoted and outstanding educationist. He held the position of the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University for some years. It was through his bold and far reaching efforts that the University of Calcutta attained great fame and stature. He was the President of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. He used to encourage students and scholars alike to produce intelligent and useful work in the field of culture.

* * * *

SATYENDRA PRASANNA SINHA was the first and the only Indian who was honoured with a hereditary British Peerage. He was also the first Indian to be a Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council as well as to be a Governor of a British Indian Province. He was born at Raipur in the Birbhum district in 1863. He joined the Lincoln's Inn in England to study law. He came back to Calcutta after sufficiently qualifying himself to practise as a barrister in the Calcutta High Court. In recognition of his great success at the bar he was appointed Standing Counsel and later Advocate-General. He was elected President of the Indian National Congress. He had the unique distinction of being a Member of the War Conference in Britain during the First World War and representing the Government of India at the subsequent Peace Conference. He was appointed Under Secretary of State for India. In 1920, with the introduction of Montford Reforms he was given the full-fledged Governorship of Bihar and Orissa but due to ill-health he had to relinquish this office only a year after.

A MOTOR TRIP IN EUROPE

(Continued From Page 89)

spoke in French and German I took the earphone for listening in to the English rendering and looked at the poor translators who were shut up there in small glass cages in one corner of the room. I could see the incessant movements of their lips and the perspiration gathering on their forehead and could imagine what they were going through.

Anyway we really enjoyed the P.E.N. Congress, specially my husband who was present there as my guest, and attended all the receptions and parties scrupulously avoiding all meetings. He told them he preferred dinners to lectures and while we were shut up gaining knowledge about the theatre he had the whole Vienna to roam about with a couple of cameras hung on his back and a bright sun to help him. They all envied him and assured him that they would have liked to have done the same but were afraid to do so.

Besides the sessions and meetings our times were booked up with receptions and parties held in most luxurious palaces of Vienna, which are now reserved only for big receptions and banquets.

WEST & EAST

The most impressive one was at the palace of the Empress Maria Theresa. The 17th century palace is called Schonnbrunn, meaning the beautiful castle. All the members and delegates were there. There was an informal atmosphere all round inspite of it being a State reception given by the Chancellor. I remember Lord Pethick Lawrence being present there. He was an extremely nice man and told me how he had to argue about India in the Parliament, on his return from the Cabinet Mission. "But how are you going to keep up the standard and produce more riches and luxury when you have lost India and will ultimately have to lose all your Eastern territory ?" I asked him pointblank. "Yes", he agreed "we have lost the East but we have achieved something else — it is the atomic energy. If we could use it for peaceful developments we could do wonders." "But don't you think it is better to limit our wants somewhere and not to progress at such a fast rate ?" "Oh no," he said, "we must go on progressing. We the men of the West do not believe in such Eastern philosophy as yours. We must stop nowhere and ambition has no limit. Demand of hunger must be met, and the men would have to be provided for by some means or other. The world has still sufficient resources to provide for all". We all talked a good deal with each other that night. Schonnbrunn was really a Schonnbrunn with great big gilded halls of white marble beautifully decorated with chandeliers, exquisite flowers, and costly velvet curtains.

While I stood in the mirrored luxurious hall which was supposed to be the dressing room of Maria Theresa, I reflected once more what was after all real and what unreal and where are the values ? What different scenes were played here only two hundred years ago. How the Empress used to roam about in these rooms planning her daughter's marriage to France. She exists no more except in the pages of history and to her we did not exist at all. But still she was there, and we are here, only with a thin curtain of two hundred years between us. I looked out of the balcony. A great big moon was shining, flooding the tree tops of the garden, softening the marble figures into a haze of dreamy silvery light.

We had our last session in the great hall of the University and the last reception given by the Mayor in the Townhall. The Mayor presented us with a nice book about Austria. There was an autograph hunting expedition in the evening. My sari was an attraction and I remember how hesitantly they would come and would apologise to admire my dress, and would request for an autograph. We really cannot remember all the members and the delegates we met. Neither will they remember us, but still we cannot deny that even that short temporary meeting had a real effect on all of us. We talked and discussed about the fundamental affinity of our thoughts. And when we said goodbye amidst clicking of cameras all round, once more I thought that cultural movements were the only effective means of uniting the world for one great cause at the same time preserving the customary and the traditional distinction of races.

LOW-COST-HOUSING

(Continued From Page 75)

portion of clay is high, sand or gravel may be mixed in certain proportions to reduce the clay content per unit volume, and thus to reduce the cement required. Chemical and mechanical properties should be considered to decide soil and aggregate mixture.

Soil stabilisation when properly carried out produces materials which are not brittle and are not liable to crack like a purely concrete surface. This soil cement stabilised could be used in the walls, floors, pathways, etc., as Low-Cost building materials specially for the improvement of village.

The system of construction is known as "shell construction". The superstructure of the shell house type of construction is made in the shape of a catenary so that the dead load stresses are purely compressive. Since the bending movements due to live loads cannot altogether be eliminated an adequate moment resistance is provided by thickening the arch ring, ribbing the concrete by providing corrugations formed at no great expense by the use of hessian etc.

The explanation for the Low-Cost-Housing of the shell roof lies in the deadweight of the structure. The volume of the building materials used is only 20% of that required for a convertional flat roof house. In addition, this also leads to much reduction of cost of labour, transport and handling the materials etc. The above system could be used in the construction of Low-Cost-Housing in India, specially in urban areas.

STANDARDISATION

Mechanisation of building techniques for completing the construction of Low-Cost-Housing schemes quickly and economically will be feasible only if quite a good proportion of building components are standardised. Then only will it be possible to manufacture precast numbers on a large scale economically. The adoption of fabricated standard sized doors and windows with shutters will also bring down costs. Windows can be of metal or metal alloy while door shutters can be of plywood or pressed wood with a tongue veneer. Introduction of mechanisation by making use of plants and machinery such as hoist jobs, steel forms, tubular scaffoldings, wheel barrows, chutes for pouring concrete etc., will ultimately lead to economy in construction costs, reduce accidents and increase efficiency.

The ancillary services, health and sanitary etc., should not be forgotten in the Low-Cost-Housing. The barest minimum essential services like safe water supply, disposal of human excreta, disposal of refuse and storm water drainage etc., should also be taken into consideration in Low-Cost-Housing.

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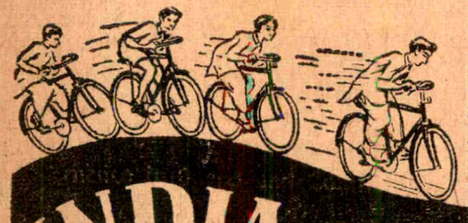

INDIA CYCLE

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PRIMITIVISM IN MODERN ART AND CULTURE

By ASIT KUMAR HALDAR

PRIMITIVISM in art and culture, advocated by the modern Western scholar-critics, should be properly understood in the light of progress made in all aspects of creative activities of the world. It is generally told by the critics that Primitive Art is great and 'timeless' because it had no past or future. But actually, art of all ages can be ascribed as inimitable and timeless. On the other hand, primitive culture actually indicates a metamorphosis of a lower order of human progress. It cannot, therefore, dispassionately be taken as a criterion of fulfilment of its purpose. Any beginning that incites evolutive-dynamic action for progress, cannot be ear-marked as a final achievement or an ideal issue. From the origin of man there has been indeed an incessant influx of novelty into the old world of ours, predilection of which is strongly indicated in modern Western Art and pompous praise is bestowed upon it by our art-critics. Surrealist artists like Piccasso, Mettessi and Paul Klee are now in the forefront of publicity and their art has already captured the imagination of the young minds. These artists are imposing precocious fame to the primitive art in which aesthetic inspiration is subordinated to the impulsive thoughtless action. In other words, imperfect art technique of the undeveloped primitive artists' work is being superimposed on all age-long matured experiences and methods of art of the world. The chronological stages of cultural development in this ase is going to be shattered and a peculiar ideology is deliberately substituted to suit the purpose of such change in art to ensure modernity in outlook. Though such influence of primitivism in current art of the world may be ephemeral, it has already become widespread.

Let us examine closely the meaning of the word 'Primitive'. Primitive relates to unskilled simplicity of the pre-historic age and is actually opposed to the word 'Art' which denotes skill—a system or technique to facilitate performance of certain action of a civilized man. A tree can be cut down with its root and the trunk can be used as a seat, but an artist can fashion it into a chair by employing his imagination and skill. Art requires sophisticated artfulness and experiences and, therefore, cannot be compared with that of the primitive adventures. One cannot liquidate all aesthetic discrimination for the sake of modernism and novelty.

ART IN EAST & WEST

Novelty has somehow taken the place of originality in European art of our time. Art is, on the contrary, not just a human invention and contrivance, but a spontaneous aesthetic experience of his soul seeking suitable form in both universal and natural images, a symbol of his own feeling and expression. But in India, art has always been subjective and never attempted to be a photographic representation of natural form. To observe and to draw are, therefore, not the goal of the artist in India. He should visualise what he has seen or experienced and then re-create, becoming one with the object he paints. Indian art has always been non-secular, in a sense, that the mighty impulse of creation through imagination and meditation brings the artist nearer to the Cosmos itself. Artist's imagination is akin to the inspiration of the poet, the vision of the sages and intuition of the philosophers.

This form of conception in Indian art can be better illustrated when Lord Buddha gained his enlightenment under the Bodhi tree in Urubela. Buddha with his mind concentrated, purified, cleansed with the defilement gone,—supple, dexterous, firm and impassable, directed his mind to the knowledge of the remembrance of his former existence....he came to know his past life with their special modes and details. This became his first knowledge that he gained in the first watch of the night and his ignorance was dispelled and knowledge arose. Similarly he experienced super-human visions in the second watch of the night. In the last watch of the night he realised how to destroy his re-birth after leading a religious life, doing what was to be done;—there he knew nothing for him, beyond this world. This was the third knowledge that he gained and ignorance was dispelled, knowledge arose, darkness vanished and light revealed. Similarly, Indian art and religion are transcendent realization of form or manifestation of all forms and spirit in all its rich thoughts of exuberant variety.

GREEK FORMS IN ART

In the early stage of evolution, European art drew inspiration from the classical Greece with its well-poised athletic forms of male beauty and supple muscular form of female, which became ideals in art and gradually with the passage of time and with the invention of photography, values of such art diminished. Instead of reverting to the intuitional and imaginative art of Byzantine and Gothic School, they found solace in imitating undeveloped primitive art of the prehistoric ages. To give credit to such a 'progress' they had to invent a new ideology dissociated from romanticism, and rhythmic realistic forms of traditional motifs in art. As seed is realised in formation of a tree, similarly a primitive mind is considered, according to the psycho-analyst,

as the seed-mind of a grown-up sophisticated experience. A primitive mind rests in purity and is free from super-imposed knowledge and romanticism. In fact, decorative pattern, which contains no human emotion, occupies a distinguished place in this kind of modern ideology. Western world, therefore, has its sur-realist school which can go without tradition or discipline of the past experiences. In the matter of romanticism, naturalism and traditional discipline, Indian art never differed from Western school of painting. But on closer observation, other differences are noticeable. Indian art is realistic and keeps intact proportions of natural forms but does not deliberately imitate Nature. Indian art in this respect is a natural evolution of primitive expression and to some extent could be compared with the modern Western school of Impressionism. Though technique itself is not art, it is a vehicle of expressing art: and perfection of technique is a legitimate requirement for artistic creation. Academic discipline blended with country's art-tradition can make art unequivocally impressive. Moreover, with the artist's metaphysical depth and detachment, many new forms of expressions can be evolved in abstract transcendental plane which can derive profound sentiment and symbolical meaning. The thrill of imagination and subjective creation and emotional rapport with Nature, consolidates the sense of human perfection through art. Religions have produced gods and goddesses and the pagan Greek identified gods with ideal features of human forms. Christian art also followed the maxim. Whereas, Indian artists put several hands and heads and reshaped the standard of human form to create his God.

SUR-REALIST'S REPRESSED COMPLEXES

The artist's super-ego could build such images without hampering the realistic anatomical proportions of animals and human beings, whereas wilful eccentricity in sur-realist art expresses repressed complexes—vulgar and stupid. The refined meditation (dhyana) on the other hand, enabled artists of India to evoke pictures of gods and goddesses—the metaphysical expressions which stand for vehicles of the Universal and Eternal. Subjectivism in this way can remove such dissatisfactory approach to art, which is devoid of intellectualism. The artist can fashion his psychological and mental processes of aesthetic contemplation and remould his art in multifarious ways for his audience. Art has no fixed routine and artist can help the mind's adjustments according to the environment and suitability of time. A man of philosophical bent of thought may not like to live with a painting depicting a sublime landscape. He would, perhaps, prefer to see his own transcendental experience unfold in a picture. Similarly, a newly married couple would be happy to be with a picture of more optimistic nature. This kind of variegated emotional stresses can also be seen among the artists themselves and the infinite configuration of patterns of thought is frequently experienced in art. Adherence to the objective principle in relation with external forms is also illustrated in Indian art, whereas the modern European School is an adept of phantasy and consider it a supreme key to revalue the reality. A modern French art-critic, M. Andre'Breton observes: *"It is only at the approach of the fantastic, at a point where human reason loses its control, that the most profound emotion of the individual has the fullest opportunity to express itself; emotion unsuitable for projection in the frame-work of the real world and which has no other solution in its urgency than to reply on the external solicitation of symbolisms and myths."*

SYMBOLISM IN ART

Symbolism has limited scope in austere Christian and other religions and thus new symbolic forms had to be invented in modern Western art of Europe. Hindu, Buddhist and Jain symbols are to be found in their immensity of quality in painting, sculpture and architecture. Oriental iconography has developed the symbolism of pose, gesture of hands, *Ayudha, Bahana,* etc. most elaborately. In Vishnudharmottra we read: *"The Universe is regarded as the transformation of the Supreme Being. All transformation consists of Shyama, i.e. dark colour, and through that is the sustenance of worldly life. The Lord, the creator of all creatures assumes the KRISHNA form".* The universal mystical realisation in India of the oneness in diversity of form, flesh and spirit, brought about complex qualities of the deities. Shukra-Nitisara enjoins this method of visualisation upon the image-makers of India. In order that the form of an image may be brought fully and clearly before the mind, the image-maker should meditate: and his success will be in proportion to his meditation. No other way—not indeed seeing the object itself will achieve his purpose. In other words, the artist should attend to the images of gods by means of spiritual contemplation only. This spiritual vision is the best and truest standard for him. He should not depend upon the visible objects perceived by the external senses. That is the reason why mere imitation of Nature is never attempted by the Indian artists. His power of visualization and intuition was for his self-realization and was accepted as finer means.

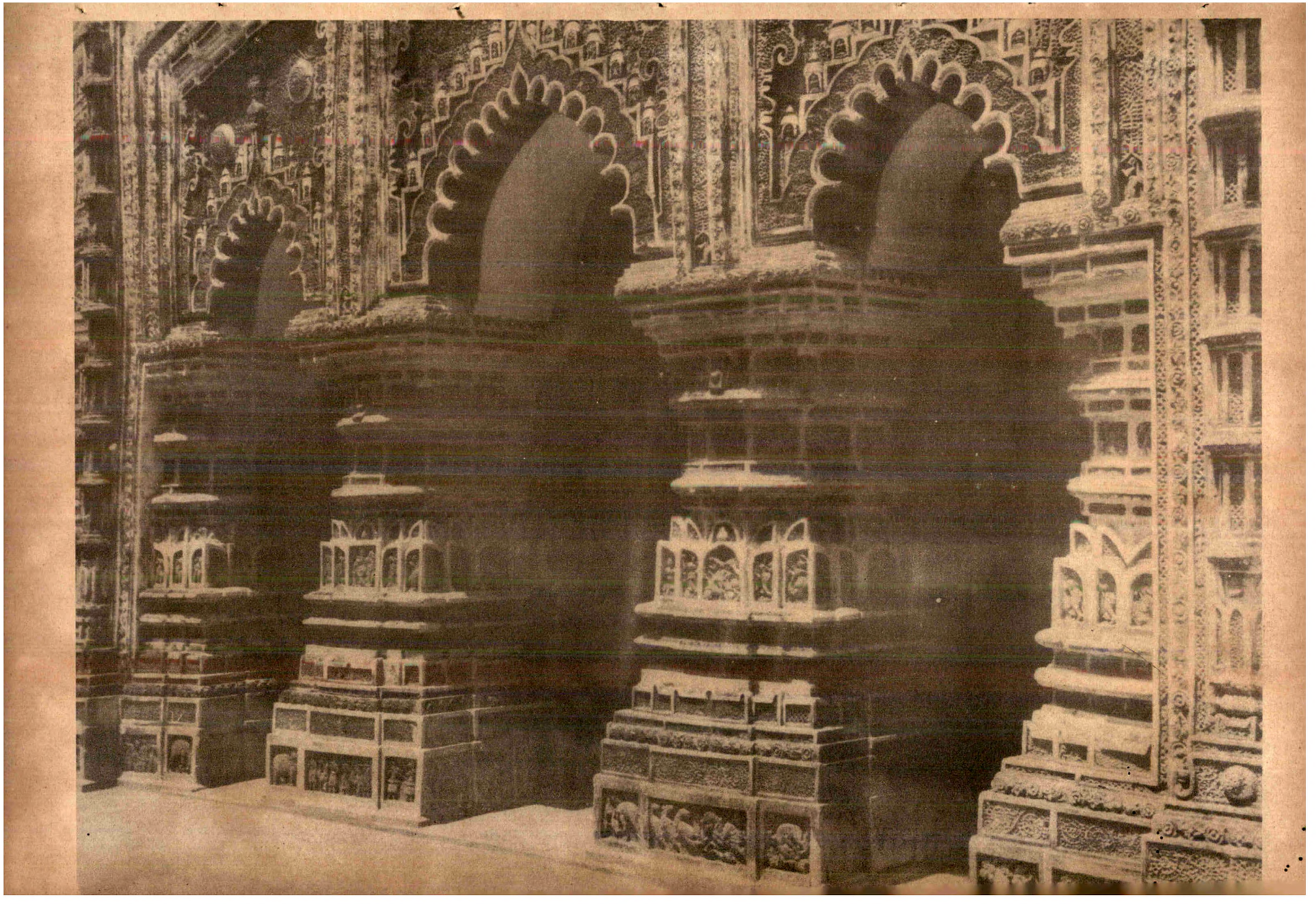
INDIA'S ROLE IN ART

Whatever good or bad the influence of the present psycho-analyst school might have on the art of Europe, it may not have a healthy development in this borrowed ideology in India. We should try to solve our peculiar problems by studying and understanding our old masters and then modernize it according to the present-day life and its spirit. Universalism attributed to such modern art-expression can never mean a uniformity in which all art should look alike. Rather, it should be a unity in diversity that is always observed in Nature, each country presenting its individual type of expression-forms. So, Indian art too should retain its creative individuality and typical Indian stamp rather than bear the uniform hall-mark prescribed by some other country. It should never be an amalgam of a hybrid expression of different schools of art, such as an admixture of ancient Chinese and Pre-Raphaelite techniques, but should be the sincere expression of an artist conveyed in his spontaneous creation.

To some modern art-critics of Europe, aesthetics seemed like sophisticated behaviourism and quite insignificant to labour upon. They do not value anything "beyond science" and cannot thus fathom the mystery of art and its nature. Even artists of Europe became victim of science. After the Gothic or Byzantine School, which was essentially aesthetic and of mystical nature, artists and critics began cultivating realistic forms in scientific manner and for the first time invented perspective and the process of light and shade. Again with the advent of the modern era they are falling back on the science of psychology. They have lost sight of the heart of a creator in Man who brings out his sincere expression without any calculated scientific sophistication. An artist may not be a "pundit" but still can be a creator.

The Sleeping City

Anil Dut



The old Tom cat

The tom cat is regarded as the totem animal of 'Sasti', the goddess of fertility, and it is forbidden that no cat should be killed. No child will be born or those living will die if a cat is killed against this injunction, traditional social taboo says.

By RAJ SEKHAR BOSE

AFTER the guardian deity of children, Sasti, had been duly honoured with a ceremony, Sukumari laid her new-born baby on a low wooden stool and bowed before her husband, touching his feet with her forehead. Sukumari was twenty-four and her husband, Gokul Goswami, fifty-four.

"How lovely you look !" exclaimed Gokul Babu, "Like Urvashi fresh from her bath in the sea !" She pressed the palms of her hands together and pleaded, "Please, I beg of you, release me. It is seven years since I came to you and I have borne six children. Five are dead. Only one remains. I cannot suffer any more. My health is gone. I shall surely die if I conceive again. And this baby too."

"God forbid," protested Gokul Babu, "Why should you die ? Children are born, live and die according to the will of God. That is to say, according to the karmas of their former lives. I see clearly now that you have completed your quota of suffering. Your bad luck is passing. From now on you have nothing more to fear."

Gokul Chandra Goswami was a Sub-registrar in Sheoraphuli. His job was a comfortable one. There was little work and his office was near his residence. He read a great deal, and was proficient in many Shastras. He even read English and Bengali novels and was considered learned. His circumstances were easy for he owned property dedicated to religious purposes and practised usury under an assumed name. Seven years before, Gokul Babu had gone on pilgrimage to the sacred places in the foothills of the Himalayas, completing the pilgrimage by climbing as far as Lake Manas and Kailas. When he came back he declared that he had been reborn and it was no longer possible for him to live with his family. He must have a new one. There was no difficulty. An orphan, the daughter of poor parents, Sukumari, came into his home. His first wife, Katyani, took her three children and went to live with her brother in Calcutta. A meagre monthly allowance her husband sent her was the only connection that remained between them. Her two daughters were married and lived with their husbands' families.

"Do not deceive me with false hope", Sukumari replied to her husband's effort at consolation, "I have read in the papers that a method of birth control has been found which our ministers in Delhi consider good. You are so well informed. Don't you know about it ? Go to Calcutta and ask the ministers there to teach you."

"Rot they know !"

"Ask the chief minister. I've heard that he is a doctor."

"Are you crazy, Sukumari ? What things you say ! You ! A respectable Brahmin wife in a pious Brahmin family ! A little learning is a dangerous thing ! You have learnt enough to read

Don't you know it is a great sin to arrest the processes of birth by artificial means?

newspapers. Now all sorts of wrong ideas are getting into your head. Don't you know it is a great sin to arrest the processes of birth by artificial means ? God created man and woman to multiply his subjects. Woman's duty is to conceive. It is so ordained. Do you wish to interfere with the will of God ?"

"I am an ignorant woman. I know nothing. I spoke of it because I have heard that it is done in most families nowadays, and I fear for my life. I do not know right from wrong. But who does not interfere with the will of God ? God sent you naked on to the earth. Why do you wear clothes ? Why do you shave ? Why do you make use of false teeth ?

"You must not say such things, Suku ! Radhamadhav ! Your tongue will drop out !"

"The tongues of the Delhi ministers haven't dropped out !"

"They will ! They will ! When their measure of sin is full ! If one follows the injunctions of the Shastras God's will is not infringed. It is a great sin not to follow them. Know once and for all that no one can escape his fate. In respect of children you have been unlucky and have suffered. When your luck changes you will be happy. We must submit to what is destined for us. These are very deep matters. I'll explain them to you sometime."

Sukumari, discouraged, was silent.

* * * *

Before six months had passed Sukumari became big with child once more. She fell ill. The doctor diagnosed her ailment as severe anaemia with various complications. If she were removed to Calcutta and given proper medical attention there was a chance of her pulling through, he said. "Don't you worry at all, Suku," said Gokul Babu lightly dismissing the doctor's advice, "You'll be well in no time. All you have to do is to get an amulet from our astrologer and keep on taking the pills Bidhu doctor has prescribed."

"I have not been away for a long time," Gokul Babu said to Sukumari just before the Pujah holidays, "I feel the need of a change." He added seven days' leave to the holidays and joined Naresh Babu, a lawyer friend who was travelling as far as Rameswar with his party. Sukumari was not to worry. He was leaving a maid with her, and the servant boy, Gupe. The wife of the milkman had promised to come to see her twice a day. He would be back for the Festival of the Lamps.

Not long after Gokul Babu's departure Sukumari took to her bed. Three weeks passed slowly and with difficulty. Then an evening came on which she felt her breath was failing. A lantern was burning but she could not see. Her baby lay beside her. Resting her hand on his head she prayed, "Holy Mother of the World, I am going. Who will look after my baby ? Oh Mother Sasti, Guardian of Children, take pity. Have mercy on my child ! Save him !"

Filling the room with light the goddess appeared. "What is it, child ? she asked tenderly.

"My life is ebbing out," Sukumari murmured, "I have heard, Mother, that children are born at your desire and live by your grace. You are She Who dwells in all things as Mother ! Mother dear, I am going, look after my child !"

The goddess ran her lotus hand over Sukumari's brow. "I shall make provision for your child," she promised, "Sleep in peace !"

Sukumari slept.

"Meni !" the goddess called.

A great cat appeared before her. Its head was black but the rest of its body was a pure white. On its forehead was a red mark in the parting of the black markings and its tail was ringed as though with bracelets.

"What is it you will, Holy Mother ?" asked the cat, standing on its hind legs and folding its forepaws reverently.

"You must take charge of this baby boy."

"But I am a cat, Mother !"

"Take human shape."

Instantly a handsome young woman stood in the cat's place. "Holy Mother," she said, "I shall take charge of this baby. But I have young ones of my own. What will happen to them ? My first litter has grown up and I do not worry about them. They can feed themselves by catching mice and crickets and rats, looking for scraps of food or stealing a little. But I have four little kittens who have not yet opened their eyes and are still on milk. What will happen to them ?"

"Turn back into a cat now and then to suckle them."

"But what will the head of the house think ? There'll be trouble if Goswami finds it out."

"Don't be afraid. If he finds out he too will turn into a cat".

"Will he turn back into a man ?"

"No, never. He will be a cat forever. So he will not be able to make trouble. You also need not stay here long. You will be free to leave as

By the flickering light of the lantern Gokul Babu saw a very pretty girl holding the baby in her arms.

soon as satisfactory arrangements are made for the care of the child."

The goddess vanished. Sukumari's infant son woke and began to cry. Meni took the baby to her. The hungry child gurgled with pleasure at the full breast.

* * * *

A hackney drove up and stopped in front of the house. Gokul Babu had returned. He was expected to rejoin his post on the day following the next. "Gupe!" he called, "Where are you? Come and carry my luggage in ! Has the maid left already ? What's the matter ? Why doesn't any one answer ? Suku, where are you ? Why don't you come out ? Come here a minute ?"

Nobody came. Gokul Babu was obliged to take his trunk and bedding out of the hackney himself, with the help of the coachman. He paid the fare and dismissed him. "How are you, Suku ?" he asked as he entered the house, "How is the baby ? Why didn't you write to me ?"

By the flickering light of the lantern Gokul Babu saw a very pretty girl holding the baby in her arms. She stood in front of him. "Who are you ?" he demanded.

"I am Menaka," she answered, "a distant cousin of Sukumari's. I received news that she was seriously ill and all alone. There was no one to look after the baby. So I came as quickly as I could."

"It is good of you to come, Menaka !" exclaimed Gokul Babu gratefully, "and since you have come, you may as well stay on. How is your cousin ? Her sleep seems to be sound. Is she running a temperature ? A high one ?"

"Sukumari has just died."

Gokul Babu wailed and beat his head with his fists. "Where have you gone leaving me all along," he cried, "What will happen to the baby ?"

"Hush, Cousin-in-law !" Meni reproved him, "There will be time enough to weep later. Now summon people. Make arrangements for cremation. Don't delay !"

Gokul Babu did as he was bid.

* * * *

"How lucky it is that you came, Menaka," Gokul Babu said a couple of days later, "I get my meals and the baby is alive. You are a fine girl. I think that since you have taken charge of us you should make it permanent by becoming the lady of the house and shining in my home".

"You are very impatient," Meni answered, "Why are you in such a hurry ? What will people say ? Let your grief for my cousin diminish. Complete the period of mourning and all the funeral rites. Then you may speak to me about it."

The funeral feast was over. Gokul Babu felt uneasy. Menaka's behaviour seemed to him very questionable. Unable to keep his peace he asked her, "Menaka, see here, your behaviour is very odd. You are an unmarried girl. How is it that you can give suck ? I have seen you nurse the baby. Have you had children ? Please answer plainly. However beautiful you may be, I cannot marry a bad woman !"

"Oh, so you have been spying on me !" Menaka retorted with a laugh, Venerable Goswamiji, don't be alarmed ! No blemish will you be able to discover in my character. I am wholly pure and, as they say, untouched by sin. You are learned and have read widely in the shastras. Have you never heard of a *payaswini* woman ? That is what I am. At times my breasts fill with milk for three or four months and then go dry again. You are fortunate to have such a woman in your house. Your half-dead son is alive now and well. He never got his fill of his own mother's milk".

Gokul Babu's suspicions were not allayed. But Menaka's beauty bewitched him. He was determined not to let her go whatever might happen. Within two months they were married.

* * * *

Gokul Babu's distress grew. Where did Menaka go every night so secretly ? And on Sundays she was missing for several hours during the noon. Perhaps she went out every day. How could he know ? Gokul Babu did not wish to displease his beautiful wife. He was completely at her mercy. She was his third. But one day he broke out, "Tell me, where is it you go ever so often ?"

"That is no concern of yours," Menaka answered proudly, "Surely I am not a slave. Do I ever ask you where you spend your evenings ?"

Gokul Babu decided that he ought not to keep quiet. He must find out to whom she went. He purchased a flash light and secreted it in the bedroom in a place where he could reach it easily without being detected by Menaka. That night he went to bed early and pretended to be asleep. About midnight Menaka got up and left the room silently. Gokul Babu followed her barefooted.

Menaka crossed the courtyard and went out by the back door. She entered a low thatched shed behind the house where firewood, coal and cowdung cakes were kept. Her figure was indistinct for she

was wearing a white sari and she vanished as soon as she entered the shed. Gokul Babu, with the help of his flash light, saw only a white cat lying in one corner. Four kittens were feeding at her teats. Of Menaka there was no trace.

"Menaka", Gokul Babu called, running his light around the walls of the shed.

"What is it ?" answered the cat, "Don't shout or you will frighten my kittens. Gokul Babu was so nonplussed that he dropped the flash light. But he saw as well as ever despite the dark and he felt no surprise. "Radhamadhav !" he exclaimed in a hurt voice, "illegitimate children in a Brahmin's house !"

"A fine Brahmin !" Meni answered, "You cannot see your face but you can put your hand behind you !"

Gokul Babu put his hand behind him and discovered that he had a full-grown tail. Even that did not surprise him. He went on indignantly, "You're a bad woman ! How many lovers do you have ?"

"I haven't counted them."

"Get out of my house this instant !"

"Who are you to turn me out, Goswami ? Don't you know that it is a matriarchal society ? Men are not the masters. They are of no importance, companions of the moment only."

Gokul Babu mewed furiously and tried to bite Meni. Meni gave a single leap and called, "Ur-rauo!" According to Sri Dipankar Bose, who is an expert in the language and customs of the cats, a mother summons her sons to her rescue with just such a sound.

Meni had a taste for novelty. From a wide variety of husbands she had obtained a motley array of sons. "What's the matter, Mother ?" cried the white, black, grey, brown, dappled and striped cats which presented themselves instantly in response to her call.

"Drive this wicked fellow away !" she said. Seven of her sons pounced tigerishly upon Gokul Babu who was now only a tom cat. He fled, scratched and bleeding. One of his paws was lame.

* * * *

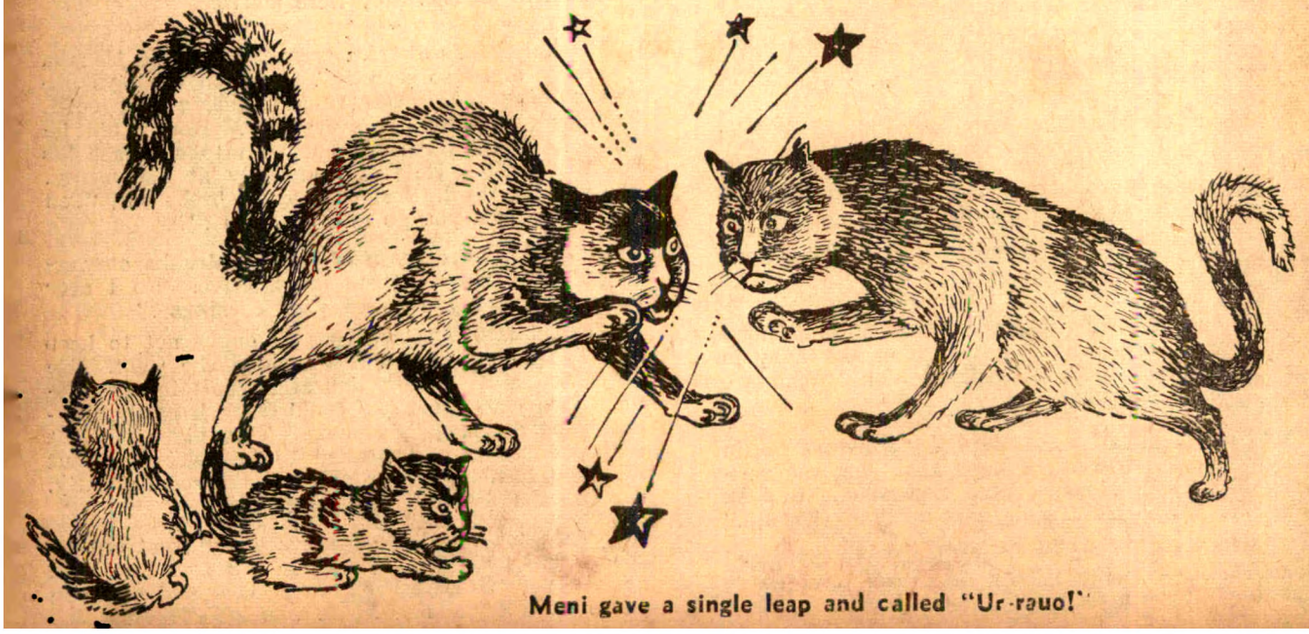
Three days later the first wife of Gokul Chandra Goswami received the following letter. "My revered Elder Sister, I am Menaka, your unfortunate younger sister, our husband's third wife. Last night Goswami quarrelled with me and left home. He vowed by his sacred thread, which he broke, that he would not come back. I am not capable of looking after his property. It is necessary for you to come immediately with your children and take possession of it. Our second sister, Sukumari, left a baby boy to our care who is now nine or ten months old. He is a lovely baby and you are sure to love him. I do not intend to stay here any longer. As soon as you come I will go to live with my mother. Yours obediently, Menaka."

Katyani did not delay. She returned to her husband's house and brought her children with her. Taking Sukumari's baby boy into her arms affectionately she said, "He will be as my own to me."

Menaka was indeed a fine girl. She asked for nothing. Katyani offered her a monthly allowance but Menaka protested. "I do not need it," she said, "I will not want for anything at my mother's". She even refused to take her train fare. But at the time of leaving she said, "Elder Sister, you are not a widow. Whether you ever hear from our husband or not, he is alive and you should eat fish for his sake. It will bring him misfortune if you do not. I have another favour to ask of you also. An old tom cat comes to the house daily. Take pity upon it, please, and give it the fish bones mixed with a little rice. And when you can, give it some milk. The poor creature is old and infirm."

"Do not worry about that, sister", Katyani assured her warmly, "I shall feed your poor tom cat."

(Translated from Bengali by Lila Ray and Ajit Mukherji)



Meni gave a single leap and called "Ur-rauo!"

The Life Insurance Agent

By AJIT KRISHNA BASU

AMLAN BARORI was a simple life insurance agent. If there was anything extra-ordinary about him, it was his extra-ordinary simplicity. His dress, his habits, his manners, his living, his diet.....everything was simple, as simple as his heart. Perhaps simplicity, the keynote of his character, was also the secret of his success, for he *was* a success as a life insurance agent.

How, or why, did he step into the world of life insurance? He told me about it one day. Years ago, when he was about eleven, he was with his mother, a widow, aboard a steamer navigating from Naraingunj towards Calcutta. On that same steamer was another widow, with her only child, a daughter of seven or so. Women become friends very easily, particularly when co-travellers, and the two widows soon became dear sisters. And their two children became playmates. The little girl knew she had lost her father for ever, but knew not what a tremendous loss it was. The boy of eleven knew, and he pitied the girl all the more.

The little girl's father had left no life insurance. The boy picked up this information from the conversation between the two widows. In fact only a month before the gentleman's untimely and unexpected death, a life insurance agent had approached him with a proposal for a twenty years' endowment policy for five thousand rupees, only to be rudely hounded out of the house. And just a month after that the gentleman died, leaving not a copper for his wife and child! He was repentant, on deathbed. but it was then too late.

The boy, Amlan Barori, was angry with the thoughtless husband and father, but he could partly forgive him for his repentance, though late. That insurance agent, however, he could not forgive for having given up the fight so easily. The fellow who could not convince a real prospect did not deserve to be in the line. He was inefficient; he stood too much on his own dignity, or rather *vanity*. Barori could not forgive the unsuccessful life insurance agent, for *his* cowardly retreat was responsible for the helplessness of the unfortunate widow and her fatherless daughter.

And then and there the boy Amlan Barori resolved that when he grew up to be a man he would become a life insurance agent; a doggedl tenacious one, not a selfish, cowardly, inefficier one like that worthless fellow. He would never giv up a prospect till he had his life insured. He woul coax and cajole, he would argue, he would plea he would do anything short of physical violenc Insults he would bear smiling even as Lord Jesu endured his crown of thorns, for all genuine ben factors of mankind must ever be prepared to receiv the worst possible treatment from those they a out to benefit.

Their fellow-journeying in the steamer wa short-lived, for the girl got down only a few st tions off with her mother. Young Amlan felt sudden shock, the like of which he had never fe before. He had felt deep sympathy for the gi and, unknown to himself, the sympathy ha deepened into something like love. It was only whe she had left the steamer and the steamer ha already started on its journey again, furrowin through the water of the broad and turbule river Padma, that Amlan remembered he had n even asked the girl's name. It was then that felt, though only hazily as a boy of eleven cou feel, that he had himself to blame for losing h for ever. Nor had Amlan's mother, as he lat came to understand, collected any information th might help in tracing them later.

* * * *

Time passed on. Days, weeks, months, yea Amlan Barori grew up to be a young man. Wh time came for choosing a career, he became a l insurance agent, taking his work more as mission than as a profession. He felt himself re ponsible for the future security of countless wou be widows and would-be orphans. He felt it holy duty to thrust life insurance policies on many husbands and fathers as possible. For th purpose he religiously studied the various arts persuasion. He had some knack for singing, a

he practised it so as to fascinate music-loving prospects through songs and make them sign on the dotted line. He studied horses and gave race tips to race-loving prospects. He regularly studied international politics through newspapers, not for any love for politics, but to enable himself to discuss politics with politically minded prospects. To make himself easily popular he even mastered some highly entertaining conjuring tricks. His tongue was fluent from his very childhood; he made it more fluent by habit, and made himself a mine of funny tales and anecdotes. In short, he learnt many things in order to popularise himself, for only popular agents, he felt, could popularise life insurance.

Amlan Barori went further. Before trying to sell life insurance to prospects he started to give them benefits in as many ways as he could. To give only one example, he moved heaven and hell to find a job for an unemployed graduate on the understanding that the said graduate would, on receipt of his first month's pay in the event of getting the job, get his life insured through Amlan Barori. When that particular graduate, however, got his first month's pay, he had his life insured all right, but not through Amlan Barori. That, however, is another story, and even that did not embitter Barori enough to make him give up his habit of obliging people by doing them as many good turns as he could, no matter whether he received any returns or not.

Incidentally, Amlan Barori's first case was Mr. Mahesh Mustafi, a small ledger clerk in a big bank. He was past forty and had just married for the second time after his first wife had died childless. Only a few days after his second marriage, a young clerk in the bank died. Young age could not prevent his death. This made Mr. Mustafi nervous, and conscience started tormenting him. He wondered whether he had done well by marrying second time so late in life. What would happen to his widow, and his yet unborn child, if he died all on a sudden? He maintained a ledger of other peoples' bank accounts, but himself had none.

Amlan Barori was a frequenter to that bank. He smelt Mustafi and found him an already converted prospect. Barori got Mustafi's life insured for five thousand rupees on a twenty years endowment scheme.

In the meantime, I have forgotten to say, Barori's mother had died, leaving Amlan a complete orphan. She had a desire in her heart to see the face of her daughter-in-law before she died; she died with unfulfilled desire, much to the sorrow of her son.

Amlan could not forget his sweetheart of the steamer. He could not remember her face even hazily. He did not know her name, for her mother had only called her "Khuku" (dear little girl), the common term of endearment, rather than a name, by which ninety per cent mothers of Bengal call their daughters some time or other. He did not know the name of the station at which she had got down from the steamer. There was no means of tracing her or knowing her whereabouts. It was also not possible for him to recognise her even if he ever chanced to meet her. He realised the utter stupidity of continuing to think of her, and the still greater stupidity of hoping against hope to find her out some day; but the head and the heart do not always walk on parallel lines, and he continued to think and hope.

Amlan's first case was a very lucky one, for case after case followed the first and went on fattening his commission account. He was single, and he was, as I have said at the outset, simple. He had no dependant. His wants were few, luxuries and addictions he had none. Earning much and spending but little, he went on fattening his bank account in the vague hope that some day it might be placed at the service of his long-lost but never-forgotten sweetheart whom he had met long ago for a short while in the steamer.

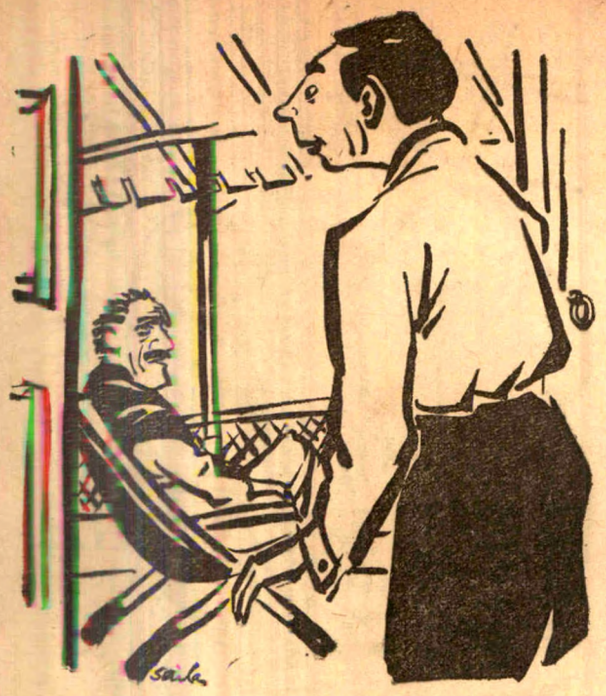
Mr. Mustafi, Amlan's first case, got transferred to another branch of the bank in another part of the city, and Amlan Barori lost touch with him. Mr. Mustafi, unable to afford a flat in the city where house-rent was exorbitant, lived a few railway stations away from the city, in Baruipur to be exact. Everyday he had to come to office partly by train from Baruipur station, and partly by bus or tram, and the journey to office and back took a very long time. And the journey was extremely strenuous too, the more so because of Mr. Mustafi's advanced age and weak constitution, not to mention the poor diet, better than which he could not afford.

* * * *

Ten years passed after the first case. In these ten years Barori satisfied his company beyond expectation and amassed a good sum of money in his bank. The dream of his sweetheart of the steamer-journey haunted him still. It was strange, even to himself, that such an unreasonable and impossible dream continued to haunt him. But it was true, it was strange but true. He was sad. But he was happy too with the tidy bank balance; it seemed as if he held it in sacred trust.

Then came a letter to him. It was addressed to the company, and the company had forwarded it to him for his attention and necessary action. It was a letter from Mr. Mahesh Mustafi, his first case. "I am at the farthest end of my resources now." Mr. Mustafi's letter said, in effect, "I cannot continue my policy. I am desperately in need of money. I want to surrender my policy to you, kind gentlemen. Give me ready cash immediately, whatever sum the surrender entitles me to. May God bless you, gentlemen."

It was an extra-urgent S.O.S. Amlan Barori had never heard a more desperate cry for help. And it had come from his own first case ! This Mr. Mustafi had, in a way, ushered him into this noble yet lucrative line! And all these years Barori had remained completely out of touch with this bene-



With some difficulty Barori recognised him as Mr. Mahesh Mustafi.

factor! Never cared to enquire about his welfare! Barori felt ashamed of his thoughtless ingratitude, and felt he must make amends.

The address was on the letter. To that address he hurried. Getting down at the Baruipur station Barori had not much difficulty in finding out Mr. Mustafi's house, which was a solitary one not far from the station. It was a small, very small tiled bungalow with a narrow verandah in front, facing west. Reclined on an armchair on the verandah was an emaciated gentleman looking almost vacantly at the sun setting down the horizon. With some difficulty, or perhaps without much difficulty, Barori recognised him as Mr. Mahesh Mustafi.

Even after the long gap of ten years, Mr. Mustafi at once recognised Barori. A faint smile of untold joy brightened up his disease-dull face. "Mr. Barori?" he said. There was no complaint, there was only joyous welcome in his voice, which put Barori at his ease.

"Yes, Mr. Mustafi," said Barori. "I come to see you. Sorry I couldn't keep touch with you all these days. I didn't know.....I mean I got your letter only yesterday, and....."

Trying to be easy, he became clumsy.

"My letter? Ah yes, my letter. To the company," mused Mr. Mustafi. "So kind of the company to have sent you, Mr. Barori. So kind, so kind." Mr. Mustafi seemed to feel overwhelmed by this much too unexpected kindness of the company.

"No, Mr. Mustafi. I mean, not *exactly*," said Barori. "I have come more on my own behalf than on the company's."

"God bless you, Mr. Barori," said Mr. Mustafi in a tone which left no doubt about his sincerity. "God bless you for coming. My near and dear ones, the few that I had, have all forsaken me. And I don't blame them. It is a dangerous, treacherous disease, you know. Not the galloping type to finish me off soon, but the creeping type which is finishing me by inches. Be seated, Mr. Barori, on that yonder stool. That's right. Don't come nearer. It is a dangerous disease, my friend."

Amlan Barori took his seat on the stool, wondering what to say next.

As if to give Barori a summing up of the situation, Mr. Mustafi said, "I have been a regular T.B. patient for over two years, Mr. Barori. Over two years without any income. Malati, my wife, noble, unfortunate paragon of a wife, earns a small amount by teaching, sewing and embroidery in a near-by girls' school. It will require her services no longer from next month. House rent is in arrear for the last six months, and the landlord has served notice. The grocers have stopped further supply, pending payment of arrears. Doctors have given me up as beyond their powers. The plains are not for me now, they say, and I must hasten to some hill station. A good idea, isn't it? But tell me, Mr. Barori, what amount can I have, and that *immediately, im-me-di-ate-ly,* if I surrender my policy to the company once for all? I have nearly paid three thousand in these ten years; can't I have a few hundred immediately? My wife, and my child will starve before my eyes if I can't, and we shall be in the streets, Mr. Barori. The very purpose of my insurance will be defeated if they starve to death."

"Please don't worry, Mr. Mustafi," said Barori. "I shall settle everything, now that I have come. You must not think of surrendering your policy; the policy *must* continue. Did you take up the policy only to give it up midway? That too would defeat the very purpose of your life insurance."

"Ah, Mr. Barori!" said Mr. Mustafi. "We are on the brink of a precipice, heading towards disaster. Down we go with a crash if we don't have some money immediately. I was thinking of committing suicide under a running train so that my wife and child could immediately benefit from my insurance money of five thousand rupees. But then I refrained, fearing that the insurance company might object to pay the money if they suspected suicide. Also, I shuddered to visualize how mad with sorrow Malati would be if I died that way. A true Indian wife, she holds her husband's life dearer than her own. She is a gem of a woman, Mr. Barori; and yet God has thought fit to pour such sufferings on her."

Mr. Mustafi paused for a while and then resumed, "I took this insurance policy for the future protection of my wife and children, even though my income was too low to make both ends meet. I had to cut out milk and fish from the diet, and had to live very close to starvation level, to save

enough surplus for the insurance premium. Add to that the heavy strain of the daily journeys to and from the bank, and my poor constitution. It all told severely on me, and you see the result. I might not have got this T.B., Mr. Barori, if I had not bound myself to this insurance."

This gave another shock to Barori. Was Mr. Mustafi hinting that *he*, as the insurance agent, was thus responsible for his T.B.? But no, there was absolutely no complaint in Mr. Mustafi's tone; he was certainly not thinking that way at all, but was just lamenting the circumstances in a somewhat impersonal manner. And yet, complaint or no complaint, Barori felt some responsibility in the matter, the more so because Mr. Mustafi was his very first case.

"I have three hundred rupees with me, Mr. Mustafi," said Barori. "I shall bring you more tomorrow. You can repay it later, and pay me only the 2 per cent bank interest. I could arrange a loan for you against your policy, from the company, but they would charge you 6 per cent interest. Why pay so much quite unnecessarily?"

"But.....but....." said Mr. Mustafi.

"There is no *but* in it," said Barori. "Besides, it is more to *my* interest that your policy continues as before, and I shall see that it does. I shall win a grand bonus, you see, if all policies booked through me run without a hitch for fifteen years, out of which I have already completed ten. Your discontinuing will spoil my record, and I simply can't afford it. In fact it will be more profitable for me to pay all your premiums henceforward, than to allow the policy to be surrendered or paid up."

This was of course bluff; but Barori *had* to bluff, for Mr. Mustafi, he felt, might refuse to accept charity or obligation. And Mr. Mustafi was the very first case in his career of life insurance.

Mr. Mustafi, he thought, would last at most for one year more, and it would be a blessing for him to leave his suffering body. It would be no good to lengthen his stay. Barori would pay the premiums till Mr. Mustafi's death so that his family might get the full benefit of the insurance. That, Barori felt, would satisfy his conscience and repay his indebtedness to Mr. Mustafi.

As he was thinking, a lady's voice startled Barori. "Will you have your meal now, dear? Cooking is finished," it said.

"What does the Panjika (almanac) say, Malati?" asked Mr. Mustafi. "I can eat any time up to...?"

"Six fiftyfive," said the lady from behind the window. "And it is about five thirty now."

Evidently Mr. Mustafi (or was it Mrs?), given up by doctors, had become superstitious enough to eat by the almanac, thought Barori.

"Plenty of time left," said Mr. Mustafi. "I shall eat later, Malati. Now come out here, and meet my very good friend, Mr. Amlan Barori."

Mrs. Mustafi came out in the verandah and smilingly greeted Amlan with joined palms. Amlan

"Pray be seated Mr. Barori" she said sweetly. "I am sitting here."

stood up from his seat in honour to her, and offered his counter-greeting.

"Pray be seated, Mr. Barori," said she sweetly. "I am sitting here." She sat down on the verandah, and Amlan took back his seat.

As Amlan looked at her face, he remembered that girl companion on the steamer, then about seven years old, twenty years ago. And this lady before him looked about twentyseven! Was it a mere co-incidence, or....? Amlan's pulse-beats became more rapid, and in a moment his decision was changed.

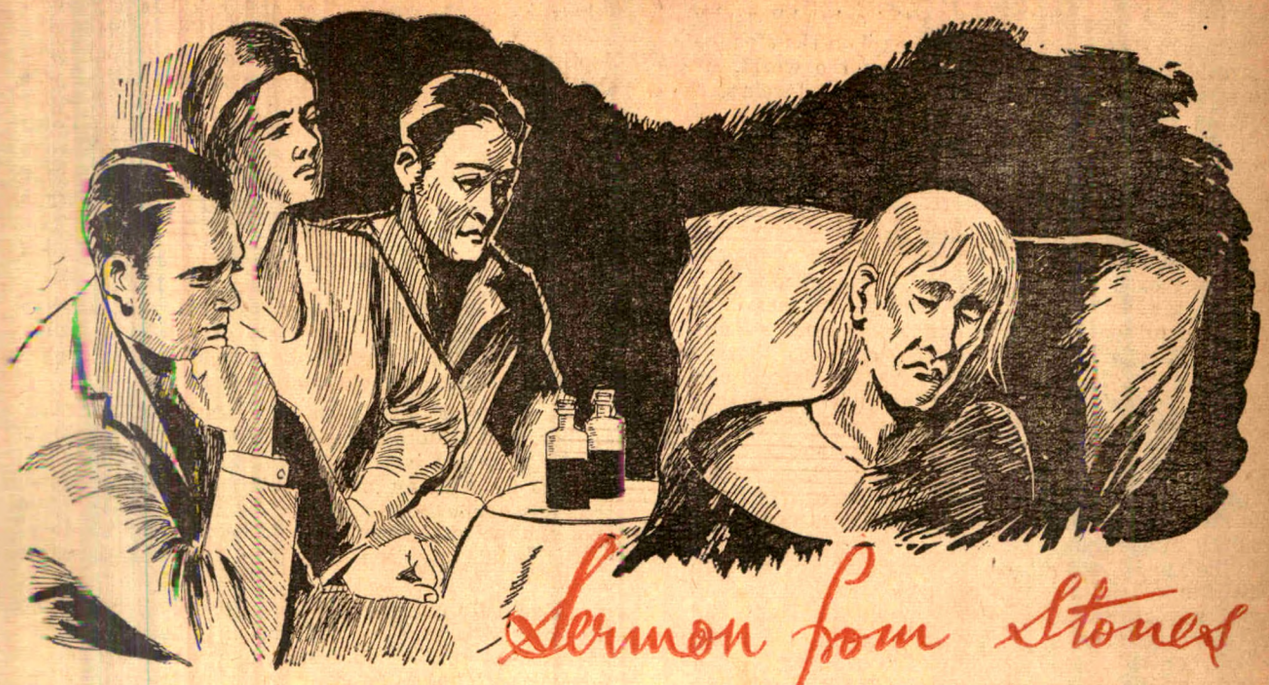
"My friend has a beautiful little house in a very healthy hill station, Mr. Mustafi," said Amlan, telling a downright lie in the tone of downright truth. "A very rich friend. I shall arrange so that you may stay there as long as you like, free of rent, for he never rents it out. And living is exceedingly cheap there too. Besides, there is the hermitage, close by, of a Swamiji whom I know. He and his disciples will always be helpful. There is, too, a first class sanatorium, near by, run by a Mission. I know the authorities of the sanatorium, and medical help will always be available to you; I shall arrange that."

It is perhaps a happy coincidence, too", continued Amlan, "that I am personally going there on leave for six months, which I may extend up to a year. I have worked for ten years incessantly, you know, and have well earned a long holiday. I have earned too much in these ten years to need any further earning for quite some years more. I shall stay in Swamiji's hermitage, close by you, and can always look after you. It will be splendid. It is settled that we all start in a few days."

"But....but...." Mrs. Mustafi hesitated.

"Of course we shall pay up all the dues here before we start. Leave that to me. I shall manage it from the loan, of course," said Barori, reassuring her. "There is a small school as well as kindergarten

(Continued on page 111)



Sermon from Stones

By MARGUERITS DARNTON

IN the silence of the room three people watched the dying woman with awe and wonderment. The air was not heavy with pathos and sorrow, for it was obvious to all that some wonderful thing was being experienced by the departing soul. No one could tell what this thing could be, but the dying face was radiant with some inner light, was happier than it had ever appeared in any earthly circumstance, and seemed to emanate that elusive particle of divinity which we believe to be part of every human soul.

These people watched the outward signs with wonder, but they would have been still more spell-bound if they could have seen inside that awakening mind, for she could see in that same room what their eyes, still veiled by healthy and vital humanity, were incapable of seeing. Only by those whose link with life is frail can things immortal be truly discerned and understood. Here indeed was unfolding the mystery of fifty long years of toil, disappointments, and searchings. All the tears, the questionings, were as the snowflakes in the first sweet breath of spring, melted into nothingness, no longer of any account now that life was once more surging through the veins of nature.

("Ah, yes," a small voice said, "even in the dullest days when chill winds almost froze your very soul, and all the world seemed like an enemy ready to break and destroy a struggling human being you felt that somewhere there must be Reason, that some day all the whys would have their answers. And that day has dawned. Behold it in its true glory, and rejoice." The voice ceased.)

Once again the eyes beheld a face so beloved for many years, lost for a-while among the turmoil of ordinary life, dead for some time now but always a treasure of memory whose worth was above all else. A face beloved! — so easy to say or write, and yet how few had ever touched such depths as she had known. At times when during his earthly life—shorter than hers—they had come close, they had been one mind, one spirit. How that love had dispelled the darkness when it had seemed unbearable!—how it had made even suffering worth while!

In life she had thought that no love could be as great as her love for him, but at that moment it arose and engulfed her, expanding from its former chrysalis and revealing greater beauty and infinite dimensions. She realised that their love was as everlasting as God Himself, and that her earthly life, so recently came to its close, was only one of many others in which they had struggled together towards the light of absolute perfection. She also knew that if her life had run as smoothly as she had desired then the greatest good and the greatest love could never have been appreciated in their fullest sense. In a room filled continuously with the warmth and light of the sun the wonderful cheer and warmth of the fire on the hearth are unnoticed, but in a bare and ill-lit room that same fire would give an immense measure of comfort and happiness. Life is like that: amidst trouble and sorrow and darkness love has much greater powers to shine and to lift the hearts of men.

"Dear God," she murmured softly within herself, "in this my utmost happiness and fulfilment, let me but look once more upon those days when everything seemed wrong and You sent him back to me, for as I can no longer feel pain and agony of soul I can read them as You meant them to be read."

Thus, as she prayed she watched, and saw what she had begged to see.

* * * *

Andrea sat alone, as she was accustomed to do these days. She was thirty years of age but very serious and grave for her years, for life had brought much suffering. It had held little pleasure — except perhaps an extraordinary love for the past in any form, which sometimes she thought must be a longing for something in another life which had been joyous and happy. On looking at a Saxon church or an ancient temple she was always filled with a love and reverence that were almost nostalgic. Even as a girl she had felt that reincarnation was indeed a fact, and now in maturer years and with a vast experience

behind her, it seemed that it was the only philosophy in the world that could adequately explain the strange vicissitudes, the seeming injustices of the world. It was strange too that she had always been fascinated by those religions which embraced reincarnation in their doctrines. For some reason unknown to her the East seemed to be a far away home from which she was for a while absent but would ultimately return.

Tonight, having settled her daughter Margaret in bed, and the day's tasks being finished, she pondered over such things. The day had been a wearying one, for she had just attended to the last legal matter connected with the death of her husband and all that that involved. She was now face to face with the task of creating a new life for herself and the child. Would it be better than those years that had been spent in a marriage that was just a mockery ? She felt guilty at her lack of sorrow for her dead husband, ashamed of the fact that it was actually a relief to have the chance of a new start. And yet new starts in life did not always have the expected results. They needed extraordinary wisdom.

She had thought that marriage to a man with identical interests to her own would be a wonderful adventure. How soon disillusionment had embittered her heart, and how quickly she had found herself in a morass of despair which drew her deeper and deeper into its vicious grip. For several long years she had been weak under tribulation, until she felt that she could no longer go on, and then quite suddenly there had grown a resolve within her mind that she must help herself, she must have faith in her philosophy that everything in life held a hidden purpose, that although the purpose may never be disclosed there must surely be greater strength after facing any trial with courage and the determination to overcome it. Above all she realised that to those who had sufficient faith not only in life but in themselves to reach out to God and ask His guidance, there was a way, as the poet said, "from the lowest depth to the loftiest height." From that moment she had always been aware of a strength that was not her own.

When at last, overcome by fatigue, she lay down thankfully in bed, she prayed sincerely, as she always did before giving herself over to sleep, for a deeper understanding of life and for strength and courage to face whatever may come.

The following morning she was very busy for Margaret was going to stay with a friend of Andrea's who loved the little girl and thought that Andrea herself should have some rest. When at last her friend had taken Margaret she was filled with a mixed emotion of loneliness and peacefulness.

A hot cup of coffee had a stimulating effect on her, and feeling refreshed she thought longingly of the little old book shop which for years she had to pass by with an ache in her heart and a regret that she could no longer buy any of its books. The best change in the world would be to enter its doors with the full intention of buying something however small.

Excitedly she put on her coat and slipped along the road with an almost forgotten eagerness. When at last she reached the shop she stood for a few seconds with bated breath, and then went in. The musty smell of ancient volumes assailed her like the fragrance of a rose garden, the rows of untidily arranged books were indeed a paradise to her vision. She took all in with the glance of a connoisseur, for she knew books well, and one look sent her over to a large heavy volume on a rather high shelf, dusty and neglected, undoubtedly very old, with beautiful gilt tooling from the hand of a craftsman.

In her excitement she was unusually clumsy, and besides, the shelf was high. Before she knew what

She looked up greatefully at her helper.

was happening the beautiful volume was on the floor. The fear of what may have happened to it left her feeling very shaken.

She tried to pull herself together, but someone else had picked up the book. He handed it to her with a gentle assurance that the book had suffered no damage. She looked up gratefully at her helper, but at the same moment as she looked into those friendly brown eyes she was startled as she had never been before. What in the name of heaven could it be that produced that thrill of recognition which pierced her whole being when she looked into the eyes of a stranger ? She knew him, but how, where, and when ? Many times she had read of such things but she had never expected to experience it herself.

However, the pause was only momentary, for soon the stranger, observing her discomfort, was talking about books to put her at ease again. He was not of her race, but from her beloved East — India, as he explained later on. But even the fact that he was an Indian and therefore held an especial interest for her could not explain the strange link between them that was there from the first moment. She could not concentrate on books or on anything else; her heart raced madly, all her senses were disturbed and agitated. Hardly knowing what she was doing, she purchased a small early volume of Shelley and prepared to leave the shop. Her new friend was also leaving, and they walked together down the road in the spring sunshine towards the park. Soon she learnt that he was lecturing at the university, a post which he had taken for five years, of which only one more year was left in England.

It was a strange friendship. No one could say that it had developed quickly, for it had not needed to develop — it seemed as old and natural as any friendship could be. It was as though she had met what an Easterner would call her soul-mate. No two people could be so completely at ease or could know so much of one another in one meeting unless they had met before, and she knew that it was not in this life.

Perhaps she had really come across a vivid piece of evidence for reincarnation !

* * * *

Time passed so quickly, and Andrea realised with dismay that daylight was fading and twilight creeping silently upon these two people to whom in the new but old companionship time meant nothing. She had found herself opening to her friend and unfolding all her inmost thoughts, her troubles, her hopes, despairs and aspirations. The comfort and the feeling of safety that she felt were quite unlike all other acquaintances, and when they parted, with the knowledge that they would meet again the following day, her heart sang with a joyous melody. Could it be that "He" had really come ? — The one companion whom ancient philosophies had taught her must be somewhere in the world ? — That was certainly the conviction that was growing in her soul.

In bed that night at first she did not sleep, but it was not the restless sleeplessness that besets an anxious mind, it was a new awareness of a miracle.

She loved this man, not with a reckless infatuation but with a deep wonderful love which could only be born of long association. She felt that somewhere in the lost passage of time she had loved him and that she had merely picked up the threads once more.

Finally she thanked God for this revelation, and then sank into the deep sweet sleep of a happy and contented mind. For the moment all troubles were forgotten and all anxieties smoothed away.

Each day they met, sometimes in the park, and often in her home. Andrea was so grateful to Joan her friend for these solitary weeks during which she could sort out her emotions and revel in her new happiness; and when Margaret returned it was to a mother renewed in mind and body. Margaret herself formed a very deep affection for her adopted uncle.

During the weeks that followed a new fear grew in Andrea's mind, a fear of how she would feel when he returned to his own country — a thing which was absolutely inevitable. During hours of great happiness she tended to forget it because it seemed impossible at such times that time should be so short, but often when she was alone it loomed up like a spectre.

In days when material questions were very depressing he was there with help and advice, and the tender solace with which these were given changed the whole face of life. Problems had to be faced and tackled but they were much lightened because of the sharing of them.

Spring had changed to summer, summer to autumn, and winter had spread its icy grip over the land, but even cold and desolate days were brightened by love, real deep indescribable love. When the new Spring arrived they both realised how the past year had gone on fleeting wings, drawing them ever nearer to the inevitable day of parting, and too soon arrangements had to be made for his journey home.

Always there was an obstinate feeling that surely there had been some mistake; that such companionship could not be broken up. However, with the rapid inevitability of such things, the day did come, and she tried so hard not to show how her heart was breaking. Of course he knew, but still she must appear braver than she felt. They had made plans to meet again if it should be at all

possible, but such plans, so intangible, were of little comfort in great distress.

He went. How long would it be before they met again ?

* * * *

One evening, Margaret, now a slim and lively schoolgirl, returned to find her mother quietly sitting at the open window staring at the distant hills, no near sound or sight impinging on her senses. At first the girl was startled and afraid; she called her mother, but there was no response, only a fixed stare and a look of utter weariness upon her face. Then Margaret noticed a paper, dropped unconsciously onto the floor. It looked like a cable, and in her terror she picked it up to see if it would give some clue to her mother's shocked appearance. Smoothing it out she read ——

"Nirmal died today. Taking urgently needed medical supplies through treacherous country to a village stricken with cholera."

Young as she was, Margaret understood why her mother was so troubled, and she knew also why she was staring at the hills. A few years ago, she remembered, often when she was safe in bed, a friend would come and sit by her while mother and uncle Nirmal went for a long walk into the wooded hills. She understood more than anyone could guess her mother's growing silence since uncle Nirmal left England.

Her own sorrow was great, for she too had loved uncle Nirmal, but she knew that no sorrow could equal her mother's. She crept quietly from the room, knowing that her mother would like to be alone.

Andrea, the dying woman, watched this last scene, and she smiled a wonderful smile as she felt in her hand a small leather notebook. Nirmal was very near to her now, holding out both hands, and he knew well the contents of that book, for she had brought it to him long ago. Since his death she had guarded it carefully.

It was as if their hands met, and he took her in his arms. She sighed a last earthly sigh, and went with him.

Margaret was first to see the book. She took it gently from the dead fingers, and tremblingly opened it. Every word was written by her mother's own hand. She started reading :

SERMON FROM STONES

In the beginning, when God became the father of His universe, He wished to purify the souls of His children, that they may finally reach perfection and blend again with His own spirit.

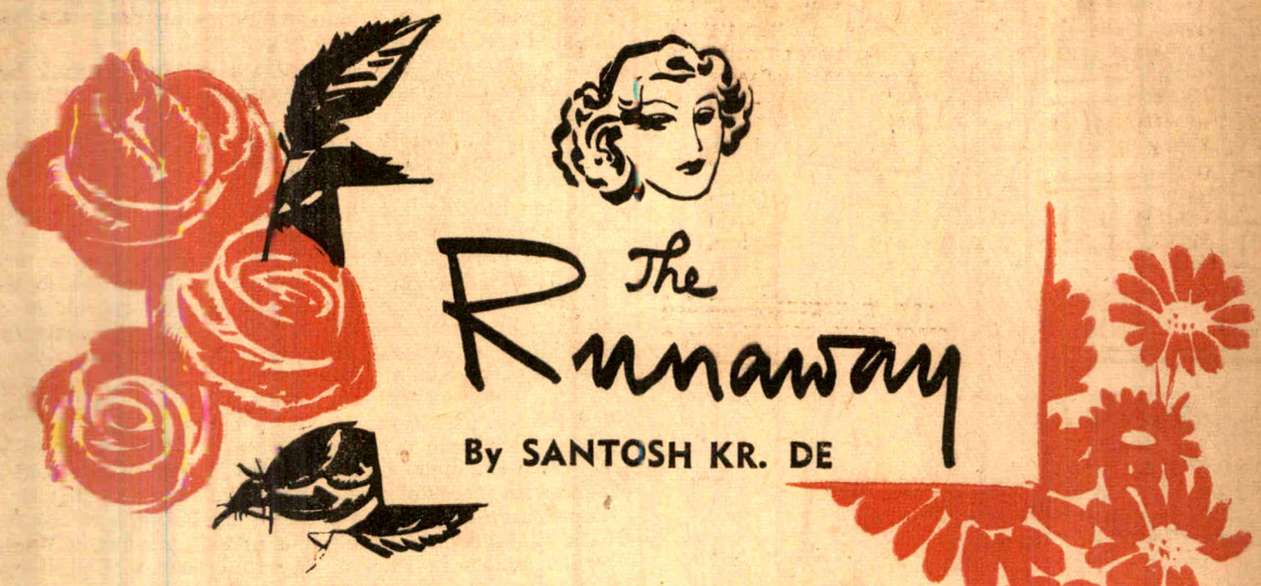
Three rules had they to learn before this perfection could be won, — justice, sacrifice, and love.

These souls, his children, were sent to the earth school as often as was necessary, to learn there each time a little more of these three rules.

In order that each soul may be tested to the full it was divided, and yet the two halves remained united by part of their Intuition. Each half possessed an equal share of justice, sacrifice, and love; but to each was added material of a grosser kind during its

(Continued on page 112)

Her mother quietly sitting at the open window staring at the distant hills.



The Runaway

By SANTOSH KR. DE

I CHANCED upon Swaminathan at the Great Eastern, and asked him about Sabita. Drink had already had its effect on him, and he said, "Ah, Sabita! Ask me no more about her. I know little about her except that she is in New York, may be."

So Sabita had not made a husband of Swaminathan? I felt surprised, and Swaminathan read it in my face.

"She is incapable of loving or yielding to love," said he in return to my jest. "She merely wanted to go to the States with me at my expense, and that she did. She reached the States and forsook me for a new friend."

"Ultra-modern," I said.

"Better call her an atomic girl," said Swaminathan. "Her highest ideal is drinking life to the dregs. She feels that the flame of life may go out any moment; any moment the whole body may vanish in smoke; and that in this atomic age love, constancy and chastity are hopelessly out-of-date."

Swaminathan said more about Sabita's life in the States, but I paid no heed. As I came out of the brightly illumined and merrily crowded bar of the Great Eastern, my mind went on humming "So Sabita has not come back! Sabita has stayed in New York!

** ** **

Sabita Rahaman. The beauty queen of the city. In health, in beauty, in education, in manners, in everything she was simply fascinating, and no man could escape her spell. I too could not. I pined in love for her, and, fool that I was, I tried to win her love. She easily ignored me altogether, and married my friend Abbas Rahaman, the famous artist, and the only child of a wealthy father. It was I who had introduced them. And not long after that they (perhaps I should rather say Sabita) invited me to their wedding.

For some years after that I did not see Sabita. In fact I studiously avoided all chances of meeting her. Then one night I chanced upon Sabita in the street, unexpectedly. I was returning from the Lakes rather late after my usual evening stroll. Sabita was unaccompanied, except by an animal she was leading by a chain. A dog, obviously, though I could not clearly see it in the semi-darkness. Sabita left me behind to a certain distance and then, as if on second thought, turned back. As we came face to face, we recognised each other unmistakably.

Probably she remembered the many evenings that we had walked round the Lakes together. "You are still fond of the Lakes, I see," she said, unhesitatingly.

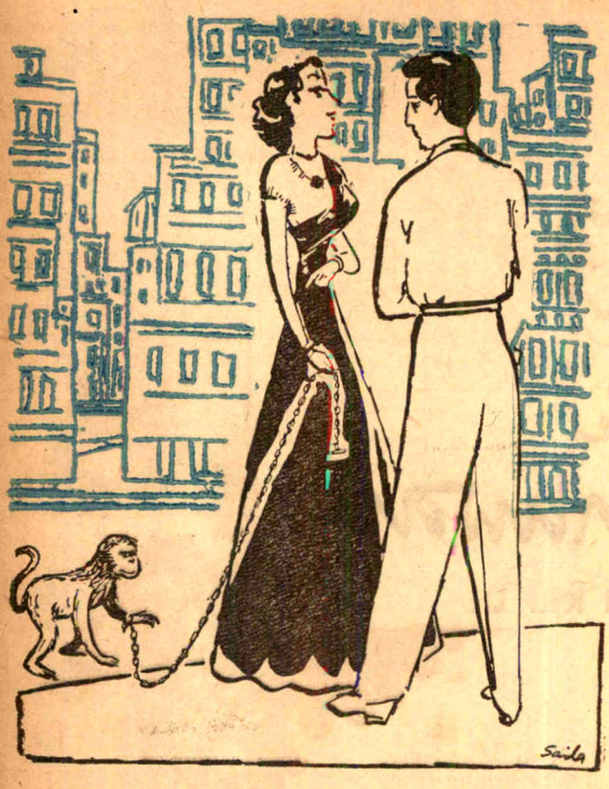
I felt a strange joy to think that Sabita had not forgotten me. But do people *really* forget, or merely pretend to forget?

We walked together and reached the well-lit highway. She was the same Sabita, I found, only a little more aggressively attractive. She was dressed in ultra-modern style as before; her magnificent coiffeur was garlanded with fragrant flowers, as before. The passers-by could not help looking at her as they passed.

"If you are not in a hurry," she said, with perfect ease, "would you mind walking a distance with me? I want to buy some flowers".

Together we went to a florist's, where Sabita was received with great respect. Sabita selected some flowers, including a bunch of lovely roses. As I was about to pay the florist, Sabita stopped me. "I don't have to pay cash here," she said. "The price will be debited to Rahaman's account".

It was a sudden rude shock to me. I suddenly realised that Sabita was the married wife of Rahaman. In the bright yet mellow light of the florescent lamp I looked at Sabita, and I looked at the animal she was leading by a chain. I noticed that the chain was golden and the animal was — a monkey! Not a dog, but a monkey. It was strange...



I noticed that the chain was golden and the animal was — a monkey!

surpassingly strange. I wondered why I had not noticed it before.

Sabita did not fail to notice the wonder in my eyes. "How do you like this simile, or symbolism, or whatever you may call it ?" she asked. "I mean the symbolism of this golden chain and the monkey. It is a symbol of your friend Rahaman. I care little for the animal, but I care for this golden chain. It is made of genuine gold, real gold, no doubt about it."

"What do you mean ?" I said. Rather, the words escaped through my lips.

"Your friend has run away from me." she said. "You don't know, it seems. How will you ? You never came my way since my marriage. Were you broken-hearted, or jealous, or what, I wonder ? I noticed how you studiously avoided the hotels, clubs, cafes and cabarets you knew I frequented. You loved me. Perhaps you haven't yet outgrown it. Perhaps that is why you still seek solace beside the Lakes. You loved me but couldn't marry me. Your friend merely married me, but couldn't love me. No, my friend, he didn't love me. And that is why he could so easily run away to England, where, I understand, his art has received good appreciation. Now we are legally separated, and he will stay on in England".

I felt astounded. Rahaman, I knew, had been head over heels in love with Sabita. Her unparalleled beauty had maddened him and conquered him, and he had completely succumbed to her. How could he make himself run away from so beautiful a wife ? How could he be so inhuman, so inconsiderate, so cowardly ? And he an artist of genius !

Sabita read my mind in a moment from my eyes, and smiled. "No," she said. "Your friend was not inconsiderate. He has left me his house, his car, his bank balance, in short all his movable and immovable property excepting his artistic requisites and his Secretary, Camelia. Rahaman has left me more than well provided for."

The mystery deepened. I too knew Camelia. She first came to Rahaman as a model and sat for several paintings. Then she became Rahaman's personal secretary too, and soon made herself nearly indispensable to Rahaman. She simply adored the artist in Rahaman. And when Rahaman married Sabita, Camelia gave her quite a costly present.

Those past days came flashing back on my mind. I had presented a collection of lovely conch shells to Rahaman, and Rahaman had displayed them on the fireplace in the drawing room. The shells reminded Rahaman of the sea they had come from, and he often became lost in contemplation of the beauty of sea-waves. One day I found the shells missing, and I enquired about them. "I removed them from there", said Sabita. "Don't they spoil the neatness of the room ? This is a drawing room, not an exhibition or a museum of curios. Your friend nearly flew into a rage for their removal; but I always like the drawing room to be very neat."

This caused some bitterness between Rahaman and Sabita. Matters came to a crisis about a small miniature statue of a nude woman. On the glass-top table Rahaman prepared small imitation hills and lakes with pieces of stone of various sizes and shapes, placed the statue against the stony background, and took photographs of the whole arrangement from different angles in such a way that they looked like genuine photographs of a completely nude girl standing on the hilly shore of a lake about to take the plunge or after her bath. Some of these photos won international prizes in photographic exhibitions.

"I became so angry," said Sabita, recollecting, "that I broke the statue to pieces. If you want to portray the feminine form divine, why not borrow from real life ? Why all this fraud of photographing dolls and false hills on your table top ?"

The contrast between the two women — Sabita and Camelia — became clearer in my mind's eye. One exquisitely beautiful, scorning the artist's worship of beauty. (Or was it, perhaps, jealousy ? Was Sabita jealous of the statue, the little lifeless doll that Rahaman brought into life in his wonderful photographs ?) The other woman in the studio, always serving the artist, silently but surely, keenly feeling in her heart of hearts the artist's aspirations and his intense joys and sorrows. The calm loveliness (I will not call it beauty in the same sense that Sabita was beautiful) of Camelia soothed me even in mere memory, wonderfully grand in its wondrous simplicity.

"Your friend was in reality an utter puritan," Sabita went on. "His ultra-modernity was a mere hoax, mere garb. An eye-filling streamlined house in South Calcutta, a giant luxury car, a stylish chauffeur, photographic studio in European quarters, no end of wealthy westernised customers. And that Camelia, or is it Magnolia ? I really cannot remember her ugly name. That awful girl as a bait for the westernised, sophisticated customers. All, all mere outward show. Hollow man, that's what I call him, for all his inside was hopelessly prudish, puritanic, centuries behind the times. He hated night clubs, hated mixed cocktail parties — and what fun in cocktail parties unless they are *mixed ?* — and he hated men dancing with women, or women with men ! Just think of it ! He ought then to have married a girl that could be kept locked up in a harem."

There was anger in her heart, it seemed, but more sorrow and disgust than anger. More words seemed to be steaming within her, and I waited in silence, showing my genuine eagerness to listen.

"I persuaded, nay, nearly forced him to sip a few pegs now and then", she continued, after re-

If you want to portray the feminine form divine, why not borrow from real life?

covering her breath. "But he soon gave up liquor entirely. He wouldn't hear of touching a peg. I couldn't keep him away from home after ten at night, and by eleven at night — which is practically evening-time for all fashionable people in a metropolis like this — Rahaman would be snoring. Disgusting. As if he was a petty officer worth six hundred a month! Or worse. It became impossible for me to move with him in *society*, till I had to move *alone*. Couldn't help. Why live in civilised society if you shun parties and clubs and all that like plague?"

Sabita's tragedy became plain to me now, clear as daylight. She was all for fun, luxury, admiration. She wanted to parade her glamorous beauty in "civilised" circles; to become the cynosure of countless admiring sophisticated eyes. She could not afford to fall asleep at home by eleven at night, when "civilised" life in swell clubs barely get started. In short, Sabita was all for sophisticated life, but sophistication was disgustingly foreign to Rahaman's nature. Rahaman was no mere professional photographer and painter. He was a *born* artist, artist to his finger tips, artist to the core of his heart, artist to the very bottom of his soul. No wonder he could not keep pace with his ultra-sophisticated wife. No wonder he *had to leave* her and run away, to save his artistic life.

As for Camelia, I think it was not Rahaman who took her away with him; it was Camelia who accompanied him, for did not she adore, even worship, the artist in Rahaman? And was not Camelia infinitely closer to Rahaman's soul than Sabita?

But what will Sabita do? The path she has chosen for herself is one for speeding and speeding along — in which there is no halt, no rest, no peace, no bliss of soul. She, alas, does not know whom she is laughing at scornfully by keeping the monkey golden-chained.

Swaminathan is my friend and fellow businessman. I do not know how he picked up acquaintance with Sabita, or Sabita with him. I am glad that I did not introduce them to each other. Swaminathan, a bachelor, is a frequenter of parties, clubs and all that. May be they met in a party, and became "friends". Swaminathan thought they were in love, and hoped Sabita would marry him.

Swaminathan had to visit the *States* (as the United States of America are called in high society) in connection with his business. Sabita did not miss this opportunity, and accompanied him. At *his* expense, of course, in more senses than one.

Swaminathan came back, but Sabita did not. She had even been dreaming of New York, the *Mecca* of high life, and now she *is* there in her dream city.

But will she find her salvation there? In running after the will o'the wisp is she not running away from light?

(*Translated from Bengali by Ajit Krishna Basu*)

Life Insurance Agent

(Continued from page 104)

there where you will find pleasure in working. The pay will be small, but enough for your expenses there. I know everybody who is anybody there, and I shall settle everything."

And he, past master of persuasion, persuaded them. He paid off the house-rent arrears, the grocers' bills, and all other dues; and fixed up everything by writing to a friend in Swamiji's hermitage. Then one day he started for the hill station with Mr. and Mrs. Mustafi and their daughter, aged seven. It would mean a good deal of expense every month for him; but what was all his money for?

* * * *

Barori wondered whether his long waiting had at last been crowned with success. Perhaps Malati Mustafi was *not* that same girl Barori had met in the steamer. But then, perhaps she *was*. It was the possibility of this second "Perhaps" that made Barori, the life insurance agent, give up his career and dedicate himself to the service of the death-marching husband of Malati.

Was Malati his steamer-companion of twenty years ago? Or was she not? Barori could try to verify it by asking her "Do you remember ever having travelled by a steamer from Naraingunj about twenty years ago?" But Amlan dared not. For, suppose she said "No"? It would be a shattering disappointment to Barori. And then, if she said "Yes", if Barori knew for certain that the girl he had met in the steamer long ago, and for whom he had been waiting so long, hoping against hope, was *this* unfortunate would-be widow of an advanced T.B. patient going to meet his doom, his shock would be no less shattering.

Better, therefore, he thought, to remain uncertain on the point; and he never asked her the question.

(*Abridged into English by the author himself from his original story in Bengali*).

SERMON FROM STONES

(Continued from page 108)

sojourn in the world. To one half was added manly strength and courage, but a physique more delicately balanced, and with the emotion of possession much stronger than the other half. This was MAN. The second half was not given great physical strength, but as compensation was given the power of creation and of mothering any living thing. This was WOMAN.

In both man and woman passion played a part, always testing, trying, tempting. It was the fire within the heart, ready to destroy, — or purge and purify. Always in each was Conscience trying to gain victory over worldly life, to teach the soul to forsake its grosser shell and to reach out to the Divine light of the Father.

These two halves were sent out into the world wherever the Father wished, with the truth of their being veiled for a while from their memory, to mix with other souls and struggle to work out their destiny. A will was given unto each that they may carve out a Karma for themselves.

One promise was made to the departing souls,— that the Father would watch over them and bring them together some time on the earth for as long or short a time as He deemed wise.

Thus it came about that the Father was surveying His universe, for He had a soul which was ready to take again an earthly life, one which was needing a finer test. And as He looked upon the earth He saw two peoples of a different kind, — the one poor and oppressed but with the greatest wealth in all the world of knowledge of His truth and love, the other great in discoveries of the earth and blinded by power and the desire to rule. "The greatest test of all," He said, "shall be for one soul to be divided among such peoples. Go, my children, to these places and see if you can be of use in solving the problems created there. Added to this will be the new difficulty when you are called together in these roles. But if you keep your eyes ever towards the light and your hearts ever open to spiritual truths, your minds closed to the temporal pleasures which are of no account but merely serve to take man's mind from God, then you shall be much nearer to the perfection required of you.

With these words He drew the veil of memory and set the divided soul upon its journey, at the same time plucking two pieces of rock, rugged and natural, from the highest mountain of the earth, and flung them far apart into the oceans there, saying "Just as these two pieces of rock shall be flung about and tormented in the savageries of the oceans, coming at last together upon the same shore, better and not the worse for their experience, so shall the two souls come through the storms of earthly life, unharmed, made better by their hardships, meeting together for a while that they may be strengthened and fortified, and find spiritual love in one another. Then they shall move on to greater work with greater strength.

"Sweet is the sunshine after rain,
And sweet the joy that follows pain."

It is strange that in a single moment of time a whole life can be illuminated and changed. I speak as she who was sent down to learn those lessons of justice, sacrifice, and love, among a race of people foreign to my soul, where the ruling power is of material possession and social status. What care they for the spirit ?—Naught !—It has become as a fairy tale, rather sweet but merely phantasy. The so-called real and tangible things of life are for the pleasures of man and man will excercise his right by grasping and plundering lest at death he should have missed something that his neighbour had. What does it matter that elsewhere in the world are people ground down by poverty and disease ? What the eye does not see the heart does not grieve. Thus here in a gross material world most people surround themselves with their precious possessions, dreading the time when they shall lose them. Even the gift of love, which the Father bestowed as an uplift of the soul, has been sullied, trampled upon, and made into a thing of shame and contempt. Love in this form has come between the Father and his children. Men of the west have become intoxicated with the idea that because they are outwardly more fair — a mere accident of climate — they are in all ways superior in the world. Their very fairness has blackened their souls.

It is thus I came to the world. I have been sickened by its materialism and its injustice, heartbroken by its terrors and desolations, shackled by my human limitations. At times it has seemed intolerable, at others a glimmer of light has broken through to show the promise of a nobler thing after the soul has emerged from the struggle just as a beautiful butterfly is the product of an ordinary caterpillar held in strict confine for a while to effect the change.

Sometimes the way has been easy; sometimes very hard; sometimes stumbling or falling by the way, at others led on by the guidance of God Himself.

But through all—both sorrow and joy—there has been a dreadful and desperate loneliness that no human being could dispel, and often have I cried, "Oh God, my Father, surely in this world somewhere is he who complements myself !—he whom I know exists, but only through the intuition of my heart. If it is Thy will may I find him." How strange this knowledge was, how so impossible and yet how certain.

The Father pitied the child. "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved, He that keepeth thee will not slumber.

How often have I gone out to those beloved hills of God, carried away in dreams and taken there by music. There the soul is refreshed and bathed in the love of God, and there one can see the true nature of the earth.

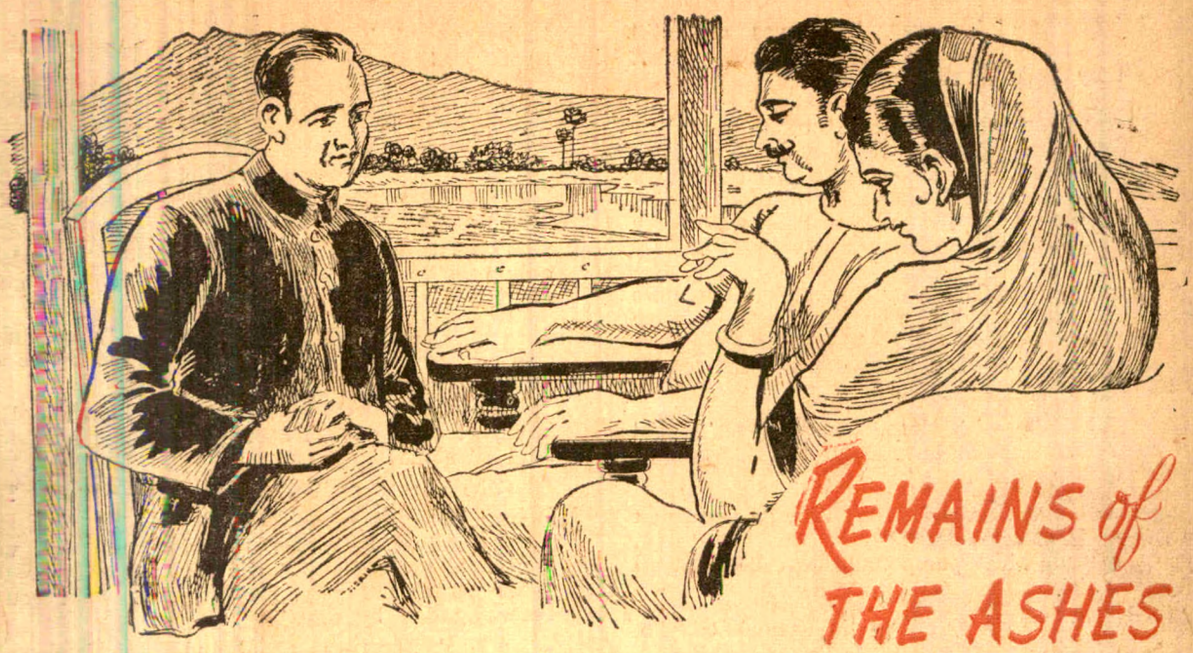
And suddenly HE was there ! Yes, with certainty I knew it. Straight from the country of my hills. He stood there by my side and in one flash the truth was revealed. Oh strange perversity of life ! that he to whom my heart is joined, to whom I could give my very life, must prove to be my greatest test, my greatest love, my way to God. Not for us the pleasures of this earthly frame, but the experience of a purer love.

So it happened that while this tremendous revelation was new upon me, whilst I was forming my resolves, my steps led me to the quiet and peace of a little church. I knelt in prayer, alone with my Father, thanking Him that the world could no longer be a lonely place,—and happy, so happy !

From there I walked in peaceful solitude along the shore, and there upon the sand lay two small white stones flung apart into the oceans, one not from these native seas, perfect, their roughnesses all smoothed away not by gentle handling, but by the torment of the oceans.

You are Joking

Madan Dutta



REMAINS of THE ASHES

By PREMENDRA MITTER

HERE on the first floor the verandah is narrow. The staircase is broken at places. Still, before the evening sets in, the chair and the table are placed up here—because the distant hills and the river can be seen from this place.

The argument is rather weak. Definitely nobody looks at the hills and the river these days. Perhaps once that view had some significance, but now it has not. What had been a pleasure, has now turned to a senseless habit.

Perhaps many things of this household, something much deeper, can be traced from the simple placing of these chairs on the verandah. This story aims at that.

* * * *

Jagadish Babu is the first to come and sit. The low easy-chair is there only for him. His great luxury is reclining with closed eyes, with two fat hands on the two handles on either side and with his two legs placed on the stool in front. If he could, he would not ordinarily talk. Seen all of a sudden, he looks like having fallen asleep.

Surama follows a bit later. Carelessness lingers on her sari and toilette. Perhaps carelessness is there in her nature. And she asks as soon as she turns up. "Are you asleep so soon?"

Jagadish Babu moves just that little in his easy-chair to let her know he is not sleeping.

Of course, Surama is not eager to get the answer. She poses the question out of habit. Then, perhaps, she gets up on the point of sitting down on the wicker settee and says, "My goodness, I have forgotten to bring my *Dokta*-box."

Jagadish Babu mutters with closed eyes, "Why not call the servants?" Surama sits down again and says, "But I have sent him to the market. Well dear, why don't you go and get it for me?"

There are no signs of movement in that easy-chair to show that Jagadish Babu has heard anything; at least, he has no eagerness to get up.

But in reality, it turns out after some time that Jagadish Babu gets up from his easy-chair with great strain. Jagadish Babu may have some love for his own comforts and luxury, but the attention and care for the comforts of his wife are stronger than that.

But Jagadish Babu does not have to take the trouble of going. The doctor is seen on the steps.

Surama says, "Wait, you needn't go. Doctor, fetch my *Dokta*-box before you sit. I have left it probably on my bed. And I am afraid I did not put out the light of that room. Go and switch it off."

No orders these. Instead there is that sweetness of a request but even that sweetness is somewhat mechanical.

It is likely that there is a lot of sweetness in many things about Surama—her features, her voice and her manners. Those sharp lines of her body have quietened with time but even now they show traces through the dishevelled dress and toilette. Surama's beauty has not yet become a page out of history. History there has been of another aspect of her character, but that need not be related now.

The doctor puts out the light of the bed-room, fetches the *Dokta*-box and then sits down across the table, facing Surama, his back towards the hills and the river. He had never had the urge to look at the hills and the river. All along he had been taking his seat in this particular position.

Even in the gloom of the hazy dusk, the doctor looks somewhat shabby, not only in dress and looks, but even his mind seems to be indifferent about everything. It is a fact that the defects of his dress are the first to strike your eyes. A closed neck coat on baggy, faded trousers—the collar not buttoned simply because the button is missing. Probably all day long he visits his patients with this coat on. The pocket on one side is torn a little, perhaps, with the weight of the stethoscope. A few loose papers show themselves through that gap. Apparently there had been some very recent attempts at a hairdo, but that too with absolute negligence.

The weary lines of indifference on the doctor's face do not appear very prominent probably because

of the brightness of his eyes. The eyes are still awake in this lifeless, drowsy man. Who knows what treasure they have to guard?

Silence reigns for a while. Surama has her *pan* accessories with her as usual and she is busy preparing them with care. Jagadish Babu lies still in his easy-chair. The doctor after making a very minute examination of his nails, perhaps waits only for Surama to do away with her *pan* business.

Surama has finished preparing *pans*. She puts one in her mouth and still remains silent for some time, her looks fixed in front. Then suddenly she asks, "Have those flower-grafts of yours arrived as yet, Doctor?"

Jagadish Babu with closed eyes, says "Would they ever? You could have had the flowers of Paradise with greater ease."

Surama laughs out and says, "Why do you think that Doctor is so worthless? If he was not there, do you think our water-pump could have been set all right again?"

A sleepy voice comes out of the easy-chair, "No, I don't. If someone else had looked after that pump, real water would have come up."

The three of them laughed. This happens to be an old joke of this household.

Surama says, "Really I wonder how you go on with your practice. Do they take your medicines in good faith?"

"Why shouldn't they ? Once they take that, they hardly get a chance to accuse him."

Surama picks up a little lime out of the *pan*-box, puts it to the tip of her tongue and says laughing, "Dear, to tell you frankly, you have a grudge against Doctor. Do you see nothing good in him?"

"That is due to a defect in his eyes—so many other good things escape his eyes," Doctor speaks out at last.

Surama smiles and says, "That is true. How could he see if his eyes were always shut?"

"I don't keep them shut for nothing. There would have been a duel if I opened them ever so slightly."

The doctor's silence seems a little awkward beside the loud laughters of Surama and Jagadish Babu. Is there a shadow of pain in his eyes, as he looks at Surama's face?

Surama stops her laughter and says: "Well I had almost forgotten. But you will have to get up now, Doctor."

"Just now? Why?"

"No, it has to be just now. Brother has sent some parcels and they had been lying in the station since yesterday. He could not make time for once to-day. You must go and fetch them for me."

The Doctor hesitatingly says, "Would it matter if I went in the morning?"

"Would it ? Would it matter if you went after a month? Would it not be better if the things were lost for ever?" Surama's tone is now clearly more bitter than sweet.

"Would they get lost in one night?" The doctor tries to argue with a little humility in his voice.

Surama's reply comes louder, "I can't enter into [illegible] that you won't be able to go? It had been a mistake to have asked you."

The doctor is very much embarrassed and gets up, "Did I say I won't be going? I thought that a night will not matter."

"How do you gain by that night? You have nothing pressing in your hands. You would have been sitting idle otherwise."

That is not incorrect. The doctor comes here only to sit and idle, and he had been idling for many years now.

He picks up his hat and says, "Come along, Jagadish Babu, let's go. The car is there—we shall have a nice drive."

Surama objects even before Jagadish Babu, "Strange suggestion, I should say. Shall I be sitting here all alone?"

The doctor smilingly suggests — "Why ? Of course, you will be going with us."

"Won't it be better to bring up the whole household or better still the whole locality to fetch those parcels? Really, I don't know what you are becoming day by day."

The doctor turns about and descends down the stairs in silence.

"What you are becoming day by day!" Does the doctor think about this, as he drives down to the station in his car ? Perhaps not. The turbulent sea of worry and emotion has long become still and quiet. Perhaps those days never come back even in remembrance. Perhaps those old leaves of memory are buried deep somewhere, very deep. He is now completely fixed in a definite pattern of life. He himself could never know when the fire had gone out completely, leaving ashes behind, ashes.

Oh yes, the fire was ablaze once. But that is probably a story of some other person. He can recognise that Amaresh only from a distance and that, too, indistinctly. He has no ties with that person.

* * * *

There was a time when the boy had not hesitated to stand up against the whole world with supreme courage.

The girl had perhaps found a scope to ask him in a frightened voice, "you have come here, of all places?"

"I could have gone farther."

"But"——

"Do you worry about what they would think? But what you yourself think is of far greater importance to me."

"Well, I," the girl had hung her head down in silence.

Amaresh had fixed her with a piercing look and said, "You have not even the courage to think, Surama."

Surama had lifted her face and uttered in a low voice "No."

"I have come here only to infuse that courage Surama. I shall wait for that."

Surama had remained silent.

Amaresh said again, "Are you thinking how long we shall be able to wait thus? If necessary, till eternity, but I don't think that would be necessary."

It is likely that Jagadish Babu had entered the room at that moment. Perhaps he looked much the same as now.

A short, chubby gentleman—a quiet, harmless creature. That he has attained material success

through struggle from the lowest rung of life was not in the least betrayed by his features. From his looks, one would suppose that fate had so long been very favourable with him. This perhaps is true as far as Surama is concerned. He had said as he entered the room, "have you not yet changed your

Suddenly Amaresh grasped one of her hands and said, "Don't remain so quiet, Surama.....

travelling clothes? No, don't detain him now, Surama. He had a whole night of strain. Let him first have a nap after wash and meal."

Amaresh said laughing, "The blame of detention lies with me, not her."

Jagadish Babu had laughed aloud. Even Amaresh could not dream that. He could look so ugly when he laughed.

Amaresh had enjoyed with painful pleasure the look of that face, distorted with laughter, as he was standing behind Surama.

Then he got up and said, "All right, let us get up then."

Jagadish Babu, as he escorted him, had said, "You have chosen a very bad time, Amaresh Babu. You won't be able to see anything here in this tremendous heat. It is a bother to go out these days."

"That may not be a very bad piece of luck," he had answered to the astonished look of Jagadish Babu, "and then the summer must come to an end one day."

"But where shall I find you then," was there a tinge of suspicion in Jagadish Babu's voice ?

"Find me surely you would. I am afraid you would find me a bit too much."

Doctor Amaresh had not told a lie. Really a signboard of Dr. Amaresh was found to be hanging by the side of a street in this dirty, poor town, a few days later.

Jagadish Babu remarked "You won't get the returns of an English degree here, doctor. This woodland is all right for the wood-cutters but will it suit you ?"

Doctor Amaresh had laughed and said, "Is there nothing else to suit but timber business and medical practice ?"

And after that Doctor Amaresh was seen everyday on the narrow verandah of Jagadish Babu's house. It did not matter if he was not seen in the houses of his patients so much.

"Turn about your chair, Doctor," Jagadish Babu had said.

"Why, to see your hills and river ? Their value is all gone since your trade mark was branded on them".

"Doctor, with the dissection of dead bodies your heart too has dried out." And then Jagadish Babu had asked with astonishment, "Why are you getting up, Surama ?"

"Half a moment," Surama had gone in.

Doctor Amaresh with a strange smile had said "Girls cannot stand arguments. Isn't it, Jagadish Babu ?"

Jagadish Babu did not answer. It seemed as if he was thinking about something with a grave face.

Doctor Amaresh had again said, "That little thing is the pity."

Jagadish Babu had replied gravely, "And even that is not meant for all."

The coming and going of the Doctor in this house had perhaps

beginning but gradually it was tolerated—perhaps it had become easy even with Jagadish Babu.

"I shall have to stay a few days out in the woods, Doctor. One has to be on the spot during the counting. Do keep an eye on the household. Of course, you don't have to be asked about that."

The Doctor laughed and said, "No, you needn't, you may even ask me not to come and see the result."

Jagadish Babu had smiled.

Surama too had smiled and blushed. Perhaps she blushed because she had smiled. Perhaps there was no other reason for her to blush.

* * * *

Strangely it was Surama who had once spoken so sharply, "But I can't stand this life any longer."

"And I hope you shouldn't."

"No, you leave me. How do you gain by killing me and yourself like this?"

"There are still ways left to live."

"When that way was not chosen earlier—"

"I am not to be blamed for that, Surama. You didn't know your own mind. I didn't know the value of opportunity. But why should we accept the cruel pranks of fate?"

"You don't know what you are saying. That is not to be, that is not to be." Surama's voice grew pointed with emotion.

"Do you worry about it? Is there no such great thing for which the supreme price of committing a crime can be paid?"

"I can't follow your words, I am frightened."

"You shall be able to follow them. I wait for that day."

Did that waiting come to a success? That day they went to see the woods, taken in lease for timber business by Jagadish Babu. The whole day had been spent in the excitement of a grand picnic in the mysterious surroundings of the forest. Towards the evening all of them went out for a walk around.

In that pathless forest, Amaresh and Surama had, somehow, separated from the others. This separation was not perhaps completely accidental. Amaresh, too, perhaps had no hand in it.

Surama had said, "A few moments later one might lose his way in this forest."

"Ways might be lost even outside forests."

Surama replied a little impatiently, "I don't like this sort of talk from you always."

"You don't like it because you must be having a pain somewhere within you. These talks you can't tolerate because you don't want to know yourself."

Surama had gone a little in silence. The gait of her tall and graceful figure against the canvas of the forest had seemed to have been moulded with all the exquisitenness and sweetness of Nature herself.

Amaresh had, perhaps, halted in silence for a little while only to feast his eyes with that serene sight. Then he had said "Surama we too may find a way out of this wood instead of losing it."

Still Surama was speechless.

Suddenly Amaresh grasped one of her hands and said "Don't remain so quiet, Surama. Confess that you have no pride of tenacity, you possess only the shame for your weakness. One can't live for ever with the treasure of feeling and it's not fair to live like that, Surama."

Surama replied almost indistinctly, "Tell me what I can do."

Amaresh placed his right foot on the trunk of the tree and said "Do you see this felled tree? It had fetched a value to the timber business. But it had a far greater, far more real value of its own than that. You too are not the timber for the trade, you belong to the woods."

As Surama did not utter a word, Amaresh added, "Excuse me if I cannot speak it out to-day at ease. Everything is so mixed up in my mind."

Surama had come still closer to Amaresh, and resting her hand on his chest had said slowly in a choked voice "You give me courage, you."

* * * *

But they could not go away at that moment. The obstacle rose from an unexpected angle. Jagadish Babu suddenly got ill—seriously ill. Surama and Amaresh had spent the whole night and the day without the wink of a sleep by the bedside and silently waited for that hour of liberation. Perhaps they would not have to wait much longer. This happpened to be their final test, the fundamental price for the new life to come.

Jagadish Babu recovered from his illness but they had to wait for a few more days, a few more. Surama's little weakness lay in removing those little hindrances, preparations for the last take off. She might be allowed a little time just to give her a chance to get back courage from within. Amaresh does not want to apply the slightest of force, let every root disentangle itself by its own will, let every bound be broken. His patience is mountainous.

Doctor Amaresh had waited—for a few days, for many days, for far too many days.

By and by the fire had died away, it is not known when. It is not known when the fire had become pale and colourless like last year's petals, they had all become colourless. Colourless and cheap and commonplace. They have been fixed in the framework of habit, they have all become torn and pale in the dirt of this earth.

The doctor is perhaps the most lifeless of all, lifeless and weary. Because the fire was in him—because it had burnt him through and through.

The doctor still comes and sits in his earmarked chair everyday, with his back to the hills and the river. But that is out of sheer habit.

The doctor runs to the station to take delivery of these parcels but that is only obedience.

(Translated by Prashanta Chakravarty)

FOSSIL

By SUBODH GHOSE

ANJANGARH was a native state exactly eight-and-a-half square miles in extent. A tiger cub, though small, is still a tiger. It was a kingdom. There was a Maharaja. There was an army, a police force, a Keeper of Records, a Nazir and so forth. The Maharaja had more than twenty titles. He was Lord of the Three Worlds, Shepherd of Men, Defender of the Faith and the Subduer of Enemies. Criminals had been impaled on stakes in accordance with the hallowed injunctions of religion not more than two generations ago. Now that was no longer possible. Offenders were stripped naked instead and bees set upon them.

Although the ancient fortress had long lost its splendour the stone masonry was still intact. Two rusty cannons, like the weathered skeletons of a pair of wild elephants, stood beside the great gate. Pigeons had built their nests in the cannon mouths and laid their eggs there in complete security. Tired dogs rested in their shade. Turbans and swords decorated the halls of the castle and brass and iron shields clung to its walls like cakes of dung.

A minister and eight chieftains, the Prefect of Police, the Amin or Surveyor, the magistrate and the Keeper of Records formed the administration. The Maharaja looked after the welfare of his subjects with the help of the combined wisdom of his Kshatriya and Moghul officers. The unprecedented oddness of this Government made life so uncomfortable for the people that half of them had fled. They were working as coolies on the sugar plantations of distant Mauritius.

The eight-and-a-half square miles of Anjangarh consisted of barren hills, rough rocky uplands and stretches of cactus and wild neem. Kurmis ar Bhils brought water in buffalo hides from the hidde springs in the hills four miles away, watered the fields and grew maize, barley and jonar.

Every year there was a dispute between th Kurmis and Bhils and the state revenue departmer The peasants were unwilling to surrender their cro to the royal treasury. The State took half. T Maharaja maintained an excellent polo team. T royal stables echoed with the neighing of more tha a hundred of the best polo ponies. The Mahara cherished these divine creatures from Sydney te derly. They could not be fed on oil cake and bra Maize, jonar and barley had to be provided.

The revenue officer was forced to call in the polic In the clubbing and spearing of the Rajput poli heroes Kshatriya heroism sparked and flamed. an hour all protest was silenced. The rebellion w subdued.

Even the wild endurance of the defeated Bh gave way. They left the kingdom in droves, signir up in the camps of the recruiters of labour. Son went to Delhi with their wives and children, son to Calcutta, others to Shillong. They did not mal the mistake of returning.

Only the Kurmis were unwilling to go awa They had lived in this part of the country for seve generations. Their mud huts, large and small, we cool in the shade of the wild neem. Their ear had the sweet smell of mustard. Every throb their blood bound them to it. They tilled the fields without grudging their labour, rebelled at th harvest and were put down as regularly as th

seasons came and went, involving in their course all their days and nights. No alternative seemed possible.

But mercy and piety were not entirely absent from Anjangarh. Every Sunday destitutes numbering a thousand or more gathered in the spacious ground in front of the fortress. Flattened rice and molasses were distributed from the royal storehouses. On the last day of the month the Maharaja himself appeared in all his magnificence, riding an elephant auspiciously painted with sacred signs. He blessed his subjects. And on his birthday the Ramlila was sung in the castle courtyard. His subjects were invited. But as is usual wherever power is displayed to excess, the lathi was present everywhere. In every crowd and with every shout of triumph some unfortunate heads were broken. The flattened rice, the royal blessings and the Ramlila songs were all distributed to the accompaniment of blows. The subjects had grown accustomed to receiving them in that way.

Although the state was administered and revenue collected by big stick methods it was becoming more and more difficult to maintain the dignity of the crown. There were the expenses of the chamber of princes and the maintenance of the polo team. Little by little hands were laid on the royal safes containing ancestral gold and silver.

At this critical juncture a legal adviser who had studied English law was brought into the court. His name was Mukherji. Mukherji had broad, strong shoulders. He quickly became a great source of strength to the ruler both in polo and in the affairs of the state. By degrees he became the de facto minister and the minister himself was reduced to signing documents.

Mukherji was an idealist. Still interlaced with his thinking was the dream of American democracy about which he had read in his history books as a child. And although he was young he was extremely cool-headed. He believed that the truly courageous are never defeated and that one who works for good never comes to grief.

Mukherji spent every ounce of his ability in forwarding the best interests of the state. Young and old, in fact everyone who lived in Anjangarh, came to know their Agent Saheb. He was as sympathetic as he was strict. The subjects both loved and feared him. It was at Mukherji's suggestion that the lathis were withdrawn. He caused a furore in the office by auditing the accounts with hair-splitting precision. The boundaries of the state were delimited all over again and a census of the population taken. Even the pair of cannons lost their rust and began to shine with polish.

It was Mukherji the law agent who discovered the hidden subtefranean wealth of Anjangarh. Anjangarh held treasure in the bowels of her earth. Layers of mica and asbestos lay in the folds of her granite ribs. He showed them to businessmen in Calcutta. The rocky uplands were leased for lacs and lacs of rupees. Anjangarh recovered her vanished glory.

A vast palace in the Gwalior style was built beside the fort and decorated with a marvellous mixture of marble, mosaic, concrete, and Venetian blinds. Expensive limousines, tourers and sedans of German manufacture stood in the royal garages. In the royal stables newly imported Irish ponies kicked and frisked. A power house proclaimed the new life and prosperity of Anjangarh with its day and night drumming.

A fresh tide of life had really come to Anjangarh. The businessmen formed a Mining Syndicate. Gravel roads were built in the mining area. Coolie lines, tube wells, a club bungalow, a garden with flowers and a gymkhana appeared one by one. The Kurmis crowded into the coolie lines. Their wages were paid to them in cash. They made offerings of pigs to their gods, drank rice wine and pounded their drums in the evening, raising a tumult in the colony.

The Maharaja was contemplating the construction of two new polo grounds. And the palace garden was to be enlarged by the addition of eleven more cottahs of land. He also thought it would be nice to have an Italian band master on a salary.

Mukherji spread the map of Anjangarh on a table and lost himself in plans for his irrigation scheme. Ten canals were to run parallel across the state, from north to south. Here and there he placed large dams with strongly-built sluices. All the water of the Baroka rains was to be caught and cleverly made to flow over Anjangarh's stony bosom, like blood through arteries. Every Kurmi tenant was to have three cottahs of land of his own. There would be winter and summer crops of rice and an extra rabi crop as well. There must be three crops a year. The land on the north was to be turned into a nursery for potatoes and tobacco. On the southern plot he would grow sugar cane, barley and wheat. Then.....

Then there would be, gradually, a bank. A tannery. A paper mill. The royal treasury was no longer negligible. This was the auspicious hour. Mukherji would change the face of Anjangarh with each new estimate as though with the strokes of an artist's brush. He would prove that the ruling of a state is not an affair of the big stick: it is an art.

A school. To this the Maharaja gave a plain answer. No. Mukherji stood up. He would see whether the Maharaja could be made to change his mind or not.

The Maharaja tugged fiercely at his beard and pushed a couple of papers over to Mukherji. "Take a look at these". he said.

The first paper read :

All-powerful Court and Lord of the Court, Maharaja !

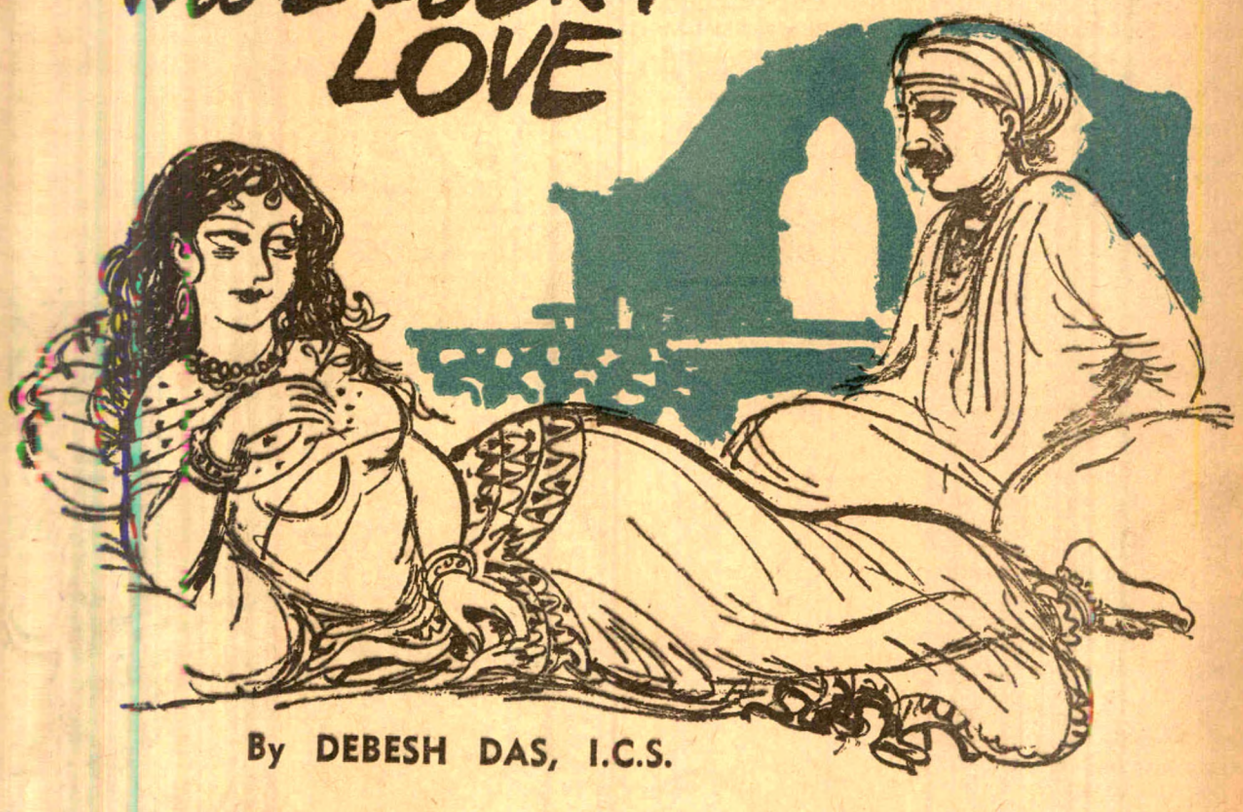
You are the father of your subjects. We eat because you grant us food. Therefore, let the Court not touch this year's crop of maize, barley and jonar. We shall give the Court as much as is its legal due and take a receipt.

Your obedient servant,
Dulal Mahato
(Baklam Khas on behalf of Kurmi community)

The second paper read : "The Maharaja's men have entered one of our mines and taken away four Kurmi workers after beating up their wives. We

(Continued On Page 125)

The DESERT LOVE



By DEBESH DAS, I.C.S.

In RAJOARA, the celebrated book of belles lettres on Rajasthan, the author has dealt with Rajput glory, ancient and new, pulsating with the quivering intensity of our new born freedom. In this story the writer reveals the innermost heart ache of another type of Rajasthani whom we do not associate with the glorious tales of Rajput chivalry.

NEITHER love nor sweetheart engaged thought at that time.

Rather I was feeling a little inclined towards communism. I am just a work-a-day man, hard put to make two ends meet. I did not go to the Ballard Pier of Bombay for fun or for dramatising the departure of some friend for Europe. All that I wanted to see was the seascape at the time when an ocean going ship sails away. I noticed many eyes filled with tears and many more rubbed with the handkerchief even though dry. I heard the steward shouting on the deck "Friends ashore, friends ashore" and was surprised to find that many eyes became dry rather quickly as the friends came ashore They threw long chains of confetti on the deck and their friends held on to them till they snapped as the ship drew away. I resented this national wastage. What useless luxury, what a waste of money over coloured strips of paper. No doubt foreign education and outlandish customs have made these rich people heartless. They should have distributed the money spent on confetti to the porters. It is because of such things that leftist labourers are waging their war of the hammer and the sickle all over the world.

Mine, of course, is a non-violent war. All my energy is spent up in the battle for the bread. I have no part to take in the struggle between the rich and the poor.

I was noting the fading picture of the ship far away when I noticed a Marwari gentleman. His eyes glistened with tears more shiny than the diamond of his ring. These were not the miserly drops of tears brought out by the rub of a silk handkerchief.

Realising that I have noticed his tear he felt embarrassed. He tried to smile away but could not wipe them off. I was considerate and looked another way.

Poor fellow! Perhaps he is unable to bear the separation. On the top of that he has been found in tears.

Still I could not check the temptation of having another good look at him. I sent a stolen look towards him. All things stolen are nice. Indeed, like stolen love. This time, however, I was caught. Apparently he himself was waiting to be looked at. I was a little non-plussed when he himself came to my rescue and asked, "What are you thinking, Sir? Is it some friend of yours?"

Just some friend? Of course, judging from the more or less blank look on my face he could not

have thought of anybody else. I merely said, "No Sethji, nobody."

"No? Then was it a friend of some friend of yours?

"No. I just came to see how farewells take place."

"You're lucky Babu Sahib. Ram Ram."

I was going away as after this there was nothing more to talk about.

Suddenly I stopped. Eureka. Here I was standing right in front of a living drama. Why else would this gentleman, apparently a businessman as hard boiled as an egg, as hard a nut as the ripe coconut should consider me lucky that I did not have to bid farewell to anybody?

"Ram Ram, Sethji. I don't understand why you consider me lucky.

He tried to explain this away. He did not mean anything in particular.

"No Sethji, you are not a man to pass any remark unnecessarily. It must have had some significance. Probably you are unhappy that somebody has sailed away just now. That is why you are considering me lucky".

During the war the ocean experienced countless depth charges by the combatants. But I am sure that no depth charge has ever brought out such an attractive prize.

I went with this businessman to his room in a luxury hotel. He responded to by sympathetic approach. I felt that he was finding himself unable to bear the burden of his memories alone in the room.

After some brief preliminaries, little spells of hesitation and more silence, Manohar Babu started to reminisce. A youth from the deserts of Rajasthan, he came to Bengal in search of fortune. Quite early in the day his business in scrap iron was in clover. His profits went sky high and so did his desires.

This is not an unusual thing for a cut and dried businessman, starved of love, of the softer influences of life. We, the educated middle classes, discuss such affairs with just a disapproving smile.

"Have you heard of the name of Shirin Begum?"

No, I have not. He explained that she was neither a film actress nor an ordinary street woman. Names like hers could only be heard in the private conversation of the gay rich. At this stage probably I betrayed a sneering smile.

Manohar interrupted my thoughts, "No, no. What you are thinking of is not correct."

I smiled again, "But how can you say so without knowing what I have been thinking of."

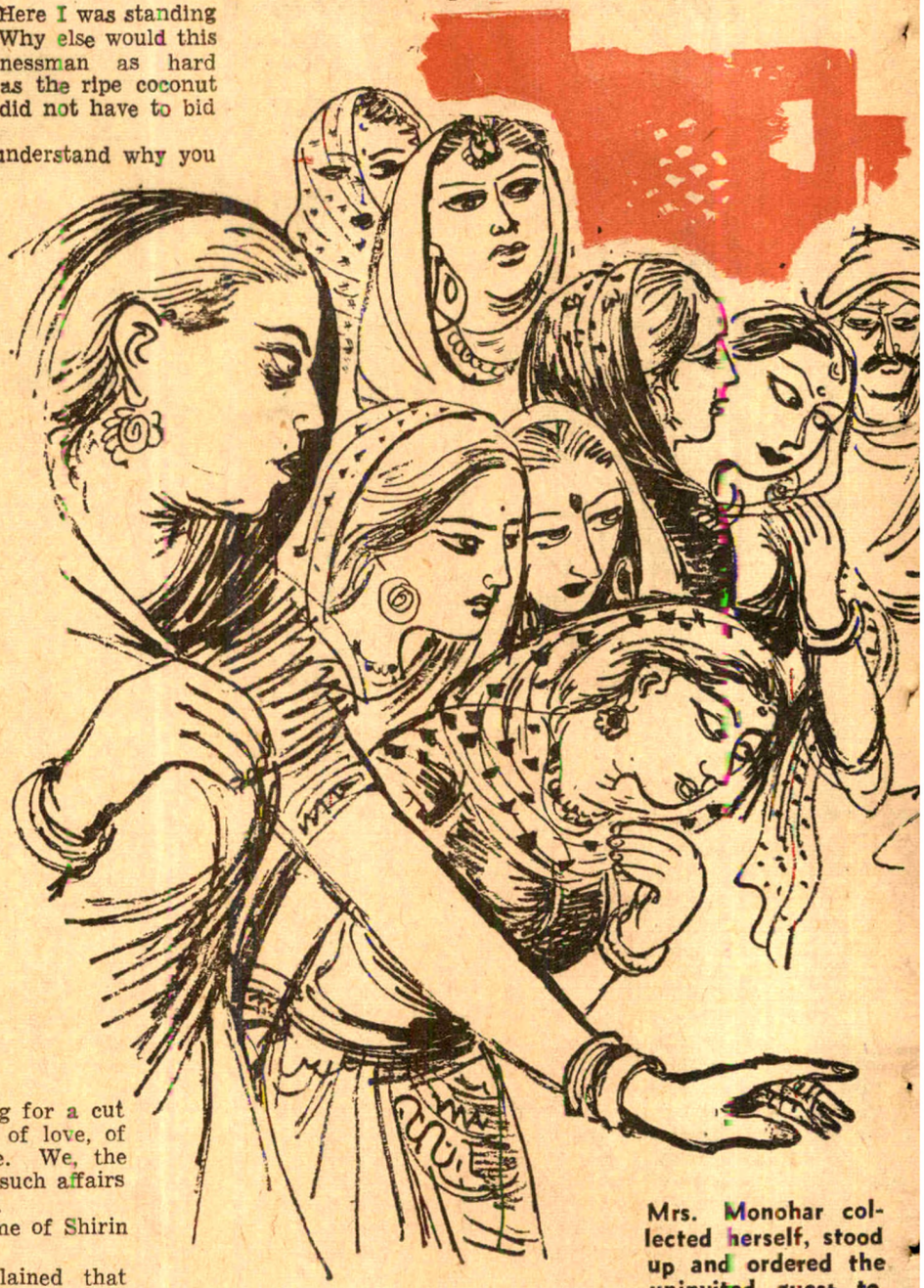
"Probably you don't like my story."

"No, no, Sethji. I like your story all right. I have a perfectly open mind about it and I am very curious."

"Yes, you would be curious. I myself am inclined to be curious about it."

"What's the matter, Sethji?"—I sounded very soft and sympathetic.

"You have probably had University education. You will understand. You may not make light of my affair. I came in for speculation in brass. But my luck struck a gold mine."



Mrs. Monohar collected herself, stood up and ordered the uninvited guest to clear out.

II

This was not unusual in ancient India, the golden period of Indian History as they say. Love out of the wedlock was sometimes the love preferred and the girl beyond one's reach was the girl of destiny.

Indeed those expansive days of India before she came under foreign domination had also a code of morality and an outlook befitting the liberty of the people. You were not bound to be in love with only the woman you have married. It was admitted that

love was as free to blossom outside the wedlock as in the progressive countries of the West these days. The laws of the Medes and the Persians were not offended, nor any code of ethics shocked if love and marriage did not find fulfilment in the same person. The throat of ancient India was not parched dry in the desert of love.

"Why should it be," asked Manohar Babu. After all, it is love outside wedlock which inspired many great men in the past. Love unapproved by society is no more than the unexplained patches on the face of the moon making it all the more interesting. Where would have been the victor of Trafalgar without the inspiration of Lady Hamilton? asked Manohar Babu.

I was surprised. A millionaire in scrap irons was not supposed to know all this philosophy. Where did he learn all these things? What does it matter to an uneducated businessman whether he deals in the brass of wedded life or the gold of inspiring love?

The struggle between the brass and the gold, however, came to a head. Manohar Babu had his family, wife, children and relations. He gave his full attention to both his family and the business. But he gave his heart to a girl versed in the enchanting ways of a cultured nautch girl. Indeed he admitted that it was the inspiration of Shirin Begum that brought him success in business. Also that the profits he derived were much more than what he gave back to his mistress.

Somewhere in the mind of the half-starved middle class lurks an eternal critic. He raised his head and reminded me, "If you want to live, try to

live like this. Life needs inspiration. Look how this businessman has put to use even the love he has bought from the market."

But Manohar had enough troubles. At first his wife did not mind so much his husband visiting professional women. Of course she was grieved and ever shocked at such developments, but she had to put up with them somehow. The situation however became desperate when she found him attached firmly to a particular girl. It does not matter if the bee flies from flower to flower. But it must not get entangled in a particular blossom. But Manohar refused to give up Shirin. Why should he do so? Has he neglected his wife or his business on her account? The devoted wife could have said a lot in reply, but she was an orthodox woman brought up behind the purdah. She did not have much to say. But she tried to strike on a tender point. She asked, "Is there no other dancing girl in Calcutta except Shirin? Why don't you visit other women also? Or is it that no other woman allows you to enter her parlour?"

The husband was, however, not to be beaten in arguments. He smiled, "Nobody's gate is closed to money. I can go wherever I want to. But you ought to be pleased that I do not visit any girl except one. That's the surest proof of my basic goodness."

The wife became all the more enraged, "If you are a good man, why do you keep a mistress?"

The word Shirin means sweet and Manohar had indeed acquired a lot of sweetness from her. He smiled sweetly and said, "Why don't you understand that nobody could blame me in the society if I had two wives."

A dancing girl must remain a dancing girl. She must not be allowed the honour and stability of an approved society. Her exploitation from outside cannot cause much harm.

That is why the wife was angry. She cursed him, "You have gone to the dogs. You are worse than the fashionable young men who have had English education.

III

The trouble did not stop here. The wife was unhappy and the children kept aloof. Relations started a whispering campaign. But nothing daunted Manohar. He drew closer to Shirin.

Shirin had naturally got much experience in this line — an experience derived from the book of life itself. She understood very well that she must now give him more sympathy and make him forget the family unhappiness. No girl companion of even the Red Lamp districts of Paris could have tackled the situation with greater tenderness. But I was surprised to hear that Shirin was a University Graduate. My surprise was all the greater because the only connection Manohar had with the University was to drive past it at break-neck speed toward the share market.

The matter, however, came to a head on the occasion of Manohar's daughter's marriage. The young bridegroom came

to the bride's house on horse back according to the custom. There was an English band party to provide music and plenty of illuminations. Mrs. Manohar came out of purdah to receive the bridegroom in person and was waving before him the traditional lamp burning camphor when a much brighter light flashed before all eyes. Mrs. Manohar looked helpless and pathetic as she looked at the fair stranger. In a Marwari marriage women of the bridegroom's party do not come to the bride's house to witness the marriage. So who could this lady be? Gradually Mrs. Manohar collected herself, stood up and ordered the uninvited guest to clear out. Here at this auspicious moment there was no place for a mere nautch girl.

The girl beat a hasty retreat to her car but the bride's father himself ran after her calling piteously 'Shirin, Shirin.' He caught hold of her hand as she got into her car and asked "Why did you come here?"

She felt a little embarrassed and said, "You cannot invite me here. I know that, still I had to come. How could I keep away from your daughter's marriage ? I wanted to have a look at her at least from a distance".

"Then do come in for a minute. Do grace my house with your presence for a while".

"No, no. That's impossible. Your home is just a dream to me. A dream which will never come true. You belong to me, but I am not your wife. I shall never have any right over you".

"Still do come in once."

"No, no. You are forgetting your society. But please do not behave like this. Hurry back to the marriage."

But the society did not hurry to forget Manohar's misadventure. Leaders of the society started shouting at and abusing him. They made it clear that they could never allow him to be regularly in love with a Muslim nautch girl. Another elder went still further in his condemnation, while the guardian of the bridegroom shouted to the latter to come away from the marriage altar.

The ceremony was about to be broken up. There was much anger and criticism and the society elders tried their best to assert their moralistic outlook on life. But the younger group came to rescue and even pointed to the past life of those elders. They also broadly hinted that those activities did not bring them any blame, but Manohar's present attachment has been brought up for censure only because of his daughter's marriage. The elders immediately protested that whatever they might have done they never tried to bring bad name to their caste and society. They never mixed up youthful indiscretions with stable family life. Manohar must give up all connections with Shirin

Heredity, family and honour belong to all times. They are worth preserving throughout whole life. It is for their sake that man works hard and goes home at the end of the day. But do they necessarily give him rest, contentment and inspiration ? His days may be filled up with work and success, but nights with darkness, stark and empty.

But Manohar did not have to announce any choice on the spot. His wife declared that she guaranteed the departure for good of the dancing girl from her husband's life. Her daughter's marriage must be concluded.

IV

That day there was not a drop of tear in Shirin's beautiful eyes but they were full of words.

But even words were lost when a few days later she went privately to the office of an attorney, a common friend of herself and Manohar. After a great deal of hesitation and silence she surprised him by saying that she wanted to give away her two houses to Manohar by a deed of gift.

The solicitor was surprised. Was it that Manohar was wanting to make a gift of two houses to her ? No. It was the lady who was making a gift to the rich businessman. The attorney was surprised and ultimately said that probably she had not given the matter careful consideration. After all why should she give away her property to one who is a friend for the time being only ? In any case the property was not earned from Manohar alone. Shirin admitted all that and pleaded that the solicitor need not go into the problem of understanding the motive of her action.

While conceding all that he insisted on acquainting Manohar with this proposal as both of them were his clients and friends as well.

Shirin implored him not to tell Manohar anything at least for the few days she was still in the country. She also said she had prepared for a new spell of life abroad after parting with all that she had as her property in the country.

The solicitor sent a message to Manohar who came to the office immediately and caught hold of her hand shaking with emotion. The solicitor discreetly coughed a little and left the room as it was inconvenient to light his cigarette under the fan.

Manohar would not even hear of the transfer of property. He asked her straight, "To which country would you go ? Where ? Why ? Why didn't you even tell me ?" Shirin replied, "For long I had thought of going to England and take some degree there and start some independent profession".

"But this profession also is quite independent."

"Yes, independent indeed. All our independence is sacrificed in the effort to please the visitor. Have we got anything called our own ? Even our own will ?"

"Goodness Heavens, Shirin ! Which will of yours has not been done ? Have I ever gone against your wishes ?"

"That is, of course, true. But still it is impossible to forget that I have got no separate existence of my own. My profession consumes my whole life. The whole of it is one big shop window. I have to arrange it and fashion it according to the sweet will of the customer".

"But the customer has begged you to wind up the shop. I did not want you to continue this life any more".

"That is what I most object to. Who are you to me that I shall wind up my profession only to depend on you for the rest of my life and according

to your wishes ? On the other hand, who are you not to me that I shall still continue a profession that brings bad name to you ?"

"Then ?"

"Then the only way is to leave this country".

"Then you will be leaving me also".

"No I am going away from you because I do not want to leave you. At the same time if I do not leave you I cannot get you either".

"I don't understand Shirin, I don't understand at all".

"Do I also understand anything ? But it's certain that I will leave you for your own sake".

"You are talking in the language of fiction, Shirin. I don't understand anything. Please do talk in plain language".

"Listen. The plain fact is that you will have to leave either me or your society. I too shall have to leave either you or the country in which you are. Our profession does not understand this type of giving up. It is quite usual to give up a patron to pick up another. But I am closing my counter for good. Nobody would see Shirin Begum in the world of dancing any more. Please bid good-bye to me and lighten my burden by taking my two houses".

Her beautiful eyes became sad and tender while those of Manohar sparkled in a determined way. He replied, "That's exactly what I have not achieved as yet. I have made money in various ways, have cheated many rivals in business. The only thing that was left for me was to become rich by getting hold of your property. My society has given me up and I too shall bid good-bye to it. But that's because I want to have you with me and not on account of your property".

"Why ? Does my property also smell of the dancing girl ? Or, my money has the stamp of my profession ?"

"No, no. Not for that. Everybody will say that I have misappropriated a woman's money and you have gone away because I have given you up. Never mind all that. But how can I face the whisper that I have cheated you of your property ?"

"But————"

"But it is not the question of money. I can't part with you. You are mine and mine you shall remain.

Shirin was firm in her reply. "I am neither your property nor your married wife. I feel like giving up this line and going abroad. What right have you got to stand in my way ?"

Manohar had no words for sometime. Then he said "No question of right, of course. Can money ever beget any right ? But certainly my heart has some right over you. You are wanting to go away

"Why? Does my property also smell of the dancing girl ?"

only because my mind casts some influence over yours. Otherwise you would not have wanted to go".

Books give you knowledge but brains intelligence. Defeated in argument, the learned girl took a different line.

"Whatever that may be," she said, "I won't allow you to leave your society. I am just a dancing girl. I can't let you forget your home or society, or your world for my sake."

Manohar had his answer ready. He replied, "If you were just a dancing girl so far as I am concerned, I would have taken to many others in course of time. The society would not have blamed me for that, nor even my wife. But you are just you and this is where the difficulty arises."

But Shirin had offered him a ready solution. Unfortunately Manohar would not accept it. On the other hand, he asserted that she was much more to him than his own wife, that she gave him such happiness as a wife could never give him.

Shirin was shocked and protested "For Heaven's sake, don't say so. Even uttering such things is a sin. It is a sin to belittle the small oil lamp lit up in the evening in your home because the neon lights of the Red Lamp districts of Paris are more fascinating. The lamp I could not light up in your home will shine in my mind for ever. Please do pray for that much happiness for me."

Manohar shook his head stubbornly and said, "No, no, I am a practical businessman. Such nice sentiments cannot befool me. I shall set up a new

home with you in another country. I shall open a new career in Singapore. Please do come along with me."

But Shirin was not to be persuaded and said, "Wherever you go, your home and family and society remain for you. I can't allow you to go away and leave them in the lurch. If you still want to go, you should go alone. I shall not be with you."

Manohar said, "No, no, you must come along with me. I want to go because of you."

Shirin parried, "No, you will stay on for my sake and I shall go away so that you can stay back."

Manohar implored, "But how can I stay on? I repeat that you are much more my own than my wife. I have had more happiness from you."

This time Shirin was not angry. She was sympathetic and tender. While passing her fingers delicately through his shaggy hair, she consoled him, "Please don't say such things. What I offer is only rose-coloured syrup, but your wife gives you water for quenching your thirst. You will not understand it now, but only when she will not be with you. That you get more cheer from me is because I have learnt it as an art. Making customers cheerful is my profession."

Manohar protested, "Don't harp on your profession, Shirin. I am a professional man myself and realise very well what you do as profession and what as your heart's desire."

Shirin's voice was cold but hands were warm as she held them out to clasp his right hand and said, "Still I tell you, please forget me. Don't stand in my way. Let me go. Let go."

After this there were no more words. Where argument lost persuasion won.

V

Suddenly I heard Manohar shaking me by the hand and saying, "Babu Sahib, probably you are thinking that this is a got up story."

I protested, "No, no, why should I think so? If it were not true, why should you tell this to a stranger?"

"Then why are you looking away through the window? Probably, you don't like it."

I felt a little embarrassed. Not that I was sceptical or unwilling to listen to his story. Actually thoughts of a different nature were continuously assailing me. I was thinking about those poems and dramas of the expansive days of independent India in which professional women used to cheer up the life of their aristocrat customers. Did those girls ever find themselves in such a situation? Could they lay aside their acting in the back stage and make a new home, blow the conch shell and light the evening lamp while praying for the welfare of the husband? Was the door of normal society open to them? Could they put on their forehead the deep red vermilion of the chaste house-wife?

I smiled a little awkwardly and said, "Sethji, I have liked your story very much but not its conclusion. You must be feeling very unhappy."

"No, no, Babu Sahib, don't talk of my unhappiness. But just think how much my Shirin will feel miserable. She has gone abroad alone and for my sake. That indeed is a great joy in the midst of my sorrow."

May be this is a sure evidence that love has after all blossomed in the desert.

But I replied, "Sethji, that is a big thing in life. If you can get joy in the midst of sorrow, that is the biggest thing one could achieve in one's life."

"But I did not get this even a little while back," murmured Manohar.

I tried to console him, "I am sure that joy had taken shape much earlier. Otherwise you would not have called in a stranger to share the joy with you."

"But what about my wife?" he went on looking at me with eyes full of question.

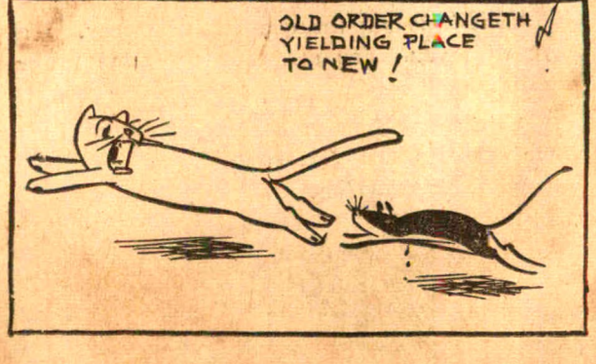
I tried to pacify him, "Now that you are happy, you will certainly be able to tolerate her."

The hard boiled businessman, the man without any education in psychology interrupted me to say, "You are right. You are right. I am sure my wife will no longer be meaningless to me. Otherwise, Shirin's voluntary exile will go in vain. Now I shall try to make my wife happy. I am sure I shall be able to do so. I have neglected her for long."

Manohar became absent-minded.

With all my pride of university education and reading of novels full of complicated psychology, I kept quiet with my head down. I could feel in my heart the paddle of the steamer bellowing its way through the blue ocean, blue with the pangs of separation. A clear picture took shape before my eyes in a quiet cabin—Shirin looking at the evening star alone. All alone.

Is that star—the evening lamp which she could not light under the sacred Tulsi plant in Manohar's home? Is it that lamp that mirrors itself in the star far away in the sky? Light, more light, give me more light from the lamp of life.



FOSSIL

(Continued From Page 118)

consider this a violation of our rights and claim immediate compensation from the Maharaja." It was signed, "Yours faithfully, Gibson, President, Mining Syndicate".

"Just see, Mukherji," commented the Maharaja, "how insolent they are !"

"I see," answered Mukherji.

The Subduer of Enemies struck the table and cried in a dreadful voice, "Heads !" He was on the point of bursting, "Cut off their heads and bring them to me ! I'll sit here and feast my eyes on them ! I'll look at them for two days and two nights !"

Mukherji reassured him. "Do not worry, Your Royal Highness", he said soothingly, "I shall find out what it is all about."

Old Dulal Mahato had returned to Anjangarh after many years in Mauritius. He had brought with him seven rupees in cash and asthma to comfort his old age. And with his return a change had come into the lives of the Kurmis. A restlessness developed and became noticeable.

The Kurmis learnt from Dulal what cash payment means. You put luggage belonging to a gentleman into a compartment of the train at Faijabad station and receive an anna coin right into the palm of your hand !

"Brothers", said Dulal, pointing to himself, "this old man has been cheated once for every white hair on his head. He doesn't trust anybody any more. Cash down. Everything. Pick up your money with one hand before you salaam with the other."

He was on the point of bursting, "Cut off their heads and bring them to me !"

Dulal spoke with the Syndicate foreigners as with equals. He discussed the wage rates of the coolies, their weekly payments, days off, allowances, medical and other arrangements on behalf of the Kurmis and obtained definite concessions. The Syndicate took pains to humour Dulal. "Come on, Mahato," they said, "We'll build twenty dozen coolie lines for your workers. We'll employ them all."

Dulal agreed. The foreigners kept their promises to him.

All the Kurmis in the state gathered in the wild neem jungle at the invitation of Mahato. He removed the turban from his white head and stood up. "Today we have met to found our association, our mandal," he said, "Now consider what ought to be done. Learn to know your enemies and your friends. We must not be afraid any longer. We shall never forgive anyone who tries to put a knife into our bellies or into our honour."

Dulal's thick throat shook like a broken conch with the intensity of his emotion. He spoke, "Brothers all, from today Mahato's life belongs to the Mandal and the life of the Mandal....."

"To Mahato," the crowd of Kurmis raised their thousands of lathis and shouted their answer in unison.

They beat their drums and even ran a flag up a pole. Then they went home.

Nothing escaped Mukherji, no matter how secret. He came to know of the event. He understood only that here was a cloud which harboured lightning. Something had to be done immediately while there was yet time. But the Maharaja must not know anything at all about it. A ruler so blinded by feudal arrogance and riddled with so many complexes about prestige would be difficult to manage. Blood might even be spilt, quite uselessly. It was better for him to give fight himself in a gentlemanly way.

Peons informed the Maharaja that the Kurmis had not come to work on his polo field and in his garden, work they were accustomed to do *begar*, without pay. The Kurmis now declared it was a sin to work without pay. To do so would bring misfortune to the state.

Mukherji was sent for. Dulal Mahato was summoned. Mahato bowed to the ground before the Maharaja and stood with his hands respectfully folded together. He seemed as timid as a lamb and to be, actually, trembling in every limb.

"It is you who are at the root of this devilry !" the Maharaja hurled the accusation at him.

"I am the dust of your slippers," answered Mahato.

"Shut up !"

"Yes, Your Highness !"

"Shut up !" the Maharaja thundered. Mahato stood without moving, like a wooden doll.

"Break off all connection with the foreigners instantly ! No Kurmi can work in the mines without my permission !"

"I shall communicate your desire to my people, Your Highness".

"Go !"

Dulal bowed and left. Mukherji was then commanded to serve a notice on the Syndicate. They were not to engage any Kurmi to work for them without the permission of the Maharaja.

The replies came in due course. A signed letter from Mahato stated that, as the Kurmis went without food unless they received wages for their labour,

and the Syndicate paid them cash they were unable to discontinue their work in the mines. They hoped that the Court would not place obstacles in their way. They, the Kurmis, intended to open a temple of their own in the following month. Would the Maharaja be pleased to grant a thousand rupees from the royal treasury towards expenses ? They also requested the Maharaja to permit them to gather wood and burn brush in the jungle without a licence during the coming winter.

The Syndicate, in response to the notice, informed the Maharaja that they were prepared to enter into a new agreement with His Highness's government but it was not possible at the moment. They would, however, be glad to consider it on the expiry of the existing agreement, i.e., after nine hundred and ninety-nine years.

"What do you think of it, Mukherji ? It seems to me I shall have to call in the police. I ask you, will you stop dreaming about your canals for once and turn your attention to the maintenance of my prestige ?"

The Maharaja spoke slowly but from the expression of his face and eyes it was plain that the wrath hissing in his thoughts was a hundred-hooded.

Mukherji addressed him with deference, "Do not worry about it, Your Highness. Give me time. I shall bring it under control."

Mukherji surmised that it was the Syndicate which was instigating Dulal's rashness. It was perniciously encouraging the agitation among the Kurmis. Until the link between them was broken there would be no peace in the kingdom. Nothing but misfortune could come of it. What was to be done ?

Mukherji went to Dulal Mahato. He stood outside his hut and called him. Mahato hurried out and invited Mukherji to seat himself upon a wooden stool. He took his turban off and, placing it at Mukherji's feet, took his own seat on the ground at a respectful distance. Mukherji explained the situation to him carefully and at the end of his speech broke down emotionally, exclaiming, "What are you doing, Mahato ? You are the children of your king ! Sometimes children commit offences, sometimes parents ! But no one calls in outsiders to desecrate the home ! The Syndicate is feeding you well today but they won't look at you once their purpose is accomplished. Then it will be the court that will keep you alive with flattened rice."

Dulal put out his hand and rested it on Mukherji's feet. "I give you my word, Honourable Agent, I shall do as you say. The Maharaja is like a father to us. We are prepared to die for him. May he grant our petition without delay."

Mukherji left without waiting for a second question or a second answer. No ! The symptoms of delirium were appearing, aggravating the symptoms of disease !

Mukherji had to forego his bath, his change of clothes and his meal that day. He drove straight to the office of the Syndicate.

"See here, Mr. Gibson, please keep your hands off the relationship between the Maharaja and his subjects. The Maharaja has guaranteed you all facilities for your business."

"Mr. Mukherji," Gibson answered, "We are not money-makers only. We have a mission as well. We have always fought for wronged humanity. If necessary we shall fight again."

"You have turned the Kurmis into coolies by appealing to their greed ! How can agriculture thrive in the state ? Tell me !"

In his agitation Mukherji disclosed the real reason for his perturbation.

"Whether agriculture survives or not, money will. Can you deny that ?"

"Stop arguing and think of co-operation, Mr. Gibson. All you have to do is to obtain the sanction of the Maharaja when you engage coolies. The Maharaja will be pleased and that will certainly be of advantage to you in other ways.'

"Sorry, Mr. Mukherji," with a twisted smile Gibson lit a cigar.

Mukherji reddened to his ear tips. He rose, pushed the chair noisily aside and left the office.

McKennon came in and asked, "What's the matter, Gibson ?"

"Mukherji, that monkey of an administrator ! I told him a few things to his face. I refused to accept any terms."

"Good. There's this irrigation scheme of his. Be careful. Fight it at any cost. Otherwise there will be a disastrous shortage of labour. The business is expanding now".

"Don't worry. We have tamed Mahato. I'll use him to spoil all the plans of the state."

They exchanged laughter. "Let me see," McKennon said, "Mahato is waiting outside, I think."

Gibson took Mahato aside. In a secluded room of the office he said to him, "The petition is ready. Sign it. All the points have been touched. I'll send it to Delhi by today's mail."

McKennon slapped Mahato on the back as he left, "Don't be afraid, Mahato, we are with you.

He spoke, 'Brothers all, from today Mahato's life belongs to the Mandal and the life.....

If your lands and houses are expropriated our lines are always open to you. Don't be afraid."

* * * *

Mukherji sat in his office deep in thought. He did not feel like touching his pen. He had nothing more that was encouraging to say to the Maharaja. Perhaps it was no longer possible for him to pilot his affairs. It was time to hand over the reins. Surely the brains of these people had withered in their skulls ! Each, in his separate stupidity, was engaged in a game that leads to suicide. But perhaps it was he himself who had made the mistake !

The Maharaja sent for him. He was received in the ruler's private apartments. The minister and the police chief were present. The faces of both looked shrunken. The Maharaja was pacing impatiently around and around the couch. He began to blaze as soon as he saw Mukherji.

"Take it ! Take it ! Take the throne and rule this state ! I spit on it ! I'm leaving !"

Mukherji, speechless, looked at the minister. The minister handed him a letter. It was a note from the Political Agent. Many complaints had been received about the internal administration of the state. More and graver complaints were coming in daily. He hoped the ruler would be able to remedy them without delay, before interference was necessary.

The police chief frowned. "Your policy of conciliation is responsible for this, Agent Saheb", he said.

Taking his cue from the police chief the Maharaja cried, "Certainly. It is true. I know all about it Mukherji. I am not blind."

"Know all ? What are you saying, Your Highness ?"

"Stop ! I know everything ! How could the traders who live by selling the dirt of my kingdom dare do this otherwise ? Who gives them secret encouragement ?"

The Maharaja seemed unable to breathe. He sank down upon the couch. A peon fussed about him in an attempt to restore him. The minister, the police chief and Mukherji turned away and gazed silently in different directions.

The Maharaja cleared his throat and resumed the subject. "My chief of police," he cried, "it is you who must save my honour !"

"So be it !" said the minister, "You punish the Kurmis with your police and I shall involve the Syndicate in a civil law suit. Disputable phrases can be found in the contract without much difficulty"

The Maharaja stole a glance at Mukherji and quickly withdrew his eyes. But Mukherji had seen. The ruler's eyes were wet.

Tears in a lion's eyes ! Mukherji divined how much pain there was behind them even though he himself was, by nature, as timid as a rabbit. So ? He had not looked at the matter from that point of view. He had been wrong. He went up to the Maharaja and announced quietly, "I have been mistaken, Your Highness. Kindly grant me leave and permit me to depart. I shall return if you ever send for me."

The Maharaja softened instantly. "No, no Mukherji, what things you say ! Where will you go ? Of course people are talking but let them ! I do not believe what they say ! The policy must be changed. It is necessary to be more firm. I cannot put up with the buffets of these toads any longer, Mukherji."

A weariness like a chill winter cloud, a sense of emptiness and exhaustion, came over Mukherji slackening his muscles, making his joints weak. He gave up going to office. In the afternoon he dressed in breeches, threw a dozen mallets over the shoulder of a boy and appeared on the polo ground. Throughout the game he kept his pony at full gallop, riding like a storm. He struck right and left, hitting under the pony's neck, taking daredevil chances. Now and then a mallet would split and the splinters fly in all directions. The flannel on the legs of his black waler and the martingale dripped with the sweat that streamed from the horse's body and the foam of his mouth. Still Mukherji charged, maddened by the desire to score. His opponents were so nonplussed that they saved themselves by turning aside as best they could, making off at an easy trot. Even during the intervals of play Mukherji refused to rest. He raced round and round the field at a fast canter. He would lean against his saddle and close his eyes as though drinking in his speed.

Afterwards the Maharaja reproved him. "Your game is very rough, Mukherji."

* * * *

The sun went down that day just as it always did behind the hills of Anjangarh. The Maharaj was dressed go out on the lawn when a peon

'Don't worry. We have tamed Mahato. I'll use him to spoil all the plans of the State."

brought word that shaft Number 14 had caved in and was still collapsing. Ninety coolies, Kurmi men and women, were entombed.

"The best of news !" the Maharaja rubbed his cheeks and shouted in terrible jubilance, "Now my enemy is in my power. He must be crushed without mercy. Call the minister at once !"

The minister came but he had a look in his eyes like a dead fish. "Bad news !" he announced.

"What bad news ?"

"Kurmi women were cutting wood in the wild neem jungle without a permit. The forest ranger obstructed them. The Kurmis beat up the ranger and his guard and drove them away."

"And then ?"

"The police arrived and fired. It would have been better if they had used grapeshot. Instead they fired with old muskets and used buckshot. Twenty were killed and more than fifty wounded. The dead are still lying in the wild neem jungle."

The Maharaja was silent. The Political Agent's inevitable note floated before his eyes like the bright sharp point of a spear.

"Has the news spread ?"

"The Syndicate certainly knows."

The Maharaja sent for Mukherji. "This is what is the matter, Mukherji," he explained, "Now show your Bengali brains ! Find a solution !"

After thinking a long time Mukherji said, "First all get hold of Mahato. Without delay."

Carrying lathis and lanterns about fifty of the Maharaja's men set out through the dark for Mahato's hut, moving at top speed.

"I am not well, Your Highness," Mukherji apologised, "Please excuse me. I think I'm going be sick."

Shaft No. 14 had caved in. The owners were fully frightened. The ceiling of the third seam had not been properly timbered. This was the cause of the disaster. At intervals a great boom came like a cry out of the depths of the earth and with it a shower of dust and gravel. The quartz pillars were snapping like firecrackers under the pressure and crumbling. The pithead had already been cordoned off with barbed wire.

Coolies who ran up from their lines were turned back half-way. "Go on with your work ! Nothing's happened !" they were told, "Nobody has been hurt. Nobody killed."

The owners stood in a group at a distance and talked in low voices in the dark. "There is no way to fill it up," Gibson said, "It will keep on caving in for another two days. Burn up the attendance book and make a new one dated as from today."

"What good will that do ?" asked McKennon, "The Maharaja must already know about it. And there is Mahato. How are you going to explain to *him ?* The papers will know of it by tomorrow morning. They'll splash the scandal for days. Then there'll be an inquiry. One of those awful Gandhi people may be on it. Do you see ?"

That night no lights were lit in the club house but a chandelier in a room of the palace blazed with a hundred bulbs. Mukherji was summoned once more.

It was an unprecedented spectacle, the Maharaja, his minister, and the police chief with Gibson, McKennon, Moore and Patterson ! Glasses and decanters knocked against each other on the long mahogany table.

The Maharaja greeted Mukherji with smiles. "Mahato has been taken, Mukherji," he said, "It was lucky you suggested it while there was still time."

"We have been spared a great deal of clumsy annoyance", Gibson agreed, "It is fortunate for all of us."

The police chief whispered to Mukherji briefly the decision that had been taken at the meeting and what they considered it their duty to do. Mukherji sat with his head bowed in his hands, silent.

"Be strong, Mukherji," Gibson slapped him on the back, "It is administration !"

About midnight a car once more drove up to No. 14 pithead. People gathered in the dense darkness. Durwans took Mahato's body out of the police van. It was wrapped in a blanket. A truck came up, loaded with the bodies from the wild neem jungle. Throwing the corpses one by one into the hungry mouth of the mine the durwans turned away and sat down to cook their supper.

Mukherji's eyes were wet with the light intoxication of champagne and cigar smoke. Lounging on the car's bumper he gazed at the pithead and dreamt of other things, of a far distant future.

A hundred thousand years after, a party of scientists, sent out to enrich the collection of some museum, would look with greedy curiosity at the fossilised skeletons of their sub-human ancestors, half-animal in build but with straight backs and unbowed necks. And they would examine their implements, some crude iron things. These people had, it would appear, been trapped suddenly by a disaster in the layers of quartz and granite. The scientists would handle the stony bones and speculate. Of the blood stains on them that day there would be no trace.

(Translated by Lila Ray & Ajit Mukherji)

Ajanta – where Time stands Still

By N. G. JOG

WHO was it who first came here two thousand and more years ago and has stayed for all time ?

What spiritual search, mysterious quest or mere wanderlust made him roam these remote recesses of the Vindhya mountains and plumb this forest-clad gorge?

What star guided his footsteps to this amphi-theatre designed by nature?

What divine visions rose in his mind as he paused here and said:

Let this be my retreat from the world. Let this be the everlasting abode of beauty.

Let this be the haven of peace. Let this be my surrender to the Buddha!

* * * *

One had, of course, heard of Ajanta before, read about it in learned books, seen its paintings re-produced in glossy folders. One may be even flaunting a scene or two on the walls of one's home.

But it is an unforgettable experience to climb to the cliff-side gallery and to be greeted by the semi-circle of caves stretching over a whole mountain.

It is a revelation when one enters the cavernous gloom of the first cave and reaches back, step by step, century by century, into the dawn of history.

And as the guide switches on the spotlight and illumines the vista, one finds oneself standing with straining eyes and gaping mouth at the unearthly splendour unrolled before one in endless succession.

Walls on walls, columns on columns, leaping into life with their plenitude of colour and cornucopia of carving.

Even the ceiling is a vast tapestry in stone, a myriad maze of intricate designs of flowers and birds and animals and geometrical patterns.

TIMELESS

One stands and stares into the immense grandeur of it all, into the breath-taking beauty of it all, into the timelessness of it all.

Cavernous gloom. Did I say "gloom?" Even the gloom does not seem to have been an accident. It descends like a deliberate curtain.

It helps you to travel back into time, to attune to the ethereal atmosphere, to adjust yourself to a different dimension as it were.

It momentarily makes you forget your companions, makes you feel yourself like a silhouette flitting in a void. Even the babbling of the guide comes like an echo from the distant past. You half expect one of the myriad figures to step out of the wall, and materialise in flesh and blood before you.

The gloom helps to summon the artist in oneself, to use one's inward eye, to invoke the faith one might have lost.

And it is as good that the gloom compels one to concentrate only on a single fresco. It would be physically impossible to take in one sweep the dazzling splendour of it all.

For no painting stands by itself. Each is part of a whole. It is difficult in the dimness to distinguish the wealth of details, to demarcate the episodes, even to separate one scene from another. All develop

and swell together into a symphony of line and colour. All merge into each other like the flowers into the tree, like the waves into the sea, like the clouds into the sky. And all converge to that pivotal presence of the Buddha.

And at least for the time being you feel humbled and purged, feel ashamed of the transient passions and pursuits of your puny self. One's ego perceptibly shrinks in that illuminating gloom.

WHAT HUMAN HANDS...

Could all this be the work of man, of the unaided hands of primitive man? This burrowing through the solid face of a mountain, this chiselling, inch by inch, vast halls and dormitories, Chaityas and Viharas, this carving these giant statues and stupas, delicate friezes and cornices, this imperishable painting of the life of the Buddha over and over again, this creation of these cameos of grace abounding?

One looks at it all and wonders. One doubts and is dumbfounded as he goes from one cave to another. One begins to feel, that mere mortal hands could never have been able to hammer these monumental edifices into shape out of solid rock even if they had laboured from generation to generation and from century to century.

Verily, some superhuman agency must have done all this. And one is half inclined to believe the local legend. Long long ago, it runs, gods and goddesses came here one night to disport in this bewitching glen. They swiftly dug huge halls out of the hillside for their spree. But they so lost themselves in enjoyment that they forgot to return to heaven at cock's-crow as they were strictly enjoined to do. An irate Indra banished them for ever, and transformed and froze them into the frescoes and sculptures of Ajanta.

Who can say after gazing on them that this legend might not be true?

What is there at Ajanta to make you so irrational?—the reader may well ask. The only reply to this would be: what is *not* there?

Here are those imprisoned gods and goddesses. Here are also their attendant angels and apsaras, self-exile yakshas and yakshinis. Here are kings and commoners, queens and dancing girls, priests and rogues.

Here is the serried procession of life portrayed through the stories of the Jataka. Here is the myriad life of the Buddha through his many fabled manifestations not only as man, but as bird and beast.

JUST LIFE

Here is not only earth soaring to heaven, but heaven cascading down to earth. Here is the divine and the human intermingled into a perfect whole.

Above all here is life. Not just an extract and episode of life, but life entire, "just life itself, all life, with its joyous impulses of body and spirit, the forward stride of adventure, the haltings of the mind and turns upon itself, its abandonment to sorrow, its renunciation, its victories."

It is futile to pick a fresco, and say that this represents Ajanta. For everything and everybody here is true to life, as large and vivid as life.

Here is love and laughter, revelry and fiesta. Here is the cavalcade of conquest, the thrill of the chase, the mundane pursuits of the market-place, the daily rounds of the home.

Here is man in his many moods from the glory victory to the bliss of surrender.

Here is ancient womanhood with lissome limbs, rounded breasts and uninhibited gestures which should shame our modern puritans and prudes, censors and cassandras out of their inverted profanity.

It is surprising indeed that these Buddhist artists should lavish so much attention on the portrayal of the female form.

One meets some of the most beautiful women of all time here. Any Apsara of Ajanta disdains to look at a pin-up girl of Hollywood, and successfully challenges Venus de Milo herself.

Some of these feminine frescoes are veritable fashion-plates from the collyrium in their eyes to the *henna* on their toes.

With what deft hand and astonishing detail are these women portrayed. See this princess at her toilet.

Note her ultra-modern hair-do, slightly disarranged by the breeze. As an artist remarked while watching her, "One is almost tempted to set back the truant hair to its proper place."

The dominating theme, of course, is of the Buddha. All the legendary reincarnations and chequered episodes of his life are delineated here. Two are etched on one's memory: The first is the Prince Siddhartha deserting his wife Yashodhara and infant son Rahul at the dead of night.

The second is the yellow-robed Buddha returning after many long years of frustration and ultimate enlightenment and greeting Yashodhara and Rahul—with a begging-bowl!

Both these scenes make us miss a few heart-beats, but one wonders which is the more poignant of the two.

Life always comes out triumphant over death in the paintings and carvings of Ajanta. There is rapture here, the joy and zest of living, the inspiration and exaltation of the supreme artist.

NIRVANA IN BRUSH

But the keynote is one of dedication, of surrender.

The succession of artists who came to Ajanta must have renounced life to immortalise it. Their dynamic energy and inspired craftsmanship sprung from their devotion.

They worked with a faith, *for* a faith. Every morning as they picked up their brushes and palettes, chisels and hammers, they must have rededicated themselves anew to their mission and chanted together the prayer: Surrender to the Buddha!

They sought Nirvana in their work. For them Nirvana was not an end and cessation of being, but a bubbling, joyous becoming.

And verily they attained it in the creation of so much deathless beauty.

And over it all presides, carved in an alcove in the centre of each cave, the towering giant figure of the Buddha benignly watching the procession of life unrolling before him.

Ineffable peace is on his face, infinite compassion flows from his half-closed eyes, and his hand is raised in silent benediction.

He towers above us physically and spiritually and in that ageless atmosphere of Ajanta in the dimness of the mountain's belly he becomes a living, effulgent presence.

He is the Enlightened One. He not only gives a

(Continued On Page 133)

My Views of Art

By UDAY SHANKAR

THERE are no bounds to the depth or to the expansion of any art which, like dancing, is the expression of life's urge We must never shut it within the bounds of a stagnant ideal, nor define it as either Indian or oriental or occidental, for such finality only robs it of life's privilege which is freedom. I feel it deep within my heart that the path to the realisation of my dream stretches long before me where new inspirations wait for me and where I must create in a limitless field new forms of living beauty. I have to unfold ever new possibilities in the revelation of beauty and truth, my creations will not be a mere imitation of the past nor burdened with narrow conventions of provincialism.

HINDU ART

The essence and soul of the art of Indian dancing, taken in a compact whole, is spiritual, which is the guiding element in all Hindu art. That inherent sentiment you can never change, however much you can embellish it outwardly. In the modern age, you are at liberty to ornament the soul of your country in the most up-to-date fashion without destroying or marring it. You may be dressed up in European style, but your soul is Indian. The outward infringement and cover is the window-dressing. By that you cannot judge what is the real actual inward object. It helps you more to realise the inner spirit through a modern perspective with which your eyes are trained.

I take the help of the modern to understand and make others understand the ancient, I take the West to exhibit the East, I take the modern art of presentation to show the spirit of India. I do not believe in westernising my creations, but I endeavour to show the true India to the West. I am a seeker of the truth of beauty, whatever is beautiful to me is real art.

SCIENCE & TRADITION

The modern scientific way of presentation becomes imperative and inevitable to exhibit a thing of beauty and a piece of aesthetics. I apply it with folded hands and apologies to benign tradition and technique. But, for a lover of beauty the crude and mundane science has no place. I cannot sacrifice the spirit which is the essential factor, the soul of India's art, for the sake of the rude, cut and dried rules and regulations.

An artist is a creator, he is wedded to beauty and possesses liberty to the free exercise of his talents as far as infusing life to divine creations are concerned ignoring the hard shackles of the codified principles.

I respect pure, simple, unalloyed tradition, untouched and not disfigured by the whims and ignorance of the artists. The spurious dance number taken out from the old humdrum monotony under the garb of new creations are legion and are like soldiers, who are out of steps with their company or like false notes in music which constantly disturb the peace of their surroundings Dictates of script

(Continued On Page 13)

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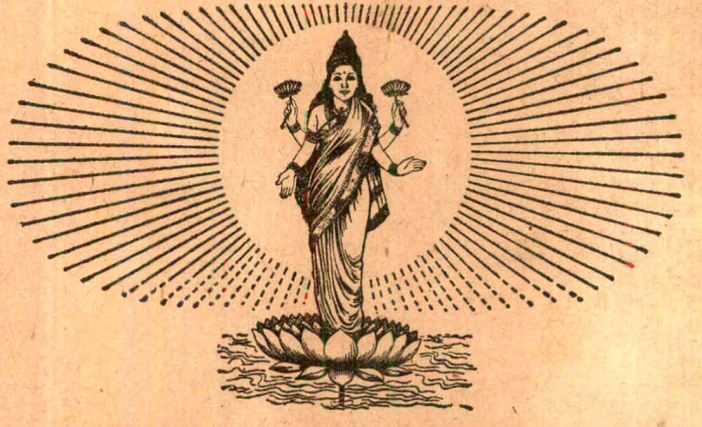

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janta—Where Time Stands Still

ntinued From Page 130)

v meaning to life, but a new slant to history, a erent perspective to Time itself.

or time has verily stood still at Ajanta. How many pires have risen and fallen, how many conquerors ve come and gone, how many kings been laid into dust in the last two thousand years!

But the Buddha has remained serene and sup- ne as he was when hewn out of the scarp by those known, immortal artists. All the turbulence of his- y over the centuries is no more than so many bles of air.

How many generations of visitors has He watch- coming to this once not easily accessible place r the centuries. They have been trekking their y there not only from all corners of India but from tant lands, from the Chinese Yuan Chwang who t to Ajanta in the fifth or sixth century to thou- ds of foreigners visiting the land today.

HILISTINES AND VANDALS

Not all of them were worshippers. Many of them e philistines or downright vandals who dis- red the frescoes or even chipped His limbs for a nto.

or a thousand years Ajanta flourished and pros- as a teeming Budchist monastery and seat of ng and a centre of pilgrimage. It was being and expanded over all these centuries without its artistic intensity and fidelity to those who conceived this miracle in a mountain. The many are in various stages of completion and decay, a master mind seems to have inspired and guided all.

And strange as it may seem, for a thousand years epic in rock reverted to a state of nature. For e reasons we cannot even remotely guess the mo- ery was deserted by the faithful, its vast trea- s of art were forsaken.

Ajanta was swallowed by the forest. Its priceless s became the lairs of wild beasts. Ajanta was lost an. True to its name it became unknown until it accidentally discovered by an English hunter in

Through all the previous centuries it was sub- to the ravages of nature. And since then, lately, it suffered irreparable damage from the of men.

Ajanta of today, is thus only a fragment of the that it once was. But even what remains is in- parable, and unsurpassed anywhere else in the d. All the vaunted resources of modern science unable to fathom the secrets of the ancient mas- let alone restore a single inch of the original tings.

But all through these vicissitudes, through all centuries of glory and decay and revival, the dha has remained aloof and apart, calmly watch- this ebb and flow of time, the ever-recurring cycle nature.

And below Him in the lovely glen the trees bur- n as green and the waters flow as crystal-clear as y did when the first visitor happened here two usand and more years ago, and stumbled into a ment of Eternity.

MY VIEWS OF ART

(Continued From Page 131)

tures and conventions should be preserved in mu- seums and worshipped by devotees for generations.

ART & THE PEOPLE

A cultural revival cannot be achieved simply by offering the public the so-called finished products of art, especially those dealing with subjects of past periods. It can only be achieved where there is a real contact of feelings and the breakdown of any rigid barrier between the professional artists and the au- dience. To the modern it is necessary to manifest true beauty. You have got to have culture resting on the whole nation; a pyramid of which these men re- present the top, the base being the people a truly national culture. And so, if we are going to make a great change, it must be a national one, and every- one must be in it. We shall have a vital art when we have a vital democracy.

Dance artists should now cast aside cheap and hackneyed repetitions or rehashes of the old conven- tions, and should endeavour to bring through their efforts real truth and beauty, social and national welfare and exercise a deep influence on the mass minds conducive to their physical, intellectual and moral uplift.

For the artist the universe is a source of un- ending inspiration. Truth hidden in the depths of the heart finds expression through the artist's efforts in dance, music and poetry. Today I feel I should give more to the public; there is so much for the artist to give, so much for him to take from the people. I fervently believe that I can come closer and unite through art for does it not bring out the subtle bond that deep down unites us?

No living artist can help being swayed by the rising forces of the age. Ancient class art, with all its sophistry, its refinement, its ideology is there; but then there is also, and more evident today than ever, the life of the masses with its vigour, vitality, simplicity and the creative progressive spirit into some aspects of which the artists have striven to the best of their ability to give the spectators some glimpses.

"MY" WAYS

While they watch the programme, they may possibly feel confused. They may not find a meaning to each movement or note. But if they take it in its entirety, they will find it harmonised together by the ever present vein that pulsates life with unabated vigour. In the programme I try to voice our cultural aspirations, our dreams, where strife is subordinated to the demands of the spirit of beauty in life. That is my humble contribution, my loving offering to my spectators.

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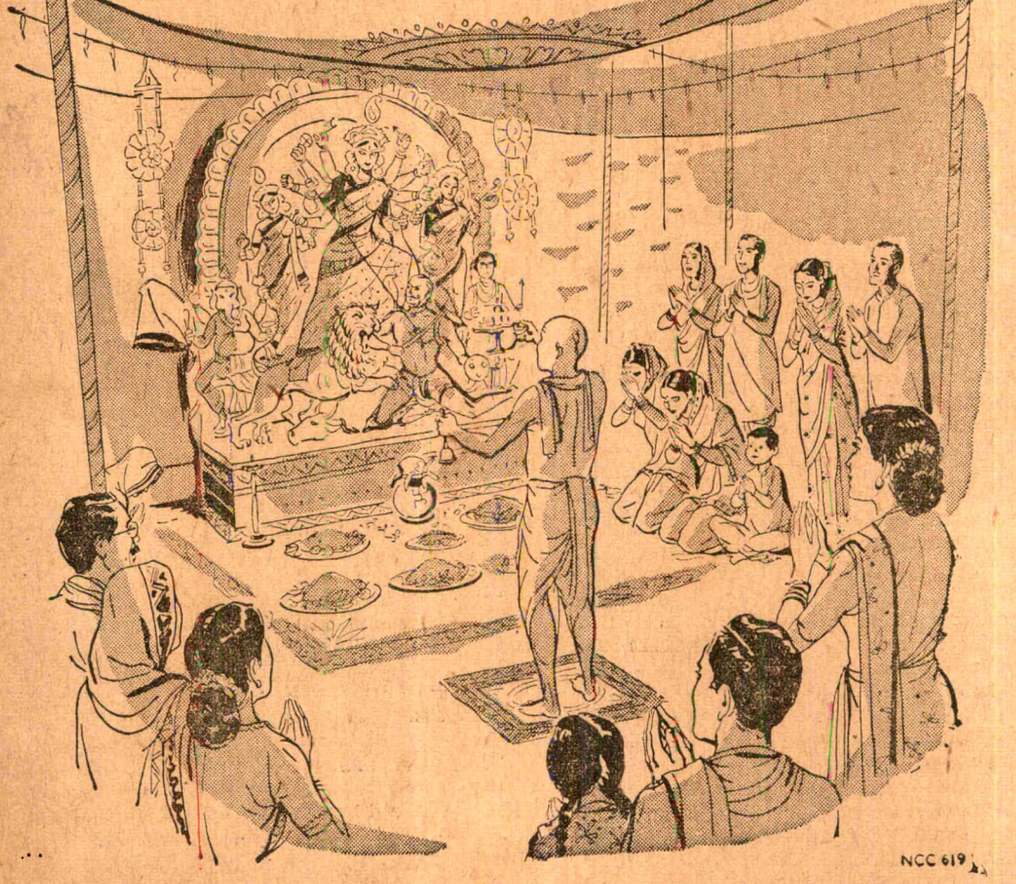

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PROSPECTS OF HOMO SAPIENS

By Dr. SIVATOSH MOOKERJEE,
M.Sc., Ph.D. (Edin.), Head of the Department of Zoology, Presidency College, Calcutta.

THE human race to-day faces the most critical and challenging period of its existence. Some openly express that all hopes and aspirations, dreams and glory of mankind will be reduced to radioactive rubble and there is no escaping it. Others are more hopeful and believe that the present dark cloud will pass off from the horizon and future of mankind will be assured. However, it is not easy to make any prophecy about the evolution of any species without considering all the aspects. It will be not only incomplete but also an untrue picture of future possibilities of man if the whole question is looked at from a single angle. Biologists have been convinced that factors, unforeseen and unpredictable, may arise with all suddenness in the life-time of an animal and may upset the future course of evolution. This is more true in cases of human beings who leave nothing undisturbed in this earth. However, it does not mean as a necessary corollary that the future of mankind is completely sealed in gloom and despair and there is no hope for it.

For inestimable millions of years, the world has witnessed that no animal or plant is completely static in its existence and impervious to the impacts of the surrounding changes. The evolutionary dynamics of the species help to accommodate the organism to the changes and new channels of advancement open up and thus the animals survive many planetary disturbances. It is idle to think about the immutability of all species in all eventualities. Evolutionary constancy of a species is meant for a definite set-up of environment.

At the present time, the human race is enjoying such a stability in the evolutionary system. Homo sapiens is at the height of evolutionary ladder. But he is apt to make dangerous commitments by creating new biological situations and new surroundings which may not be congenial to human survival. The self-transforming power of man is continuously directed to create new environmental situations for his own living. It is not unnatural that the human being would interact with the laws of his own unfolding. Thus he runs the risk of discontinuity of his heredity at a dramatic phase of expectation. Either the evil in himself or one somewhere else may seal the future path of progress and bring the human evolution to a standstill.

UNTEMPERED PROPHET

In a way Homo sapiens is an untempered prophet because of his unique brain-power. Though he himself is the continuation of a long process of evolution, he is different from the rest of the animals. Man is a cerebral animal and stands on a distinguishable pedestal of life. The power of conceptual thought of Homo sapiens cannot be shared by any one else in this world. The responses of mind and heart are his own. Unlike any other animal, senses predominate over smell in human beings. Man has the power of articulate speech. The length of post-maturity period is far more longer in his case than in any other animal's. The meaning of life in human beings never ends in the act of reproduction. It means more than that. Man can give guidance to and has control over his destiny to a certain extent. He has mental activity of far-reaching effects. He can transmit the value of experiences to the members of the subsequent generations of his species. These, in their turn, become living forces in the future evolution. These experiences are utilised by the descendants as fruitful wedges for their wider control over environment. From these respects, Homo sapiens is the path-breaker in the evolutionary process.

SCIENCE OF EUGENICS

Homo sapiens is well adjusted now to the present environment and his genetic out-fits are comparatively sound, though there are some minor weaknesses in them. He is a comparatively newcomer to the world and his activities form a thousandth part of the entire process of biological evolution. It is reasonable to presume that his genetic probabilities are not fully exhausted. The chances of showing further genetic variability and adjustment should be considerable in the comparatively youthful genotype of human beings. That is, there is a likelihood of the genotype being able to endure adverse situations. The power of genetic recombination, it can be believed, has not been fully utilised in Homo sapiens. Human beings have become conscious of improving their heredity and that has led to the development of a new Science of Eugenics. The question of artificial selection of genes is becoming an important issue in the race betterment. Gene-borne diseases like idiocy, colour blindness may be averted by suitable and controlled matings.

From the above point of view, the virility of human genetic outfit will remain undisputed. Though man has a few genetic drawbacks, like overcrowding of teeth, intra-uterine struggle, susceptibility to bacterial infection etc., it is likely that if not otherwise disturbed the human race will enjoy a long span of existence.

RISKS OF OWN ACTIVITY

Biological soundness of the gene-complex in Homo sapiens cannot be cited as the permanent basis for future evolution. Because, the context of the soundness is limited and related to the present-day set-up. This is easily changeable and the hereditary out-fits are likely to operate in a different way. The premium of the cerebral activity of Homo sapiens has become so important that it will have to pay a dividend to the survival value of the entire species. The deliberate control of natural phenomena are likely to produce far-reaching effects on the question of the survival of the human race. Human beings are constantly trying to create new environments round them which may be different from that of Nature. The force of Science, with its application and its consequences is always at work in the midst of Homo sapiens. Every discovery has a corresponding change in the world. The technological appliances can produce extraordinary changes and the human race has got to face the emergency of the new situation. Among the many outstanding achievements of man, the most important is his success in lifting the veil from the face of atoms. He can let them loose if he wants. The atom-smashing device has given almost an incalculable source of energy which can kill by its blast many things for many miles around it. The knowledge we have already obtained about the aftermath of radiation is full of horror, awe, and despair. The human genotype will not be able to survive the radiation blast if it receives the radiation directly. However, the indirect effects are still more calamitous. The human gene-complex by the effects of indirect radiation will easily lose its present equili-

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Bhatkhande And His Contributions TO HINDUSTHANI MUSIC

By BIRENDRA KISHORE ROY CHOUDHURY

I THINK what Vedavyas was to the Vedas, was Bhatkhande to North-Indian Music. Like Vedavyas, Bhatkhande was the first to collect everything which was worth collecting; then he arranged them in proper order and, lastly, commented upon them in a way that was never before attempted or achieved.

In the reign of Alauddin, the great Nayak Gopal of the Deccan was the first to give some scientific basis for Hindusthani music. Thereafter, even during the reign of Akbar and the golden days of Mian Tansen, it was a Deccani Pandit, Jagannath Kaviraj, who was the first to trace and indicate the proper ways of exposing and expanding the Ragas and Raginis. So, also in the 20th century, it was another Maharashtra Brahmin (Deccan), Bhatkhande, who for the first time collected all the prevalent modes of Dhrupad and Kheyal and thereby paved the path for the scientific development of the Indian music.

During the reign of Akbar the Great, the exponents of higher Indian music were united in their outlook and exposition of the Indian music. Such great luminaries as Swami Haridas, Baba Ramdas, Mian Tansen, Jagannath Kaviraj and others of the period will shine as immortals for ever. But, thereafter, during the declining days of the Moghul Empire, the intellectual field, just like the political one, was greatly disturbed and disruption followed. Gradually the successors of great musicians gave up research work in the field of music and kept themselves busy with trifling technicalities. The famous Dhrupads and Kheyals of yore began to be interpolated at the hands of unfit musicians and being thus permeated by technicalities, mannerisms and all sorts of exaggerations, classical Hindusthani music headed for its speedy death. Basic Ragas were branched off and distorted, only to clog the path of pure music. But the successors of some famous schools (Charanas) such as the Seni, Kawal and others kept themselves far above such defilement of Indian music. In this way a time came when public exhibitions of Indian music were all full of technicalities, mannerisms and interpolations while the real great musicians of the period were either pining in privacy or were walled off from the public by the Nawabs and Rajas of the time. At this juncture Bhatkhandeji appeared.

HIS BIRTH AND TRAINING

On 10th August, 1860, Bhatkhandeji was born in Bombay in a simple but cultured middle class Brahmin family of the Deccan. From the very early age he was nurtured in an atmosphere of devotional music. In time he graduated in Law from the University of Bombay and started practising the same with great success. During this period he also acquired a great and intricate knowledge of Indian music.

After having some training in Sitar from a famous disciple of Ali Hossain, the great Binkar of Rampur, and in Dhrupad from Ramji Boowa, he joined the 'Gayak Uttejak Mandal.' Gradually, as time passed he was seized by the idea of propagating higher Indian music amongst the cultured people of India at any cost. For this purpose he started travelling throughout the length and breadth of this sub-continent and started collecting all the materials of all the famous schools of Indian music prevalent at that time. Thus after mastering the Dhrupads and Kheyals of the Gwalior schools of music he started to learn under Mohammad Ali Kuthiwal of Jaipur. (Mohammad Ali, Sadek Ali and Asak Ali are all Kheyalis of the Kawali School and their Ragas are very perfect). He also imbibed the style of Alap from the great Dhrupadi Zakruddin Khan of Jaipur.

Panditji published many of the songs thus collected with accurate notations in form of books and also recorded many of them on the gramophone records. After this, under the pseudo-name of Chatur Pandit, Panditji published a Shastriya treatise on music in Sanskrit entitled 'Lakkhya Sangit' in 1910.

The basic structural conception of Hindusthani Raga and Raginis could be found elsewhere, such as in Sangit Darpan and other treatises which followed the principles of six Ragas and thirty-six Raginis. Thereafter, in Nagmath-a-Asrafi, the exponents of Seni school codified their conception of the Ragas and Raginis and more scientifically indicated their modes of expounding the same. Lately, Raja Sourindra Mohan Tagore also wrote, in Bengali, treatises on Indian music following the principles of Sangit Darpan and other previous works. In spite of the great help rendered by the above works there was a dire necessity of a well-planned grammar of Hindusthani music and its modes.

And this need was supplied by Panditji by basing his grammar on the ideas of ten *Thats* which followed the principles of *melas* of South India. My own view is that the theory of *Thats* and that of Raga-Raginis (in modified form) may easily co-exist in the structural basis of Hindusthani music, in a happy relation that exists between true poetry and true grammar. At present this treatise of ten *Thats* by Panditji has been accepted as the accredited grammar of Northern Indian music and its value as a help for the scientific study of Indian music has been established beyond doubt.

After this, to elucidate the elaborate basic rules of Lakkhya Sangit, Panditji started to publish an encyclopaedic works in various volumes under the

(Continued On Page 139)

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HINDUSTHANI MUSIC

(Continued From Page 137)

name of 'Hindusthani Sangit Paddhati.' The illustrations of his Paddhati are found in his 'Kramik Pustak Malika' completed in six volumes, which is indeed a monumental work. After having finished his collection of Dhrupads and Kheyals of Gwalior and Jaipur, Panditji approached the Darbar of late Nawab Bahadur of Rampur and there he was able to collect with the help of the late Nawab rare gems of higher Indian music from the famous Binkar Ostad Wazir Khan and from the famous player of Sursringer and Dhrupadi Sahjada Chhamman Sahib. He published many of these rare collections also in the pages of 'Kramik Pustak Malika.'

But Panditji did not stop here. He knew that only by such rare collections and publications of the same, the great cultured mass of India could not be sufficiently moved to strive for a revival of higher Indian Music. For this, he organised the Nikhil Bharat Sangeet Sammilani or the All-India Music Conference. For the first time this conference was held at Baroda under the kind patronage of the then Gaikwad of Baroda in 1916. Thereafter, the Music Conference was held in Delhi in 1918 with great eclat. In the conference Mohammad Ali Khan Sahib, a lineal descendant of Mian Tansen the Great, and the famous Sitari Nihal Sen, Dhrupadi Jakruddin and Alla Bande Khan and others participated and it was presided over by the Nawab Bahadur. Thereafter, started the life-long friendship between Chhamman Sahib and Panditji. The next All-India Music Conferences were held at Banaras and Lucknow with great success.

In this way the great Pandit paved the way for the dissemination of higher Indian music to the cultured people at large.

COLOSSAL ACHIEVEMENT

Similarly, Panditji felt the need of sincere institutions to educate the public in higher Indian music and to keep up the heritage for ages to come. So, it was at his instance and enthusiasm that the then Maharajas of Baroda and Gwalior founded schools for the study of higher Indian music in their realms and Panditji accepted the management of the said institutions.

The last colossal achievement of Panditji was to establish a Hindusthani Sangit Vidyapith at Lucknow. Formerly, it was known as Marris College of Music.

To make this last great undertaking a complete success, Panditji was greatly helped by the provincial Government of U. P., the Nawab of Rampur, Raja Nawab Ali Khan and Chhamman Sahib; Raja Nawab Ali Khan, at the enthusiasm of Panditji published the notations of a great deal of songs of the Seni school from the said college and was one of the active workers for the foundation of Lucknow Marris College.

At present, the said institution is famous as Bhatkhande Sangeet Vidyapith. In this very institution Panditjii nurtured the talents of Sree Ratanjankarji and made possible the flowering of his genius who is indeed a fit and great disciple of his great Guru.

The great Panditji breathed his last in the year 1936. He has been a beacon light for his successors in the field of North-Indian classical music and as was his last wish, all the musical devotees should now proceed further and further in the researches, revivals and reshapings of classical music which will influence the masses and enlighten the intelligentsia. We should not stop at what has already been achieved, but our goal should be towards the infinite.

We should remember what the world-teacher of this century, Sri Aurobindo said, "We do not belong to the past dawns but to the noons of the future."

PROSPECTS OF HOMO SAPIENS

(Continued From Page 135)

brium and the chances of rapid mutation will greatly be increased. Most mutations are dangerous and that will threaten the very survival of Homo sapiens. If human beings cannot make themselves free from their own achievements, the catastrophe is imminent. Thus measured against man's own power it is an imperative necessity for the human species to avoid the fatality which means discontinuation of life.

FOOLISH EXCUSES FOR WAR

One of the mortal dangers of the future evolution of Homo sapiens is the war between the members of his own kind. This struggle is avoidable and not necessary for safeguarding the prospects of the future evolution of any particular group. All human beings come under one species, *Homo sapiens*. No colour, nationality, race, religion or any other difference can dispute the oneness of the human species. There have been claims to advocate inherent superiority and inferiority of some races. The struggle between the members of the same species is thought unavoidable and some wrongly presume that it has always an evolutionary advantage. However, the struggle within the members of the same species, as it is understood now, has a very short range importance and does not pay much premium to major evolutionary advancements. That is why its consequence is bound to be limited. In the human sphere, intra-specific struggle as it is pointed out, has been replaced by the struggle for fulfilment of life.

The world is not yet completely free from the threats. Those who want to mix up war with the intra-specific struggle do it with a purpose. The intra-specific struggle works with the help of selection and its way of working is certainly different from mass slaughter. The biological struggle is always referred to the selection or elimination of hereditary qualities and not for open fight. But a feeling against war has been raging already. Racial idiosyncracies, false prejudice, suspicion and distrust make people antagonistic to each other. Biologically speaking, war cannot be launched in the name of 'struggle' to achieve further evolution. The conception of selection has also undergone a great change. Selection does not work only in elimination of species but also acts in safeguarding the evolutionary gain. For the human species now, consolidation of the genetical achievement is by far the most important issue because the trends of human evolution has taken the course of intellectual and cultural evolution. From this point of view, man stands alone and his ethics of life are not necessarily the same as of other animals. Any foolish excuse for war for the perpetuation of Homo sapiens is thus untenable.

Mass dilemma is gradually clearing up and the spirit of international co-operation between the members of the species will be needed most. The idea of making a world forum and working for all mankind means biologically the banishment of war between the members of the same species. This idea when practised will alone forbid the colossal risk of man's extermination and throw open new lines of cultural evolution. The challenge before Homo sapiens is how man will create his own prospects and react to it. Inspiring future is waiting for Homo sapiens if he works for humanistic evolution of a creative nature, otherwise not.

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FIELD TOOLS FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE

By Dr. MINENDRANATH BASU, M.Sc., P.R.S., D.Phil., F.R.A.I. (Lond.)

MATERIAL resources like coal, iron, oil, forest, soil, etc, are better organised than human resources like energy, intelligence, inherent goodness of man, etc. This unbalancing is not due to absence of scientific knowledge of the principles of society but absence of dissemination of such knowledge.

To-day the Government of every country is spending millions for finding out the destructive agencies, but a microscopic fraction of it is not spent to overcome the necessity of such destructive works. To-day we do also find that in every country best scientific methods are applied for gaining knowledge of the material resources but social problems are left to 'the rule of thumb, untested theories and selfish political manipulation.'

Scientific method provides basis for prediction. Prediction helps planning, as for example, metallurgy predicts the nature of the products of a blast furnace and the engineer plans fabrication on it. Social science should help in understanding and control of social interactions. After the first great war the League of Nations, and after the second U.N.O., UNESCO, W. H. O. are the organisations to attempt for the solution of the modern world problems on sociological knowledge.

Sir Crompton, the pioneer of the Atomic Energy Research, once told that Man has achieved his goal to some extent by destructive agency but let him now apply social relations with other men so that peace may reign on him. This can also be clarified just as a medical doctor has a basic doctrine that he should prevent disease and save life, so that the social scientist tends to operate on a basic doctrine that he should prevent friction and violence in human relations, and that he should save lives and aid in establishing peaceful and self-respecting relations between man and man. Recently Dr. Saha has said on his return from Finland Peace Conference and Russian Atomic Energy Conference, that if there be any atomic warfare in this world the whole human civilisation will be ruined. But if the atomic energy be utilised for the welfare of mankind the golden era will make its appearance on this world.

GREGARIOUS ANIMAL

Man is a gregarious animal, he likes to live in society and each individual influences the other and also the environment. Sociology—the science of society or the science of social process, studies the 'interaction of its type that seems to result from contact between human individuals.'

'The study of actual normal behaviour is the greatest unmapped field of sociology in all countries.' All modern science is rooted in observation and every scientist knows full well that observations form the important and primary factor. The process of initial observation is for the social sciences what corresponds with the Natural History stage in the Biological Sciences. Two principal difficulties in observation are met with:—

(1) Social phenomena cannot be directly perceptible,
(2) Emotional entanglement of the social investigator is noticed.

The social scientist has one important asset in the form of documents i.e. personal documents in the form of (1) letter, (2) diary, and (3) autobiography. But here some sort of distortion may be introduced by the investigator. Suppose personal documents are not recorded by the informant, being illiterate. There are documents of other kinds i.e.

(1) Primary source—Eye witness events described,
(2) Secondary source—Hearsay evidence.

The most satisfactory type of documents are those technically known as Records. A record is defined as documents intended to convey instructions regarding transactions or to aid the memory of the person involved in the transaction—

These are (1) Written records,
(2) Verbal records,
(3) Gramophone records.

Lastly come the reports—they differ from records in that they are usually written after the events. But the most important availability of material from the field should be case history records.

THE "IMPONDERABILIA"

Some practical applications are necessary to note about an event, as for example participant observation. In it an interpretation of an event can only be correct when it is not composed of two points of view—the outside and the inside. Thus the view of the person who was a participant in the event whose wishes and interests were in some way involved, and the view of the person who was not participant but only an observer—these two coalesce into one final synthesis.

Dr. Malinowski, the creator of Functional School of Anthropology, during his field-work at first collected his data living with his local friends, the white people. He began to suspect that this was a flaw in his technique of collection of data, so he cut off from the white peoples' company and set up his camp in a native village. There living in the village he was able to observe the customs etc., of the native people and so he achieved a group of what he called the "imponderabilia" of actual life which cannot usually be recorded by questions or from documents. Some degree of participation is, in fact, obligatory to the social worker particularly to the anthropologist. Observation is a basis for research work and any schedules used, will be purely informal and personal shorthand devices. Practice is a device by which power of observation can be developed. So thorough and careful observations in the interests of any social situation, remain an indispensable part of the process of achieving insight, for which interviews form an essential part. An interview can be defined as a meeting of persons face to face on some points. In short it is a purposive convention whose purpose can vary widely to include, as for example a meeting to arrange for a course of action, to collect information and to select candidates for some posts etc. Oldfield in his Psychology of Interviews has said that 'An interview is normally non-symmetrical in that the

(Continued On Page 14

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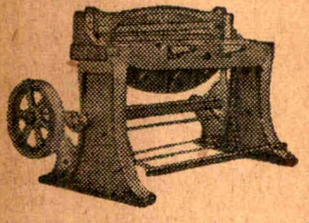

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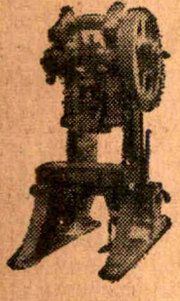

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(Continued From Page 141)

initiator plays a relatively active role while the other parts—informant or candidate plays a relatively passive role.' This is really true in the field-studies in Anthropology when one calls for an informant. We can classify interviews mainly into—

1. Potentate—an appeal for permission i.e., results of experience in the course of a particular research programme.
2. Experts—for technical information, but a social scientist particularly an anthropologist does not like to fall into the trap that truth can be obtained from expert opinions.
3. People—to mass people for ordinary fact and feelings. If any one wants to know or find out something about a person, the best way is to ask him or his friends.

INDIRECT APPROACH

The informant in an interview should be given some sort of freedom to choose the subject matter for discussion. The interviewer on the other hand should have the opportunity to enlarge his understanding of the issues raised. All these interviews are scientifically known as Formative. Five rules should be adopted for a new interviewing technique, called Indirect Approach. They are :—

(1) The interviewer should listen to the speaker (informant) in a patient and friendly way.
(2) The interviewer should not show any kind of authority.
(3) The interviewer should not give any advice or moral instruction.
(4) The interviewer should not argue with the informant.
(5) The interviewer should talk and put questions under normal conditions and in a friendly way.

There are three different methods of collecting data in the field by a social scientist—

(1) Narrative method—Narration is the most important factor. In this method the informant is required to narrate certain facts on the basis of analysis made from his experiences. A particular case is not investigated by a general account. Different men narrate in different ways.
(2) Direct observation method—In this method the investigator (or interviewer) does not depend on his informant but relies on his own personal observations in the field. In this it is not possible to account for the past events.
(3) Genealogical or case history method—Here concrete cases are studied and the investigator takes upon himself the duty of analysing or synthesising, as the case may be, instead of putting it on the shoulders of the informants. In this investigation a large number of concrete cases are collected and analysed and the conclusion drawn by the investigator. So by this method the survey of the village and the preliminary census and the details of the social structure of every human society can be easily understood.

CASE HISTORY METHOD

Genealogical or Case History method is the most convenient way of collecting data in the field of social science. But difficulty arises on one point—if the unit of investigation (people, custom, institution or area of land—as the case may be) be a very large one. Here samples are only studied. The sample varies according to the size of the unit. If the unit be a large one 2 per cent sample is sufficient but when its size is smaller it goes upto 10 per cent. The samples to be studied by a social scientist should be random samples which should be found out by tippet method. But in intensive studies the unit should be a selected one and not a random sample.

Investigation in the field of social science is a means to an end and not an end in itself. These investigations are usually undertaken for various purposes such as—administrative, legislative, political, economic, commercial, industrial and scientific. The purpose influences the nature and scope of investigation.

In every aspect of human life practical knowledge is more valuable than theoretical. To study the methodology of field-work, practical work in the field is more effective than any theoretical one. Before going to the actual field it is essential that one should equip himself both intellectually and materially.

Intellectual equipment are:—

(1) Language—Good interpreter is necessary for language difficulty and expression of thought.
(2) Study of the people—Preliminary knowledge of the people is essential; any literature or published materials should be consulted.
(3) Study of allied subjects like Geography, Geology, Botany, Zoology is necessary. Along with these climatic conditions particularly temperature, rainfall, humidity as well as fauna and flora are also necessary, as these are the factors of economic life of the people. The field investigator should carefully make a chart of these.

Material equipment are :—

(1) Provision for habitat — Equipment of tents for movements, folding and easily movable furniture like table, chairs, camp-cot, cooking apparatus etc.
(2) Dress—Simple convenient dress suitable for climate and beddings according to habitat. A mosquito net is essential.
(3) Other things like first aid medicines and personal comfort articles.
(4) Mechanical Aids—Maps, settlement plans, magnifying lenses, scales, measuring instrument boxes, drawing pencils, papers, erasers, knife, clips, pins and small note book.
(5) Photography—Cameras with films etc.

With these field appliances a social scientist should go to the field for his data. Really speaking social sciences like Anthropology are not a laboratory science—their laboratory is the field. Field is the testing place of their theoretical knowledge. The real field-work is a scientific discipline and routine. This makes vigorous demands on the patience, perseverance and sense of humour of the social scientist. A social scientist when fully equipped with his field tools, can ease a difficult situation for studying the people among whom he lives and works, because from them he can gather data that will throw light on the problems of his social science.

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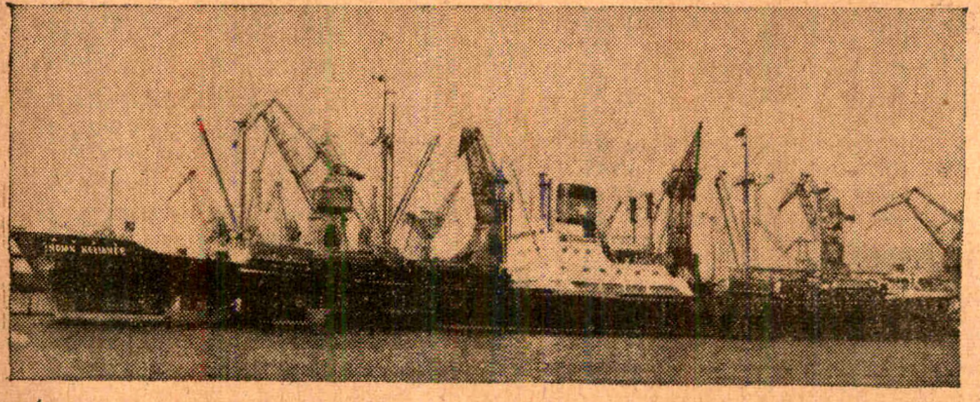

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Multi-Purpose Food For The Masses

By V. BALU, Publicity Director, Meals For Millions Association Of India

GOOD nutrition is the foundation of national health. A marked improvement in health due to better feeding is being observed in many advanced countries to-day. Nutrition is now regarded as a branch of public health and recognition is being given to the fact that a great deal of unnecessary suffering and ill-health can be prevented by proper feeding.

It is true that we need to know much more about the status of nutrition of our people than we do to-day. We have to have more thorough and comprehensive reports to find out what per cent of our population suffer from the effects of faulty diet as well as from the lack of food altogether. All the same, we have overwhelming evidence of the existence of a great deal of *chronic underfeeding* among our people, day by day, month after month and year after year.

Our food problem may have been solved and famine virtually eliminated, thanks to the merciful monsoons and the energetic efforts of our Government; but hunger and the question of nutrition still remain. Our attempts till now have been largely directed towards obtaining adequate food supply *in quantity*, but serious attention has got to be paid to the *quality* as well.

LITTLE PROTEINS & VITAMINS IN DIETS

The normal diet of most people in India, and especially the poor South Indian diet, is rather deficient in quality and variety. Far too little of body-building proteins, vitamins and minerals are consumed, and this is a sad factor, for, these materials are so vital for human well-being.

Rice contains proteins which are nutritionally superior to wheat and many other vegetable proteins, but the amount present in our diets is very small. The magnitude and character of the poverty afflicting the people is pathetic; it denies them the milk, fruits, vegetables and other protective foods available to the well-to-do. There are also other difficulties; even where animal proteins are available, Hindu and other religions forbid the eating of meat. Add to this the ignorance and the spirit of resignation to fate among the masses which shuts off even the desire for "better living" !

Thus, the problem of malnutrition offers both a challenge and an opportunity for our leaders and others who have the welfare of the future men and women of our country at heart. Needless to point out that a social problem of this great and gigantic nature can be met only by concerted efforts of the Government, scientists, social workers and benevolent private enterprises.

IMPORTANCE OF PROTECTIVE FOODS

Malnutrition is not confined to India alone but is rampant in other countries also. Several crusading scientists in different parts of the globe have and still are working hard in their laboratories to evolve inexpensive and satisfying food concentrates for the masses, using wasted or unused nutritional sources. Such supplementary foods will not only help to fight malnutrition and hunger but by their protective action also develop effective resistance in the people to common ailments and other diseases.

The importance of providing protective foods especially to children who respond very well to better nutrition, needs no emphasis. A lot of suffering and a high incidence of mortality among children are the result of malnutrition. Recently, it has been found that a set of disorders which Indian children suffer from, due to chronic under-nourishment, is akin to a common African disease known as "Kwashiorkor". This is essentially a deficiency disease and can be cured by the administration of concentrated protein foods. It is, therefore, gratifying that our leaders should have decided upon a programme of feeding school children in selected Community Project areas, with protective foods during the Second Five-Year Plan period.

(Continued On Page 14)

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Professor John Yudkin, eminent nutritionist of London, tasting 'Jamoons' prepared from the Indian Multi - Purpose Food.

(Continued From Page 145)

In 1946, Dr. Henry Borsook, a well known biochemist of the California Institute of Technology developed the Multi-Purpose Food which provides at minimum cost (2 annas) in minimum bulk (2 oz.) a high quality palatable protein food fortified with vitamins and minerals. Two ounces of MPF is called a "meal" because its nutritive value is equivalent to that of "most meals". With the sole object of popularising and distributing this food, a humanitarian cafeteria owner started a non-profit organization of private citizens called the "Meals for Millions Foundation" in Los Angeles, California.

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(Continued On Page 160)

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PATRIOTIC BENGALI SONGS

By KESHAB CHANDRA GUPTA

IN estimating the history of the struggle for the freedom of our motherland, a definite place of honour should be reserved for patriotic songs. The two National Anthems adopted by our Republic are priceless gems of inspiration. The "Bande Mataram" song should not be regarded as a mere urge for revolution but as a revelation. It stirs up the very soul as it points out the supreme beauty of our motherland—material, intellectual and spiritual. The expression "Bande Mataram" (Hail Mother) has the magic sanctity of a *mantra* to stimulate inner consciousness.

Many able poets all over our country composed songs and poems to awaken us. "Whoever wants to live bereft of liberty?" — asked Rangalal. The gifts of the top trio—Bankim, Rabindranath and Dwijendralal — bear stamps of genius. Poems and rhymes obtain easy entrance to the heart, if the poet and the composer can locate the right chords which await vibrations.

India is undoubtedly the land of poetry. From the remote Vedic Age, eternal truths about life and its manifestations have been unfolded in inimitable verses—full of rhythm, melody and appealing force. Scriptures and literature, however, stretched their mission beyond the material view of existence and often aimed at transcendence. Even in books of conduct, meant for our guidance in the day-to-day existence, we trace an under-current of other-worldliness. The ancient literature of India extolled ideals that saints and prophets enunciated.

The culture that was out to preach the serious display of immanence in the gross, could not but be cosmopolitan. Parochial patriotism, in the sense in which we understand it to-day, was almost unknown in the past. The state was synonymous with the kingdom of the ruling king. Loyalty was a rule of conduct and its limits expanded or shrank with the boundary of the royal dominions. Supermen and supreme thoughts belonged to Bharat as a whole, and not to any particular region. Every tract of India, for example, felt the same pride in Ram Chandra, Krishna or Goutama Buddha. They were as dear to the enemies of Ajodhya, Dwarka or Kapilavastu the kingdoms, as to the citizens of those states, in all ages.

GREATER THAN HEAVEN

A well-known Sanskrit verse described the land of one's birth as sacred to him as his mother and both extolled the glory of heavens. But the land of birth did not mean a homogeneous geographical extension. In its material sense the land of birth referred to the family house, or at best the countryside of nativity. But in its spiritual sense the motherland claimed the wealth of revelations, scriptures, literature, as well as the holy places of Bharat as a whole. Nobody ever cared to know the nature and extent of the State in which Krishna or Sidhartha was born or the relations of those States to the one in which his own ancestors saw the light of the day. The Indian had a generous disregard for chronology in appraising values.

The most glorious period of India's expansion started with the adoption of Buddhism by Emperor Asoka. One of the greatest figures in world-history, Asoka himself was a messenger of the message of Lord Buddha. His ambition manifested itself in the conquest of the then known world, not by the sword, but by the nobleness of India's culture. He had acquired fresh values through the eight-fold path chalked out by the Buddha, for the guidance of humanity to the goal of Nirvana. Naturally Asoka's outlook was cosmopolitan. The eras that followed expanded India through her culture; but nobody cared to foster the idea of nationality as the Greeks or the Romans defined it.

There followed a period of decadence in Northern India in political outlook, just before the invasion of the Muslims. India was divided into small rival states. They were led by the ambition of the chiefs with some of whom statecraft meant personal aggrandisement, including murder of rivals and influential opponents.

During the days of the Muslim domination, the outlook of nationality deteriorated. Everything that appeared grand in Hindu culture and every spot associated with heroes and their preachings, claimed respect and personal pride in the consciousness of the Hindu. Local nationalism or racial solidarity seldom entered the precincts of his thought. To the Muslim convert and his children as well as to those of the immigrants, India the land of their birth seemed foreign. We find praises of India in the writings of the historian Al-Beruni. Akbar, the Great thought in terms of India. But that never improved the outlook of the Muslim. He regarded the land from which came the Holy Quoran as sacred. That was the place connected with the life and activities of the Great Prophet. The Indian Muslim resorted to the traditions of the Arabs, the Persians, the Turks and the Saracens to warm himself up. The heroes of his own motherland were Kafirs and meant nothing to him.

NATIONALISTIC SPIRIT

Foreign rule came with the British. The Indian failed to understand the men from across the seas who ruled them, before the introduction of English education in the land. The clever Indian, educated in English schools, studied their history and obtained glimpses into the secret of the foreigners. He discovered that a handful of men could govern this vast sub-continent with its past traditions, simply because of their spirit of nationalism. Batches of men came to rule the country which they left after their youth was passed away. Their home was in a small island but they were proud of every grain of dust of that distant land across the seven seas. The most remarkable trait of their character was extreme cohesiveness of every individual who belonged to Great Britain, in their treatment of the people and problems of the conquered country. This was in strange contrast with the state of affairs that had prevailed in India. Every individual here was a distinct entity for all purposes and it was beyond comprehension how a Nawab, a pundit and a petty tiller of the soil could claim the same privileges and could be regarded as units of the same great mass.

Those who had ears heard and those who had eyes saw. One of the greatest of such men was Rishi Bankim Chandra. The marvellous success of the foreigners lay in unity. They possessed a wonderful instinct of nationalism that embraced each and every person who lived in their country. It was not limited to a mere homage to the king. Bankim

vanted to rouse the national consciousness of his countrymen through the "Bande Mataram" song.

The genius of Bankim lay in his analysis of the nind of his countrymen. He synthesised the elements discovered in the process. *Mantras* had a harm over the Indian mind. He started his song vith an overture to the mother country in an ncantation of two words, simple expressive and nspiring—"Bande Mataram."

What followed in the song proved the excellent ower of the Rishi in reading the inner thoughts of is people. The Indian was essentially a worshipper f Nature, a silent poet. The physical charms of his ountry fascinated him. The flowing *rills* became eak in summer, then swelled and moved in all their ory, bringing fertility to the land. Different seasons stered bunches of luscious fruits. The Indian joyed the cool, gentle breeze. This material aspect his beautiful country prompted the poet to caterically mention her material charms.

"The mother that is. the land. is profusely atered," said the poet. "She is lovely in her ferity. She is dark-green with crops. Her breeze is ol. She is gay with flowers, adorned with clusters trees. She is radiant with her smiles and is full sweet songs."

In the concluding lines of the song, the poet ain paid homage to her material aspect.

"I salute thee, on lotus-throned, pure, nonpareil mother, profusely watered, and beautifully fertile."

But the poet was quite alive to the background the Indian mind where lurked a hankering for sdom, faith and the inner spirit of eternal consusness. So in a thundering voice he wanted us to n in the chorus.

"Thou art wisdom, faith thou art, thou art the heart and inner consciousness. Thou art life in this body."

The poet included in his song the spiritual insation. The country represented not only the uties of nature in abundance, but was rich with spiritual force which had gained strength from eration to generation, by the advent of saints and es, prophets and avatars. Bankim Chandra lysed the inner spirit of India's make-up which sidered his motherland sacred, both for physical spiritual excellence. Herein lay the genius of kim.

JRCE OF STRENGTH

The country was then in the hypnosis of the sical prowess of the foreign conquerors. It was very well to go into rhapsody over the flow of er in the channels of our meandering streams, orchards of luscious fruits and green corn fields. pile of wisdom of ages had not sundered the kles of our enslavement. The dominant race strength and vigour which alone could keep a on free.

Bankim anticipated this source of despondency. pointed out the source of our strength which, n, lay stored in our body and mind. His enunon was marvellous.

"There issues a chorus full of rhythm, from thirty crores of throats.
Twice thirty crores of arms carry sharp weapons.
Who says thou art weak?
Thou wieldest immense strength.
To thee mother I bow
Our deliverer, slayer of enemies."

cool consideration will unfold the wisdom of im Chandra whose psychological analysis disred the real constituents of the national mind. The combination of materialistic and spiritual ideal he beautifully detected. The result of his research was depicted in forceful rhythmic language. It found the inner spirit of his countrymen and resulted an upheaval due to a strong urge for liberty. We understand why words are divine, for the combination of a couple of words—Bande Mataram—acted as an effective formula to foster determination for liberty.

"Bande Mataram, the battle cry of the *children,"* said Lord Ronaldshay, "became the war cry not only of the revolutionary societies, but of the whole of nationalist Bengal, which differed from the societies in method only and not in aim."

I have given the words of the poet as literally, as I could render them into English. To the Indian reader the original words of Rishi Bankim Chandra are well-known. In what follows, I will try to give my own translation of the words of Rabindranath and Dwijendralal, to illustrate my points.

But I shall fail in my duty if I omit here the poem of Sri Aurobindo, which is a liberal rendering of the epoch-making song:

Mother I bow to thee!
Rich with thy hurrying streams,
Bright with thy orchard gleams,
Cool with thy winds of delight,
Park fields waving, Mother of might, Mother free.
When the swords flash out in twice seventy million hands
Thy dreadful name from shore to shore
With manly strength who are mighty and stored
To thee I call, Mother and Lord!
Thou art wisdom, thou art law,
Thou our heart, our soul, our breath.
Thou the love divine, the faith
In our heart that conquers death.
Thine the strength that nerves the arms,
Thine the beauty, thine the charms,
Every image made divine,
In our temples is but thine,
Thou art Durga, lady and queen
With her hands that strike and her swords of sheen.
Thou art Lakshmi, lotus throned,
And the Muse, a hundred stoned,
Pure and perfect without peer,
Mother, lend thine ear.
Mother sweet, I bow to thee,
Mother great and free!

We notice the same psychological insight in the patriotic poems of Rabindranath. He regarded his motherland as an embodiment of physical beauty and her culture, a store-house of wisdom and eternal truths about life.

AN IDEAL INDIAN MIND

I am always inclined to take Rabindranath's as a supreme pattern of an ideal Indian mind. His love of life and nature, in all their forms and the concept of interdependence, reveal a charming undercurrent of understanding throughout his vast literary creation. He is as cosmopolitan in outlook as our ancient seers. But his essentially modern mind could not disregard the practical value of parochial cohesiveness which constituted the effective aspect of what the modern word nationality connoted. The preaching of world-peace becomes lip-deep if every unit of the universe is not allowed freedom to act and think in its own way.

The poet of the universe was intensely patriotic. His loyalty to his nation embraced every speck of dust of his motherland, her plants, fruits, flowers and her streams and hills, not to speak of her children

high or low. In a soul-stirring poem he made the following declaration—

"I received the message to-day that the dark-green earth is my pure mother;
She is the home of beauty and a storehouse of food."

When we analyse his innumerable poems and songs, composed to whip up our drooping spirit, we find that he wanted to wake us up through our instinctive love of Bharat, for her material as well as spiritual beauty. Take one of his early popular songs where he addresses the motherland as charming the mind of the universe. His opening lines describe the physical beauty of the land.

"The blue waters of the sea wash thy feet,
The dark-green edge of your raiment flutters in the gentle breeze,
The heaven kisses thy brow the Himachal mountain,
Thou art crowned with white snows."

But she possesses charms other than material.

"The first dawn appeared in thy sky,
The music of the Sama Veda was first chanted in thy hermitage garden,
In thy forest home what a mass of wisdom, faith and poems made their first appearance."

The poet often alluded to the sanctity of our country. He said in a song,

"In her temple that penetrates heaven exists the altar of the God of Life.
He is worshipped everyday with flowers."

Is this not a marvellous description of her body and spirit?

When the struggles of our patriots for freedom were very keen and the passion of the rulers for suppression violent and vulgar, Rabindranath's nature was terribly shocked. Innumerable songs and poems poured forth from his pen. There was hardly any trace of passion or intolerance in those compositions. He simply reminded us of the material, intellectual and spiritual wealth of Bharat. His love was deep and views ever optimistic.

"There is wealth in the midst of thy poverty,
In your silence lies concealed
Your flame-coloured Mantra. Grant that to us.
We shall throw off the robes of the strangers to wear your piece of cloth as a garment."

GOLDEN BENGAL

I witnessed in my early youth the profound sincerity and pleasure with which crowds of people used to sing the "Sonar Bangla" song. Those were the days of the first partition of Bengal.

"Oh my golden Bengal, I love thee
Thy sky and thy wind for ever play the flute in my life.
In Falgoon the fragrance of thy paddy fields creates intoxication.
O mother in Agrahayan what sweet smile have I seen in your loaded cornfields."

But it must be admitted that our indifference to his call for freedom sometimes filled the poet with just regret. He sang—

"If nobody comes in response to your call, you proceed alone, proceed alone, proceed alone."

In a paroxysm of despair, the poet sang—

"If in rain and storm, others close the doors of their dark room,
You proceed alone, making a bonfire of the ribs of your breast."

He loved his countrymen but sometimes he felt aggrieved on account of their apathy to respond to his appeal. Towards the close of his life, he scolde us. Said the poet :

"A country is the creation of man. If ma manifests himself, then the country is revealed. Ou responsibility for explanation will increase in propo tion to our loud proclamation about the motherlan as well-watered, richly fertile and cool with breez The question would arise as to how far can huma prosperity grow with the bounty of nature which an indirect gift. If through the agency of man, wat dries up, fruits decay, the breeze becomes poisonou with virus, the corn-fields become sterile, then a that poetic talk will not conceal the shame of th country".

This stray admonition was meant to be a co rective. Rabindranath's nature was ever forgivir and generous. His love for Bharat was full of r ligious fervour. He sang —

"Oh, Bharat, hear the poet's song on this New Year's Da
With fresh delight we have brought offerings for the worship of your fe
We have brought our physical strength
We have brought the devotion of our heart
We have brought our sense of religion
We have brought our life
We have brought the best of our offerings to dedicate to you

I would not multiply instances. It cannot denied that these patriotic songs played a promine part to rouse in us the requisite spirit for the mo war that brought us freedom.

The National Anthem very briefly takes through the extent of our motherland and her pow of absorption. But we find the same respect f the physical glory of India as for her spiritu history. Its expression of hope and the exhortati for unity is brilliant.

The song that asks the heart to quietly awak in the holy land of pilgrimage asks the Brahm in the end to purify himself and clasp everyone the hand. The country which proclaimed the i manence of Brahma in each particle of His creati branded classes as untouchable. It is an enigma.

A MISCHIEVOUS CANARD

A good deal of fuss was made by some perso who alleged that the Great Charioteer of Ma Destiny in the National Anthem, "Jana Gana Ma Adhinayaka", referred to King George the Fif Rabindranath himself refuted the suggestion.

"I should only insult myself", wrote the po "if I cared to answer those who consider me capa of such unbounded stupidity as to say in praise George the Fourth or George the Fifth as the eter charioteer leading the pilgrims on their jourr through countless ages of the timeless history mankind."

Sri Probodh Chandra Sen has informed public fully about the genesis and end of the stu allegation, in his booklet, "India's National Anther The song concluded the first day's sittings of Indian National Congress at Calcutta, held in 19 as also in 1917. In May 1947, Pundit Nehru sou the opinion of all the States about the suitabil of the song as the National Anthem of the Ind Union. He had the desired approval.

On the 12th December 1947, The Amrita Ba Patrika took up the question and discussed it. was proved that the allegation was "a mischiev canard". Said the Patrika, "That such a prepost ous proposition can be seriously made, passes comprehension."

Its charming tune and the inspiring mess

(Continued On Page

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SABITA & BASANTA

Music : ANIL BISWAS

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Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru is as deeply interested in the development of films as he is in the maintenance of International peace. In this picture he is seen discussing with Debika Rani, once a topmost film star of India, at a Film Seminar held recently in New Delhi.

FILM INDUSTRY IN ASIA

THE story of the development of film industry in Asian countries is as romantic as that of the heroes and heroines. While there is an under-flow of unity among them each of the Asian countries—China, Japan, Pakistan, Burma, Indonesia, Philippines, Hongkong and India — has a characteristic of its own. The following article makes a comparative study of these characteristics. Of special interest are the short notes on the attainments of the stars who have helped to put these countries prominently on the film map of the world. An added attraction is the wealth of pictures accompanying the article.

INDIA

INDIA ranks third in the world in the number of annual films produced, close on the heels of the U.S.A. and Japan. It now turns out some 250 pictures annually, 42 years after the making of the first Indian picture. An average dramatic feature 12,000 feet long and production cost sometim comes up to as high as 1,000,000 dollars in U. money, a fantastic figure in the light of India economy. Most of the pictures are, howeve quickies produced in a short period with lower pr duction costs somewhere around U.S. $400,000.

The first Indian picture was produced in Bo bay in 1912, 16 years after a motion picture w first shown in India. Produced by Sir D. G. Phalk it was *Raja Harischandra* featuring King Hari chandra, an important hero in Indian mythology. few years later appeared another mythological pi ture *Nala Damayanti* by J. F. Madan. It was t first picture ever produced in Calcutta that continue to be India's Hollywood until the beginning of Wor War II. With the making of the first talkie film 1931, the modern Indian motion picture indust was established. Initial years saw only 30 pictur

roduced per annum. But in 1949, the annual pro-
uction figure reached the peak of 289, then ranking
cond in the world.

00 PRODUCERS AND 60 STUDIOS

Unlike that of the U.S. and many other leading ovie-producing nations, the motion picture in-
ustry of India rests in the hands of 300 producers 1954). The phenomenon is due to the fact that ere is no joint stock company existing for the rpose of movie-making. An Indian movie producer the man who finances all the expenses to make picture and puts into his pocket all the net profit, any. Sometimes he gets some good advance money om the distributor (there are 700 of them now) ho get the distribution right of the picture. There e about 60 studios most of which are located in mbay, Calcutta, and Madras, the three centres of Indian movie industry. 3,200 theatres, a handful f them air-conditioned, are scattered all over the untry.

Motion picture industry in India plays a vital le in fighting illiteracy and raising the cultural andard of the people. To most Indian youths, orts and the silver screen are the main media of creation even in remote towns and villages. It is ported about 2,000,000 people see the movies ery day all over India. Where there is no movie use, mobile theatres make regular rounds to give e local folk opportunities to keep up-to-date with ings going on in the country and the world.

ANGUAGE BARRIER PROBLEM

Language difficulties have always been a major oblem in raising the cultural standard of India. ere are more than 200 dialects and 30 foreign nguages spoken in India to-day. Indian pictures e accordingly dubbed in in various dialects. Break-wn of the language used in 221 pictures produced 1951 follows: 99 in Hindi (official national ton-e); 39 in Bengali; 26 in Tamil; 20 in Telugu; 16 Marathi; 6 in Gujarati and the rest in ten other alects. This trend is interesting when viewed in nection with movements towards reorganising ates of India on linguistic basis. Hindi pictures ich have an all-India market are mostly produced Bombay, the centre of Indian film-making industry er World War II. Bengali films are made mostly Calcutta, some of which find their way into East kistan where majority of the population speak ngali. (Pakistan-India partition was a severe blow Calcutta moviemakers). Madras, the new-comer the scene of India's movie making, is turning out mil, Telugu, and Marathi pictures for the vast ith India markets.

ALISM VERSUS RELIGION

Themes of Indian pictures are roughly divided ler four categories: (1) Mythological ones based Hindu tales; (2) Biographies of legendary or torical heroes; (3) Action and costume dramas ked with sword-swinging heroes, and their allur-ladies, most of them based on tales from the abian Night and (4) Serious ones treating social blems centreing on the lingering caste sys-and other feudalistic customs.

Categories (1) to (3) are favourite themes of nbay pictures. They are full of music and dance ch can be understood even by the non-Hindi-aking fans all over India. Technically, Bombay-le pictures are of higher quality. From the artistic point of view Calcutta pictures are hopes of to-morrow. They reflect realistically what is going on both in the life and minds of contemporary Indians who were once called "inscrutable." Also, these pictures reflect conflicts between the old and new, struggle towards modernization, and various social dilemmas and paradoxes. To appreciate "Indian Realism," however, viewers need to understand the Hindu religion which influences the life of the majority of Indian people to-day.

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

Since independence, Indian films have been steadily drawing the admiring attention of the world outside. Although India's films cannot be said as yet to have found a regular commercial window in the foreign market, they have undoubtedly found a placing on the film-map of the world. There is a new appreciation of and a new demand for the truly representative films of India which can claim to reflect the culture, art, traditions, social patterns of India and the basic approach to life of her millions. It is possibly due, in a large measure, to the new prestige India has gained in the eye of the world, thanks to the capable piloting of her affairs in the international set-up by Nehru, her man of destiny. Along with that prestige, there is a growing demand in foreign countries for an intimate glimpse of all the facets of her people's lives, their arts, their religions,—and naturally their films too. In response to this universal demand, the Government acted with far-sight in arranging to send our pick of truly good films, representative of our real Indian character, to the various international film festivals. And at these festivals, despite the great initial handicap of our language unintelligible to the foreigners some of our films were acclaimed to be of sterling merit in their contents, histrionics and execution. Films like *Do Bigha Zamin, Bhagwan Sri Krishna Chaitanya, Munna, Aandhiya* and *Awara* have been received with genuine praise and given high tributes. In the field of documentaries and shorts, India's efforts have been awarded high honours which can be gauged from the unique reputation achieved by many Indian documentaries at the different festivals. In this latter field, India's technicians have shown a wonderful knack and have shown high rate talent. The fillip had certainly been given to this new creative urge of documentary productions by the courageous initiative taken by the Government of India in setting up a regular system of production under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

ATTEMPTS FOR OVERSEAS MARKET

The incentive to the achievement of international honour for Indian films was no doubt first supplied by the Government of the land when they took courage by both hands in initiating a grand-scale Film Festival of International films shown at different centres, where chosen representatives of different film-producing countries came with their pick of films and exchanged their ideas of film-making with our film people. They went back carrying a new love for Indian films and a new faith in its potentialities. This found concrete expression in the invitations that flowed out to India from abroad to send their films for international showing.

Attempts are now being made to examine the possibilities of finding a regular overseas market for Indian films in principal countries of the West and East. Already our films are being exported to various foreign countries like Africa (except South Africa)

including places like Madagascar, Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, to Asian countries like Afghanistan, Burma, Ceylon, Iran, Indonesia, Indo-China, Aden, Malaya and other countries of the Middle East. Of course we have yet to find a regular show-window in European and American countries. But hopes are growing in that direction also, and its realisation may not be far off.

AMBITIOUS JOINT VENTURE PROJECTS

Whatever be the present position of Indian films being regularly exported to the bigger international markets, one very notable thing has happened nearer home. India has caught the eye of the foreign film-producers as a large potential market for undertaking joint ventures in production here, on the Indian soil, of films with international prospects. During the recent years, India, particularly its key-centre of film production, Bombay, has been the nursery of many new and ambitious film projects of joint venture with foreign partnership and with typical Indian story materials. This has opened up the bright vista of large-scale employment of skilled technical and histrionic labour and of the Indians gaining rich new experience through this collaboration on an extended sphere. These ventures, when executed, will be righly expected to create or expand a new channel for exporting Indian films abroad and showing there on a reciprocal basis.

Indian technicians are being sent out abroad for foreign training in various spheres of film work and the day should not be far off when their fruits of practical study should greatly enhance the qualitative merit of our films. Already plans are under consideration for opening of factories for the manufacture of raw stock and other film accessories for which we have now to depend helplessly on the foreign countries.

STAR SYSTEM VERY POPULAR

In India, on the American model, the star system has proved very popular. Already, there are a large number of stars of regional or country-wide following who have seen to the commercial boosting up of film productions and have created a remarkable hunger for star-adoration. This has both its good side and bad, as in America, and Indian producers are now beginning to think of turning more to the inherent story values of the films than the stars who take away the cream of film earnings.

Another sizeable difficulty India's producers have to contend with is the distraction or dissipation of the commercial possibility of a production through the competition of regional language pictures. For this, Bengali films and Tamil-Telegu films considerably shift the attention of Bengali and South Indian picturegoers from the Hindi film which is the lingua franca of India. This creates unfair competition among Indian pictures themselves and takes away from the over-all possibility of a film's commercial returns. These different regional productions are naturally reared on different regional tastes and tendencies and a rational solution of this problem is still eluding her film producers. Otherwise, Indian films have a wonderful prospect of reaching down to the innermost or farthest corners of the country with their strong visual appeal and are a wonderful means of informati for huge rural populace.

Here are some of the film stars whose pictu appear elsewhere:

SUCHITRA SEN is the raging sweetheart of t Bengali screen at the moment. It is doubtful if a other Bengali star achieved such feverish popular in such a short period as this young lady whose e ceptionally good looks and glowing youth are her f tune. She first leapt into fame in Devaki Bos *Bhagwan Srikrishna Chaitanya* in the role of *Vishn priya*. Along with Uttam Kumar, she forms a roma tic team the appeal of which has yet to be excel by any other pair. She has just played her first Hi role as *Parvati* in Bimal Roy's remake of *Devdas* Bombay and, should she be a similar success on t Hindi screen as on the Bengali, a bright future a far wider canvas is awaiting her. Her new film is Devaki Bose's current offering, *Bhalobas* built around her colourful personality.

UTTAM KUMAR is the male heart-throb of t Bengali screen, than whom a more popularly acclai ed star the Bengali screen has not yet produced. is the producer's dream, so far as characterisation the fresh glow of romantic youth is concerned. He at his liveliest when he is the "Beau Ideal" of Suchit Sen, the two together as young partners in the lo game on screen creating a sheer sensation result in long queues before the cinemas. What marks Uttam Kumar's screen characterisations is his e and natural style of acting which makes you for he is acting at all and brings life to his roles. He also the most welcome romantic "hero" on the Be gali stage of today, as will be evidenced from unique popularity in *Shyamali*. Uttam's rise to fa was marked from the film *Basu Paribar* before wh he had been struggling for a footing on the scre His next films include *Sabar Upare, Sagarika* a *Chira Kumar Sabha.*

NALINI JAYANT is one of the popular lead ladies of the Hindi screen on the younger side. She as much at home in roles of young romance as those calling for fine shades of serious histrionics mellow tragedy-acting. She was an immediate sen tion when she first appeared on screen at the ten age of sixteen. Her extra ounce of popularity derived from her skill as a dancer. Although screen appearance extends over quite a number years, it seems that has hardly taken away from t keen edge of her popularity. Her most recent succ is in *Munimji.*

MEENA KUMARI, according to many pictu goers, represents the finest shade of beautiful roma tic charm on the Hindi screen. She drew salvos praise in the notable film *Baiju Bawra* as the roma tic inspiration of the hero and has ever since be steadily coming up in each successive appearan While she is one of the most looked-for leading st of the Hindi screen, she is equally a rage with Be gal's countless picturegoers and for this she must grateful to Bimal Roy in whose Hindi version *Parinita,* she stole her way to the heart of Ben with her delicately sensitive handling of the role the young heroine of the story. Her recent success in *Azad* which is having a bumper run everywhe Meena Kumari is possibly most desired by filmgo as the romantic screen counterpart of Dilip Kuma

SABITRI CHATTERJEE is one of the most pendable stars of the Bengali screen whose app as a character artiste is as strong as in any ot shade of romantic acting. Her versatility as a tra dienne and a comedienne is a matter of keen app

iation of both screen and stage lovers, an easy flight ver all ranges of expressions with consummate grace narking out her style of acting. She first struck veryone with her remarkable dramatic promise in he stage-play *Nutan Ihudi* and was chosen for the rst screen role in the hectic comedy *Pasher Bari* in hich as its ebullient and young romantic heroine he became an instant idol of picturegoers' fine exectations, but her popularity possibly reached its ighest peak in *Shyamali* as its deaf-and-dumb eroine.

KAVERI BOSE is the newest sensation on the engali film firmament and at a time when Bengal's lm-makers were desperately looking for a new emmine face, Kaveri's advent was hailed with unoncealed glee by filmgoers as the sweet and soulful *aikamal* girl. She exuded in it a fresh glow of youth nd maiden-like simplicity, coupled with a remarkle ease and unconscious poise of acting, which ruck everyone as a fresh breath of breeze and put er feet firmly on the road to popularity. Possibly no her screen heroine has been blessed with such a irst of popular acclamation in her very first appearnce as this teenager actress whose additional qualies of a first-rate dancer stand her in excellent stead all her future screen designs. Although she has ot quite repeated the flushing success of her first le in her second there will be little doubting the armth of soulfulness in her acting which is sure to e rewarded with a steady rise to fame. Her next big signments include the name role in the film verons of *Shyamali* and *Drishti*.

DILIP KUMAR is the busiest and most popur hero of the Hindi screen whose spell of romantic peal is a matter of delight for picturegoers throughout India. It is difficult to choose his successful pearances one from the other but among his meorable appearances one certainly remembers with armth the films like *Daag, Andaz* and *Aan*. Two of s most recent thundering successes are *Azad* and *saniyat* in both of which he scores an easy triumph h his carefree and yet intensively emotional style acting. Possibly the most significant role of his eer will be as *Devdas* in Bimal Roy's remake of the at Chandra classic in which he plays the leading e.

MADHUBALA, known as the Venus of the Indian een, is an actress whose beauty is of the classic del and makes her one of the most sought for nale stars of the Hindi screen. She scaled the ghts of fame in that famous film *Mahal* which de her the film darling of picturegoers. She has, wever, yet to show her dramatic mettle as firmly the other leading actresses, beyond what she ieved in *Mahal*. She has also tried her hand at film duction with some success.

NARGIS is described as the finest dramatic iste among the female stars of the Indian screen. is one who is possessed of a peculiarly fascinatcharm of personality and although her beauty is he irregular variety, she radiates an exquisite cefulness and dignified femininity that find elot expression in each of her screen portrayals. is undoubtedly the finest tragedienne on the di screen and her remarkable poise and restrainxpression give her a ring of elusive charm which yet to be attained by any other Indian female . She is at her best in her romantic screen partnip with Raj Kapoor. Her recent smashing suc- is in *Shree 420*. Among her other notable mphs are *Barsaat* and *Awara* and *Andaz*. She is daughter of the famous singer Jaddan Bai. When she came to Calcutta last her unique popularity was proved delightfully anew.

SANDHYARANI is believed to be the screen Cinderella of the Bengali screen whose spell of radiant popularity seems to be increasing with maturity in years. This girl seems to typify with wanted grace the roles of unsophisticated and coy maidenly charm while her roles as the young wife or the sweet mother fit her like the proverbial gloves and are always greeted with loud acclaim. Never seeming to grow up, this sweet 'evening queen' of the Bengali screen has probably enjoyed the longest spell of popularity that ever came the way of a star. To count her film successes is a nearly impossible task although one can easily think of her in rapturous terms for her beautiful and warmly human performances in *Bindur Chheley, Mane-na-Mana, Sahar Theke Dure, Nishkriti, Bidhilipi*. Her most recent film is *Mahanisha*. She was first hailed as a sweet, new screen thing of immense charm in Sailajananda's *Nandini*. Sandhya occupies a unique place in the heart of Bengal picturegoers.

ANUBHA GUPTA is among the most capable artistes of the Bengali screen whose gifts of emotional expression in roles of sensitive depth have been proved to the hilt in film after film. She was first discovered in *Bish Bachhar Agey* but won raving popularity as *Thakurjhi* in Tara Sankar's *Kavi* and *Bowrani* in *Ratnadeep*, thanks to the wonderful handling and understanding by Devaki Bose. Her recent success is in *Anupama* in which she brought out the poignant psychology of the Bengali working girl. Among her future films is *Kalindi*.

BIKASH ROY is one of the two most popular heroes of the Bengali screen but is a positive idol of filmgoers when in roles with a shade of villainy. It is difficult to forget his stylish and personally polished acting in *Bhuli Nai* and *'42* while as the hero of *Ratnadeep*, he surprised everyone with his fine flair for character acting. He is as much capable in serious roles as in those of light comedy. He has now turned to the production and direction along with his screen acting and is expected to make his mark there in the same easy manner as his acting. He was formerly on the acting staff of AIR where he is still possibly the most popular hero.

RAJ KAPOOR is the most carefree and ebullient hero of the Hindi screen whose innocently roguish charm and irrepressible youthful dash instantly win over any picturegoer. In popularity, he is quite in the same class with Dilip Kumar and many believe that if he chooses to eschew a certain studied kind of deliberate over-acting, the smart appeal of his screen acting will acquire a new grace and depth. He is now possibly the most popular director-actor-producer of India and in all the three realms he has proved his mettle in unmistakable terms. His *Awara* created wild popularity in Russia where he is said to be even more popular than our Prime Minister, and that is saying a lot. His recent towering success is in *Shree 420* in which as its hero he cultivates a style of acting so akin to Chaplin's. As a producer, he combines idealism with showmanship.

JAPAN

THE Japanese film industry, ten years after the war, ranks to-day the 2nd in the world in annual production of pictures. More than 300 pictures are turned out in a year by six major film companies —Daiei, Toho, Shochiku, Shin Toho, Toei, and Nikkatsu — and several independent productions.

More than 700 feature films and 300 newsreels are exported annually, bringing back some 1,500,000 U.S. dollars to the Japanese film companies. To Okinawa, 350 pictures are exported a year, while over 120 go to South-East Asian markets. Foreign films imported number about 200 a year. Most of these foreign pictures are from Hollywood. French, Italian and British films are also boxoffice favourites. Once in a year or two, films from other parts of the world including Russia, Scandinavia and Mexico are also imported. Boxoffice incomes from these foreign pictures occupy as much as 35 per cent of the total annual revenue of Japan's theatrical business.

More than two million people see movies everyday all over Japan.

HISTORY OF OVER HALF CENTURY

Behind the present-day high level achievement of Japanese film industry is more than a half century long history. It was in 1899 when the first dramatic feature was produced in Japan by an all-Japanese staff and cast. The first motion picture was introduced from the U.S. in 1897. 1912 saw the birth of the first full-fledged motion picture company — present Nikkatsu — with a capital of 27,000 dollars. An amazing phenomenon in early days was the fact that no actress worked in Japanese moviedom. "Oyama", world-famous Kabuki actors who always play female roles, also had major parts on the silver screen until 1921 when Shochiku was established and employed actresses for the first time in the history of Japanese moviedom. The first Japanese talkie — *Madame and Mrs.* — was produced by Shockiku in 1932 with a tremendous boxoffice success. By 1935 all Japanese pictures entered the age of talkies. In 1936 Toho entered the field which until then was monopolized by Nikkatsu and Shochiku. In those early days, most of the moviemakers were leftist-minded. In the form of "samurai" pictures or comedies, miseries of the poor were picturized in many a Nikkatsu film, while Shockiku specialized in turning out tear-jerkers and melodramas, the tradition of which won a unique position for Shockiku in Japanese film industry. Toho pictures gained popularity by portraying hopes and troubles of the contemporary youths.

IMPACT OF THE PACIFIC WAR

Shortly before the outbreak of the Pacific War, Nikkatsu and several minor productions were amalgamated into the Daiei by order of the Government. Daiei, Shockiku, and Toho were the only three film companies which continued production during the war. For several years following the war-end, Japanese film industry had been on the verge of collapse. Productivity was low because of war-damages, while Hollywood pictures literally flooded Japanese movie markets. The management tried to overcome the crisis by mass discharge of studio personnel. The organized moviemakers fought back by going on strike. Their slogans included "Protect Japanese film industry," "Influx of Yankee films must be checked," "Japanese pictures for the Japanese," etc. Month-long Toho studio strike resulted in the birth of another movie company—Shin Toho Company—in 1948.

MacArthur-backed purge of Communist and fellow travellers of the moviedom as well as the press, radio, and government offices was enforced in 1950. The purgees, among whom were veteran film directors Tadashi Imai, Kozaburo Yoshimura, Fumio Kamei etc., organized independent productions and turned out anti-war and anti-fascist pictures. Most of their pictures drew boxoffice success and the age of independent productions came to fore. In the meantime, Toei which specializes in producing medium-length "samurai" pictures or detective films mainly aimed at teenage fans, was established. In March, 1954, Nikkatsu resumed its production after nearly 15 years. To-day, six major companies,—Daiei, Shochiku, Toho, Shin Toho, Toei, and Nikkatsu—are vying for supremacy in Japanese movie markets where new pictures are released every week in major cities all over the country.

THE HIGHEST PAID ACTOR TODAY

Japanese film industry is the biggest of the nation's entertainment enterprises. Boxoffice incomes per year amount to 125,000,000 U.S. dollars of which 65 per cent is those from Japanese films. Production costs of Japanese pictures are 70,000-100,000 U.S. dollars for an average feature.

Release of some 10 new pictures every week contributed to the birth of a number of young actors and actresses who star in programme pictures and quickies, most of which feature sword-swinging "samurais" or trigger-quick detectives aimed at teenage fans. Typical among the screen idols among the teenagers is 23-year-old Kinnosuke Nakamura who has starred in more than 30 pictures since his debut in April, 1954. Kazuo Hasegawa is the highest paid Japanese film actor who has been maintaining his popularity as "The Most Handsome" and talented "samurai" player for the past 30 years. Ever-increasing popularity of Nakamura and his good rivals, Senjaku Nakamura and Chiyonusuke Azuma, reflects Japanese teenagers' mental trend. They seem to appreciate sex appeal reversely. The age of he-man and she-woman is gone and she-man and he-woman age has come. Naturally, Kinnosuke Nakamura and Senjaku Nakamura are both former "Oyama", Kabuki woman impersonators.

MANY INTERNATIONAL PRIZES

Daiei's *Rashomon* (Machiko Kyo—Toshiro Mifune) was the first Japanese feature film that made the world recognize high-level artistic and technical standard of Japanese film industry. It won 1951 Venice Grand Prix and many other international prizes and was shown in many countries of the world. In 1952, two pictures were awarded international prizes, Daiei's *Tales of Genji* at Canne and Shin Toho's *Life of Oharu* at Venice. In 1953, Deiei's *Ugetsu Monogatari* won the Silver Prix at Venice while *Entotsu No Mieru Basho* was awarded the top prize at Berlin. A Grand Prix was copped again when Daiei's Eastman-colour *Gate of Hell* won the top prize at 1954 Canne International Film Festival, while at Venice Toho's *Seven Samurais* was given a high award the same year. At South-East Asia Film Festivals, Shockiku's Eastman-colour *Golden Demon* and Daiei's *Tales of Shunking* won the highest prizes in 1954 and 1955 respectively.

LEADING STARS

Here are some of the film stars whose pictures appear elsewhere :

MACHIKO KYO seen in the picture with her make-up, hairdo, and costume for the role of Yang Kwei-fei, world-renowned historical Chinese Beauty Queen, lives up to her international fame as a typical Oriental beauty.

The curvacious actress has already won two Grand Prix, one for *Rashomon* and the other for

Gate of Hell. She also won a 1955 American Academy Award for her supurb acting in *Gate of Hell.* More recently, *Tale of Shunkin* starring her, won the Golden Harvest Award at the 2nd South-East Asia Film Festival held in Singapore in May this year. In Japan, she has been given various top prizes for the past six and a half years since her film debut in 1949.

The ex-boogie-woogie stage dancer who is now 31 years old, has never been married and is one of the few film stars without a scandal.

HIDEKO TAKAMINE, only 31, is the most talented film actress of Japan in her prime. She monopolized all the top prizes from various organizations for the best actress of 1954. Her popularity is, however, 26-year-long since her film debut in 1929. When the war ended, Hideko had to face a crisis in adapting herself for a woman's role from that of acute teenager. Takamine went to Paris all alone to spend several months in a backstreet apartment house in preparation for her rebirth. She came back from Paris to become a most talented character actress on the Japanese silver screen. Her book *'Lone Traveller in Paris'*, a best-seller, shows her all-round talent and a bit cynical attitude towards life mixed with humour. She married an up-and-coming film director and scenario-writer Zen Matsuyama last year. Two of her pictures are among the top ten boxoffice hits during the first half of 1955.

MICHITO KOGURE is a well-known leading lady of the Japanese films, whose sketch of a geisha girl in the film *Miyamoto Musashi* focusses popular attention on it. In the picture she is being given the final touch before shooting by her director Kenji Mizoguchi who is noted as the greatest film director to depict Japanese women on the screen.

CHO-CHO SAN-KAORU YACHIGUSA has made a successful debut in the international filmdom, as heroine in *Madame Butterfly,* the first Italo-Japanese joint production filmed in Italy last year. She is a popular member of the Takarazuka Girls' Opera Troupe. Her first picture was made in 1951 when the nation was hit by "teenage star" boom.

PAKISTAN

PAKISTAN'S film industry is still in an embryonic stage, with less than five films produced annually. There are altogether three major film studios in the country located in Lahore and Karachi. Pioneers in Pakistan moviedom are mostly India-trained. They came to Pakistan with the national independence, leaving behind their fame in India, to start from the scratch and to lay a firm foundation for the nation's film industry. Close co-operation is maintained between Pakistan and Indian filmdoms so far as stars and technicians are concerned, as in the case between Hongkong and Taiwan. Pakistani stars are still invited to Bombay, the Hollywood of India, for joint film making.

LEADING STARS

In the picture published elsewhere *RANA* of the Malaka Pictures (Karachi) is seen in "farak" dress with "Rupota" around her neck. She poses an exotic beauty and can well be called Pakistan's counterpart of Dorothy Lamour.

SABIHA is a leading film star in Pakistan. In the picture elsewhere she is seen in *Qatil,* a latest Pakistani film produced by Kamal Pictures.

CHINA

FILM industry in Taiwan rests in the hands of a few motion picture companies which together produce about 10 pictures every year. Movie halls in Taiwan number some 320, most of which are in Taipei and other major cities of the island nation.

As the total number of domestic productions are not enough to meet the demand of the local movie fans, pictures from Hongkong, America, and Japan find a good and steady market in Taiwan. Language difficulties are out of the question in the case of Hongkong pictures while Japanese pictures are also enjoyed by the public most of whom understand Japanese, due to the long period of Japanese occupation of the island before the war.

Taiwan moviemakers work in close co-operation with their Hongkong counterparts. Sometime a Taiwan star plays the title role in a Hongkong film. Sometime, it is the otherway round.

LEADING STARS

Here are some of the stars whose pictures appear elsewhere :

MU HUNG, in her tight-fitting Mandarin dress is China's counterpart of America's Marilyn Monroe for obvious reasons. The 24-year-old glamour girl established her name by her supurb acting in *By the Hillside,* Nationalist China's entry to the 2nd South-East Asia Film Festival held in Singapore in May this year.

CHANG CHING-WEN is an actress who usually personates a hot tempered woman. Since her film debut last year, she is steadily winning her popularity throughout the country.

WU CHIN-HUNG whose popularity in Nationalist China is tremendous may well be called a veteran film queen.

BURMA

"SILENT AGE" yet goes on here. Burma is a young country and so is its movie industry. It seems the "silent age" is yet to continue for some time in Burmese flickers.

Of the 40-odd pictures Burma produces annually, less than one-seventh are talkies. Throughout Burma there are 150 movie houses, two thirds of which have no sound system for showing talkies. Moviegoers number only 55,000 a day.

Although there are some 100 motion picture companies, the bulk of them have no camera nor studios of their own. Only four of them are what might be called full-fledged film companies.

Government's encouragement to Burmese moviemakers is given in the form of Academy Awards for the year's best actor, actress, supporting players, and directors.

LEADING STAR

KYI KYI HTAY, petite and pretty, (picture elsewhere) is one of the few born talents on

Burmese celluloid. Starting her stage career at the age of three, she was given the Best Actress Award in 1952.

INDONESIA

INDONESIA turns out some fifty pictures a year to be shown in its six hundred movie houses all over the nation.

Major film companies number only three. The Government, on the other hand, has been producing newsreels, educational and cultural films as one of the important weapons to combat the high illiteracy ever since the national independence. Government-operated mobile movie show groups make regular rounds from island to island throughout the country. Government students are sent overseas to study modern techniques in movie making.

LEADING STARS

TITIEN SUMARNI, "Queen" of Indonesian silver screen, 1954, is seen in her dazzling national costume in the picture published elsewhere. She was voted the most popular and the most beautiful star, and the best actress in a nationwide public poll.

NANA MAYO (picture elsewhere) is one of the most popular up-and-coming actresses of Indonesian moviedom.

PHILIPPINES

THE Philippines is the fourth biggest movie-producing country in Asia, following Japan, India, and Hongkong. About 100 pictures are produced every year by 14 motion picture companies in the country. On the other hand, about an equal number of American films are imported every year.

Movie-goers per day are estimated at one million throughout the nation which has 500 movie theatres. Manila is proud of its movie theatres which are equipped with up-to-date air-conditioning and other facilities.

Unlike in other Asian nations, most of the pictures made here are dubbed in English which is taught on compulsory basis in the country. Even Tagalog pictures are superimposed with English. Hollywood influence is dominant in her pictures. Melodrama makes up the bulk of them, while historical dramas drawn from the Philippine history are also popular themes.

The Philippines is a member nation of the Federation of Motion Picture Producers in South-East Asia which already sponsored annual South-East Asia Film Festival twice since its founding in 1953.

LEADING STARS

In the pictures published elsewhere are the three stars in the Philippine filmdom whose names are all-time drawers of boxoffice success. Actor *JOHHNY REYES* is the winner of the Best Actor Award in the recently-held 2nd South-East Asia Film Festival in Singapore, while his actress-wife *TESSIE QUINTANA* (c) is considered one of the most talented and popular senoritas on the Philippine silver screen. *ROSA ROSAL* (r), who usually portrays a third party, has come to star in several pictures in these few years.

DE LA ROSA in a Tyron-Power-like makeup (picture elsewhere) gets his costume checked before studio shooting of a historical feature. At right is actress Elena Acosta, up-and-coming starlet who was picked to co-star with the most handsome actor in the Philippine moviedom.

HONGKONG

THE sunny, scenic Hongkong is the dream-making factory for millions of Chinese movie fans turning out an average of 200 pictures annually.

Dubbed in Mandarin (official Chinese tongue) and Cantonese dialects, Hongkong-made pictures find their way into vast overseas markets in South-East Asian countries, Taiwan, North and South America and anywhere that has a Chinese community. In turn, millions of dollars are brought back to Hongkong moviemakers from all over the world.

In Hongkong there are about 50 movie theatres. It is estimated that 70,000 people a day go to the movie theatres.

Seven is a lucky number and Hongkong has seven major film companies which are proud of their up-to-date equipment and facilities. Also, there is a large number of independent producers, actors and actresses.

DREAMS ARE MADE AT NIGHT

Hongkong moviemakers are mostly night workers because of the sub-tropical sun in the daytime. Seldom can movie fans see Hongkong stars loitering on the street or dining in a swanky restaurant. While most people are sweating it out in offices, "stars" are taking their siesta in their deluxe beds. When other Hongkongites start to hit the hay, the "stars" rise to make dreams on celluloid.

Hongkong pictures are made in two Chinese dialects. Pictures in Mandarin (official Chinese tongue) occupy about 25 per cent of the total annual production of feature films. They are usually of higher quality than those in Cantonese, another popular Chinese dialect dominant in the Hongkong area.

Production costs of Mandarin pictures range between 16,500 and 40,000 U. S. dollars. Cantonese films, mostly quickies, are produced with costs ranging between U.S. $8,500 and U.S. $16,500.

LOCATION CRAZE HITS THE COLONY

The year 1954 brought a new trend in Hongkong movie industry. Craze for location-shooting outside the tiny colony was prompted by an influx of foreign location teams. Two American location groups visited Hongkong in 1954 and in early 1955. Clark Gable, William Holden, Susan Hayward, and other stars were among the groups. A Japanese location team followed, bringing Keiko Kishi who was picked recently by David Lean of Britain to star in *The Wind Cannot Read* and other Japanese stars.

The frequent visits of movie-makers from abroad prompted their Hongkong counterparts to realise that genuine background is far better than studio sets.

Towards the end of 1954, the first moviemakers group from Hongkong flew to Tokyo to participate in the making of Daiei's *Yang-Kwei-fei*. With the turning of the year, popular Hongkong actresses Li Li-hua, Lin Dai, and directors and producers visited Tokyo to find out possibilities of making Chinese or Sino-Japanese joint films in Japan.

A flow of Hongkong moviemakers went to Japan in spring this year to shoot locations with Japanese background.

As Japan appeared to be the most popular place

Patriotic Bengali Songs

(Continued From Page 151)

induced the Netaji to accept it as the song of his Army.

We must not forget the bold stand taken by poet Dwijendralal, a Government servant like Bankim, in his composition of patriotic songs. He loved the country with the same outlook. He rejoiced in her beauty, and felt proud in the glory of her spiritual past.

The poet in one of his well-known songs, admitted that the earth was replete with wealth and crops. But said the poet about our motherland,

"There is one country which is better
than the rest
That is made of dreams and hedged
with memories."

The poet described the physical charms of his motherland.

"Where are the sun, the moon, the
planets and the stars so bright"

Any one from other parts of the world could boast of his country in those terms. The poet however claimed all the beauties for his own country. He then sought to wake us up with memories of Buddha and Asoka, Nimai and Chandidas.

In the strain of Thomson, Dwijendralal, in a popular song, narrated the great events that were predicted when Bharat emerged out of the azure main. It did not end however with the characteristic craving for liberty of the British. Sang Thomson,

"When Britain first at Heaven's command
Arose out of the azure main
This was the charter of the land
And Guardian Angels sang the strain
Rule Britannia rule. Britannia rules the waves
Britons never shall be slaves."

In Bengal every poet wrote inspiring poems to help us in our struggles. Every Indian language has national patriotic songs which inspired patriots and martyrs. It will make a big volume when those songs and poems are all collected. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to these writers, composers and singers.

Film Industry In Asia

for scenic background for Hongkong films, the craze will continue for sometime.

Runde Shaw, is one of the foremost pioneers of Hongkong movie industry. It was in 1937 that this "Samuel Goldwyn" of China established the Nanyang Motion Picture Co., bringing a handpicked cordon of technicians and stars from Shanghai. Runde Shaw represents Hongkong on the 7-Nation Federation of Motion Picture Producers in South-East Asia that has been sponsoring an annual Asia Film fiesta since 1954.

LEADING STARS

Here are some of the stars whose pictures are published elsewhere :

LI LI-HUA, Queen of Mandarin Films, is at the height of her career in her thirties. She has been receiving highest remuneration in the Hongkong stardom. She organized a production of her own and has already made four pictures. She has oft-times won the best actress award in Hongkong by popular polls. Her name made newspaper headlines in Japan when she was given a special award at the First South-East Asia Film Festival held in Tokyo in 1954.

LIN DAI is on her way to the peak of her career, teaming with popular actor-director Yen Chung. The pair has come to establish recognition within the past few years as a sure drawer of box-office success.

LIU EN-CHIA, popular comedian, who has the knack of giving belly-laughs to the spectators, plays the part of an ox in the picture which pulls a cart-load of two Chinese beauties in a scene of his recent picture.

Multi-Purpose Food For The Masses

(Continued From Page 147)

makes a nutritive and palatable food. The nutritive value of this food may be further enhanced by the addition of black gram flour and sesame flour. When given to albino rats at 12% level as a supplement to the poor rice diet, this food results in a growth rate of 15-16 g. per week. Trials with humans have given similar encouraging results. It is estimated that 2 oz. of this food costing about an anna will supply a large portion of the minimum requirement of nutrients sadly lacking in our diets.

This food which has now come to be known as the Indian MPF can be used either as a *dhal* or in other preparations. Its palatability and versatility have been fully demonstrated. A large number of sweets and savouries besides biscuits and other appetizing dishes have been made from them.

PRODUCTION FOR MILLIONS SOON

Thus, the Indian MPF developed by the two Institutes in Bangalore and Mysore offer great promise since they represent high nutritional values in proportion to cost. While they will serve essentially as supplements to the poor Indian dietary, they can also, during times of emergency, supplant the staple food without spelling any deficiency diseases. Further collaborative studies are in progress at the two Institutes and within a short time, the Indian MPF will be produced for the millions who need it. Besides fighting starvation and malnutrition-caused-diseases, the Indian MPF will also play a leading role in preventing scourges like tuberculosis and thus result in measurable gains in national health.

Professor John Yudkin, an eminent nutritionist of London, says, "The production of Multi-Purpose Food from nutritious sources which would otherwise go to waste is a considerable step forward in the problem of dealing with malnutrition. The importance of the achievement is not only that MPF supplies those nutrients commonly lacking in the diets of under-nourished peoples but that it supplies them in a form which can be made into innumerable palatable foods and dishes. This lead given by Indian research workers at the Central Food Technological Research Institute, Mysore, and the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, will undoubtedly be followed by those responsible for eliminating malnutrition in so many other parts of the world. As a nutritionist, I am most impressed by this food which is so acceptable has such good keeping qualities and above all can be produced so economically."

A Meals for Millions Association of India (MMA) was formed in New Delhi on June 3, 1955 with Dr. Panjabrao S. Deshmukh, Union Agricultural Minister, as President, and Lady Dhanvanthi Rama Rau (Bombay), Mrs. Mary Clubwala Jadhav (Madras) and Dr. S. R. Sengupta (Calcutta) as Regional Vice-Presidents. Dedicated to the relief and prevention of malnutrition, this Association will have for its sole activity the popularisation of the Indian Multi-Purpose Food, about which more particulars can be had from the author, care of the Central Food Technological Research Institute, Mysore.

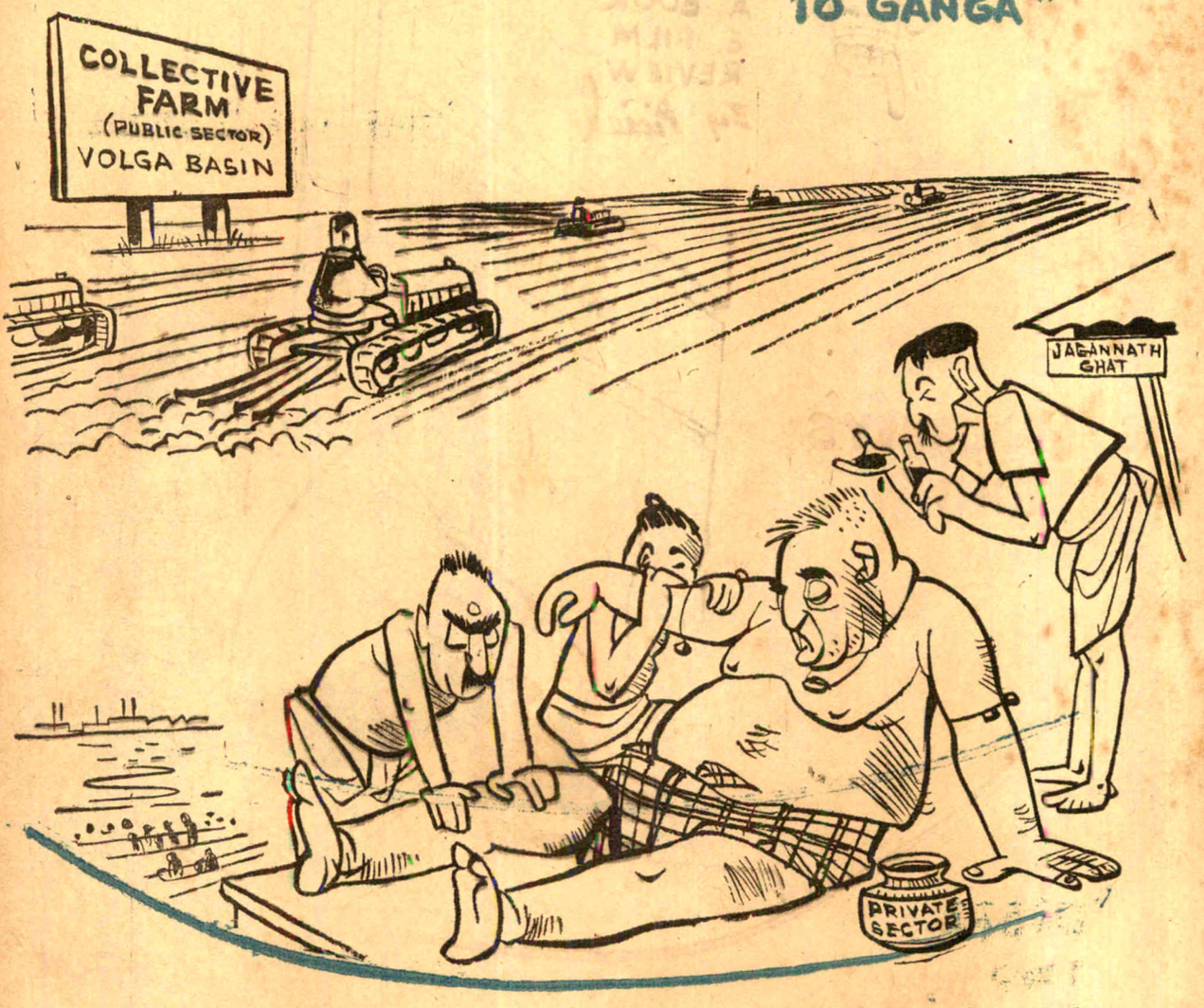
As You Like It !

A BOOK & FILM REVIEW By Picial

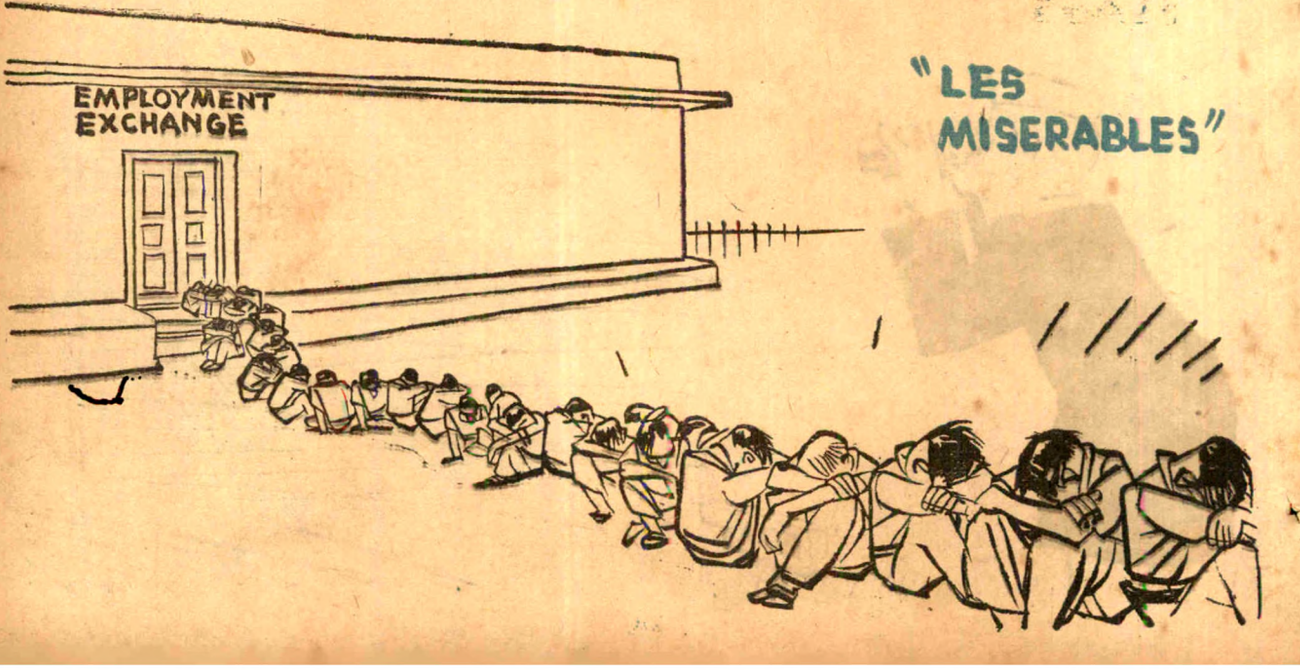
As You Like It...

(By Piciel)

"FROM VOLGA TO GANGA"

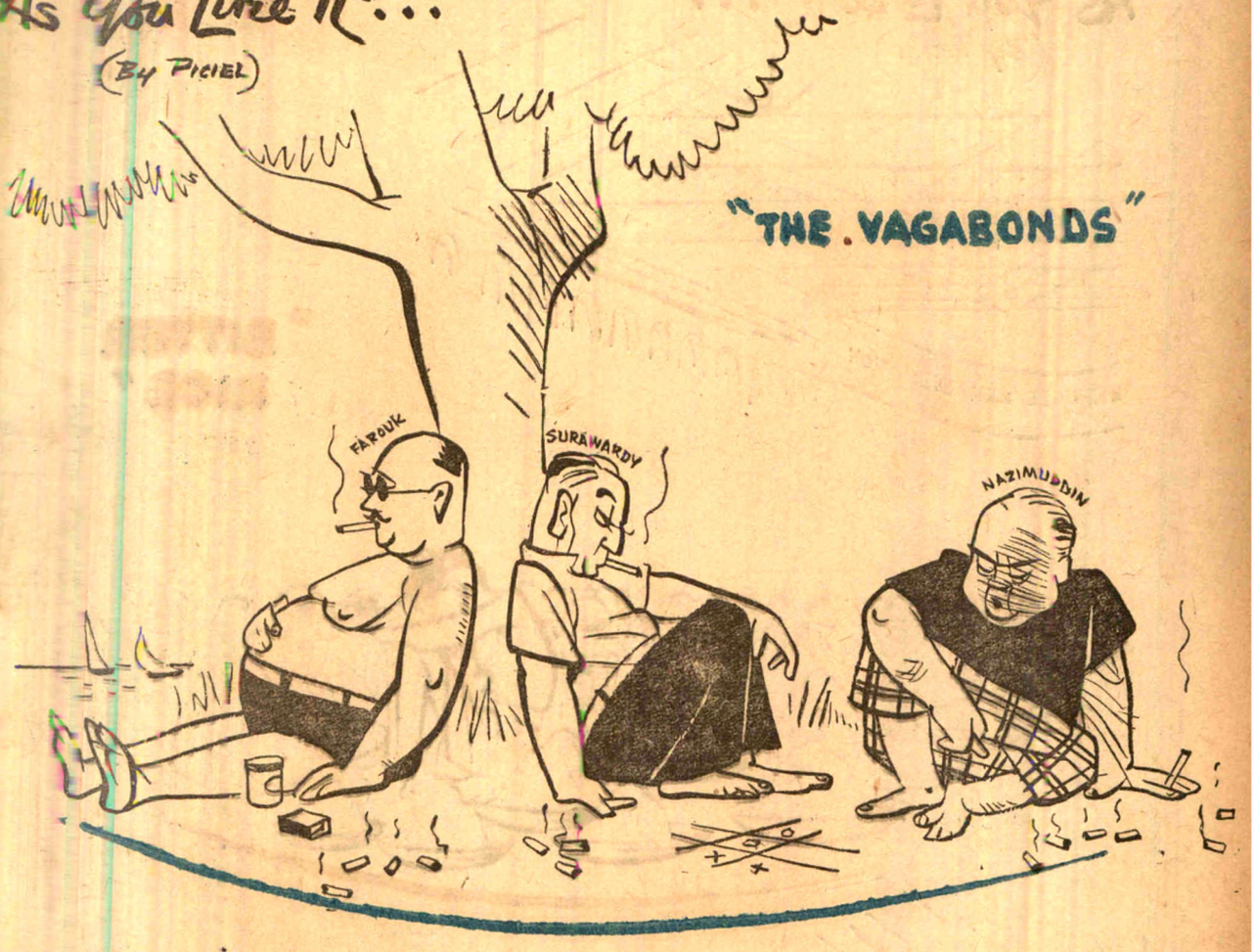


"LES MISERABLES"



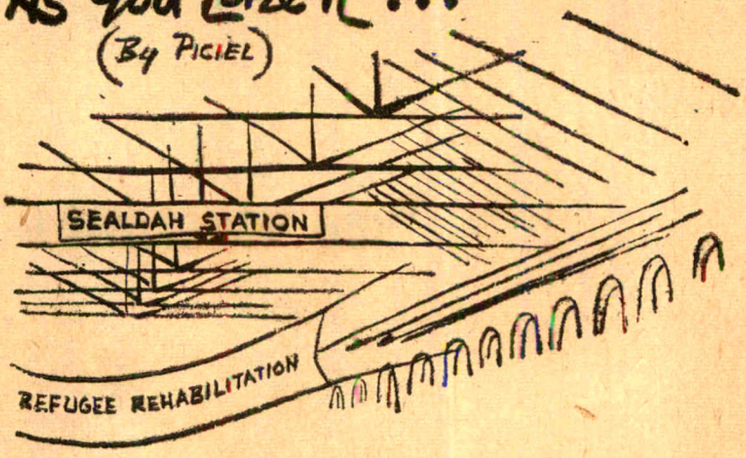
As You Like It...

(By Picuel)

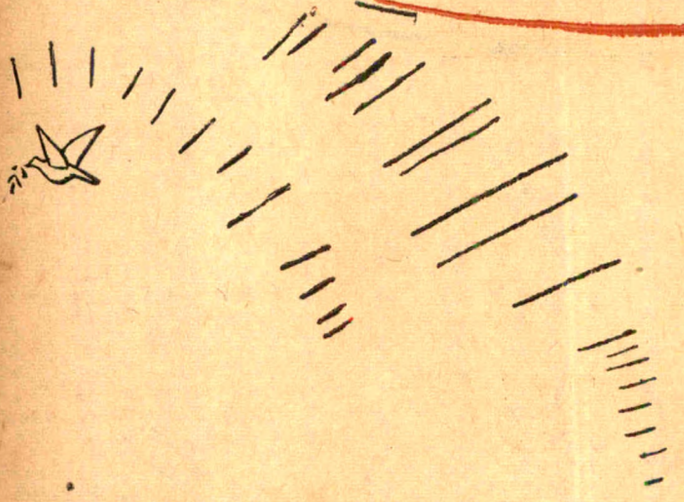


As You Like It...

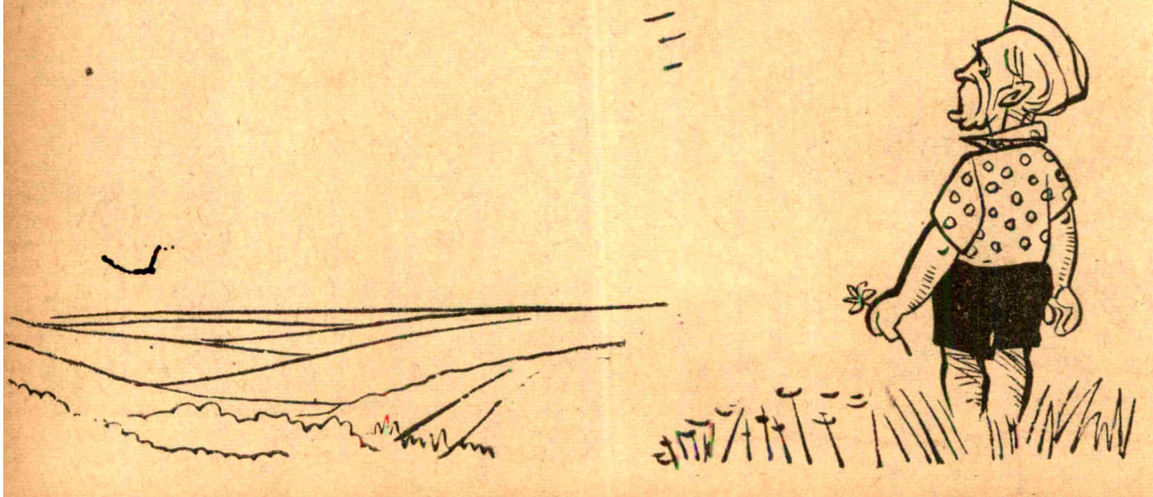
(By Piciel)



"BITTER RICE"



"BLUE BIRD"



PUJA LIGHTS

by M. A. Mazmudar

DEAR old Uncle sat sprawling on the solitary 'gadi', against a big bolster, in our large sitting-room. He was deeply engrossed in his contemplation of the string of coloured bulbs we had hung up over the entrance in honour of the festival. An occasional nod of his round bald head indicated that he was experiencing a feeling of profound pleasure. I sat cross-legged against a wall, trying not to listen to the various after-supper noises the old geezer on the gadi emitted from time to time. Auntie was busy in the kitchen, winding it up for the night. Cousin was upstairs, making our Heath Robinson swing, creak and cry with her weight which was a whale of a lot more than her age warranted. Things were at their sweetest and brightest when all of a sudden the electric lights went off. It was as if an invisible hand had plucked us from the dazzle and pitched us into a murky darkness. I stared into the woolly blackness till my eyes pained. And then knifing through the rayless murk came the frightened shriek of Cousin. I was up on my feet, feeling the wall behind with my hands, straining my eyes harder, seeing sable only.

"That little witch !" ground out Uncle. "Hey ! Do you hear ?"

"You mean me, Uncle ?" I asked, keeping where I was.

"Damn well you, idiot. Who else could it be ?"

"I am sorry, Uncle."

"Sorry be jiggered. Is this the time and the occasion to ask stupid and unnecessary questions ?"

"I only...."

"Shoot up there quick, or that little cuss will breathe her last. Secure the front-door first. You never know what bad characters are about. Light the old kerosene lanterns, and bring one here. Why isn't your fool of an aunt doing something about it at once ? Never met a sillier female in my life. I ought never to have married her. But I was forced to, that's what it was. Well, now what's the matter, hein ? Fuse gone, or the line dead ? What do the power-house loons mean by this ? And they ca'l this a festival ! Are you attending to me, nephew ?"

"Yes, Uncle."

"Well then what the blankety-blank do you mean by not carrying out my orders immediately you gastric ulcer ? Look alive, you pustule !"

"Oh, Ma, I'm no more !" Cousin pealed out from the room upstairs.

"Stop screaming, you little reptile !" Auntie transmitted from the kitchen.

"But I am dying !"

"I wish you were, you enemy of my former birth !"

"I want to come down ! I can't see anything O but it's so dark !"

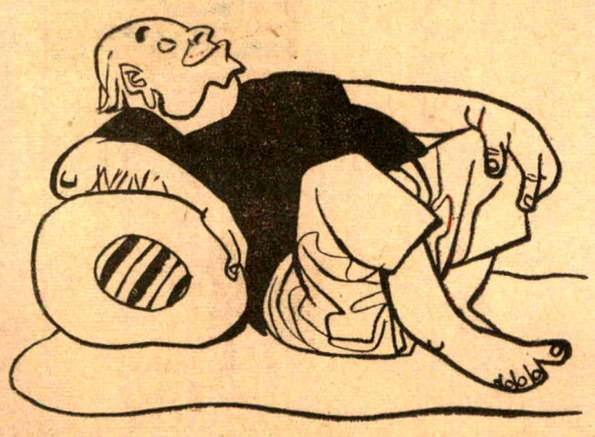
"You just keep your trap shut, you little snake I am coming."

NO NAVIGATOR IN DARK !

I must frankly admit that I have never enjoye much of a reputation as a successful navigator in state of utter lightlessness. I daresay there are me with a certain sixth sense who can nicely trace thei way through quite unrelieved darkness in the manne of cats. But, alas, I am not one of them. My min urged me to obey Uncle and make a bee-line for th stairs; my body urged me to stay rooted where was. I made a shuffling noise.

"You still there ?" rang out the old buster.
"Yes, Uncle," I told him, meekly.
"Why the dash dash dash don't you go ?"
"I'm going, Uncle."

And I made a couple of blundering movement then stood still. Great Ganapati ! I had forgotte the whereabouts of the exit ! I stretched my arm in front of me and slowly pivoted round. Good luc I contacted a wall. Something achieved, what ? grinned happily at the billowy blackness in front o me, and, my left hand pressing along the wall, cre cautiously forward, hoping to find the outlet th way. A corner of Uncle's gadi thrust itself in m way, caught my right foot, and dealt me a viole lurch that made my spine suffer a twinge of e cruciating pain. I went berserk with rage. I a



ministered to the offending corner the fruitiest kick of my life.

"Ooooh !" rose an anguished groan. Obviously, its source was the occupant of the gadi.

"Was it you, Uncle ?" I inquired, greatly taken aback.

"You just let me get at your damned throat !"

"I thought I was getting at that corner of your cushioned seat, Uncle. It came in my way and very nearly broke my spine. I'm very sorry, Uncle."

A voice resembling the noise of a saw working upon the toughest Malabar teak chopped up the darkness. I edged away from it, and was tripped up by the wooden threshold and hurled against the wall of the passage outside the sitting-room. It required unique self-control and effort on my part to steady myself after that murderous impact. When the last star had winked out of my head, I spread out both my arms so as to feel the walls, and charged ahead. It was of vital importance that the front door be secured against shady characters who take a disadvantage of such occasions. Half a minute of full careering, and then I ran full tilt against a body whizzing up from the opposite direction. However, I could contrive to maintain my perpendicular position in spite of the collision. But the body slumped down, and seized my legs.

"Ooooh !" the body moaned most wretchedly.

"That you, Anutie ?" I asked, gravely concerned.

"You addlepated bonehead !" sizzled the dear old relative, after taking a couple of deep breaths.

"I am awfully sorry, dear Auntie," I apologized. "Are you badly injured, dear Auntie ?"

"I'm just alive, you moron."

"Thank God, dear Auntie."

"What made you gallop so fast for the kitchen?"

"I thought I was heading for the front door, dear Auntie. Must be closed at once against nocturnal birds of prey at all hazards. Why haven't you lit our lanterns, dear Auntie ?"

"Oh, Ma !" screeched Cousin, lustily.

"That little coward will kill herself with fear," crackled Auntie. "I must hurry up to her. You'd better fasten the front door and get back to the store-room for the lanterns. They're there in a corner. You'll find the matches somewhere on the shelf beside the kitchen-door. I couldn't locate them in my haste."

"Light !" boomed out Uncle, still on his comfy seat.

"I'll see to it all, dear Auntie," I told Auntie.

"Light, woman !" yelled Uncle.

"Patience, man !" yelled Auntie.

"Talking back, are you ? Just let the lights be on once more and I'll show you your place in this house, you jelly-brained bit of no-good !" stormed Uncle.

"Silence !" shouted Auntie.

"Ma !" shrilled Cousin.

"I'm coming, you gutless weakling !" yapped Auntie.

OPERATION LANTERN

And we stumbled forward, the darkness so solid you could have driven a nail into it with a hammer. I left Auntie at the foot of the stairs, and then branched off towards the front door. I had not moved far when my eyes made out a tall obscurity which moved a couple of feet from me.

"Who's there ?" I demanded, loudly, my heart thudding against my ribs.

No response.

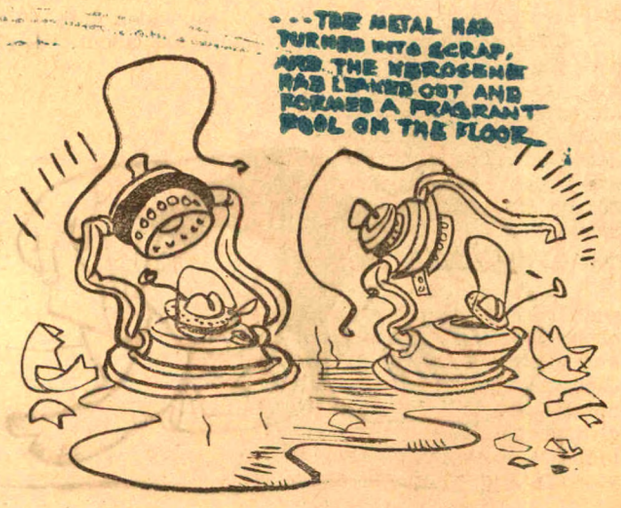
I summoned up all my courage, and let a tightly clenched fist go at what I thought was the head of the silent shape. A terrific bang and I kunckled under, hugging my fist to my pounding heart. The silent shape was not a night rover. It was our dear old front door, and my tightly clenched fist had struck it. The throbbing agony took a good few minutes to subside a little. The edge of the pain gone, I collected myself and barred the door almost scorching it with some white-hot expletives. And then my ears were assailed by cries of an unnaturally expiring animal, crisp knocks, and language raised to ignition point. Mother and daughter had met upstairs on a tide of mutual love.

"Light, you vixen !" thundered Uncle, helpfully.

I groped my way back to the store-room, and made a successful entry. Unfortunately, before I could start my search in it for the lanterns, I happened to step on something soft and warm and creepy, and jumped ceilingward. Obviously, one of the resident mice. But I didn't know the fact at the moment. I jumped high and landed on the broadest part of my anatomy. Incidentally *I located the lanterns.* But I did so with the anatomical territory aforementioned. To be precise, I had dropped plumb on the lanterns. The cursory tactile examination that followed revealed the disconcerting fact that the glass had reverted to its constituent particles, the metalwork had turned into scrap, and the kerosene had leaked out and formed a fragrant pool on the floor.

I had a very strong desire to join Auntie upstairs. I floundered out of the room, and somehow reached the stairs. When I was about half way up, there issued a blood-curdling triple shriek, and a human avalanche bore down on me and swept me down to the bottom of the stairs with it. As I discovered later, Uncle, wildly impatient, had stolen out of his room and up the stairs to give Auntie and Cousin a bit of his mind. Auntie and Cousin, their hands tightly linked, were on the landing, just about to come down. Auntie was naturally horrified to find a man coming up (she's one of the lucky ones who can sense such things in the dark). She had given him a mighty push. Uncle had seized her hand to save himself from hurtling down the stairs, and thus dragged mother and daughter after him. The party had encountered me midway and whirled me down.

We lay at the bottom of the stairs, sighing and groaning. "Oh, God !" we chorussed, and the lights flashed out, revealing to me the slightly comforting spectacle of a badly battered Uncle holding his head in his hands.



MOUSTACHES AND MANHOOD

By Animesh Chandra Roy Chowdhury

SEVERAL years ago, I contributed to the *Amrita Bazar Patrika Puja Number* an article entitled "Grow Beards—Will you ?" This year I am taking up my pen to write in defence not of beards, which are gone almost irrevocably out of sight, but of moustaches which still survive but show signs of steady decline. Moustaches and beards belong to the same fraternity and no wonder that they should share the same fate under the impact of modern blades and civilisation. The 'hairy excrescences of valour,' as Shakespeare would call them growing in close contiguity on the upper and lower lips, and chin and cheeks of man, like bushes springing from a single stalk are threatened with total extinction, and some heroic soul should raise his voice of righteous indignation and protest against the manner in which the whole fraternity are being wiped off today.

Of beards and moustaches, beards were the first to fall victims to the onslaughts of the modern god 'Decency' and now has come the turn of moustaches, which being the last bastion of masculinity must be preserved at any rate. Let me make my point clear beyond cavil or controversy. The time has come, when all of us who call themselves 'men' and want to maintain their masculinity band themselves together with a solemn vow, "Beards or no beards, we want moustaches; them we will not willingly let go."

Of beards and moustaches, moustaches certainly play the more important part in the physiognomy of men, and hence have the greater right to survival. Moreover, moustaches may well be grown without beards, without repugnance to our modern sense of decorum or decency, but beards without moustaches are a horror and an abomination! So if you vote for beards, *ipso facto* you vote for moustaches; but not *vice versa*.

MOUSTACHES TELL

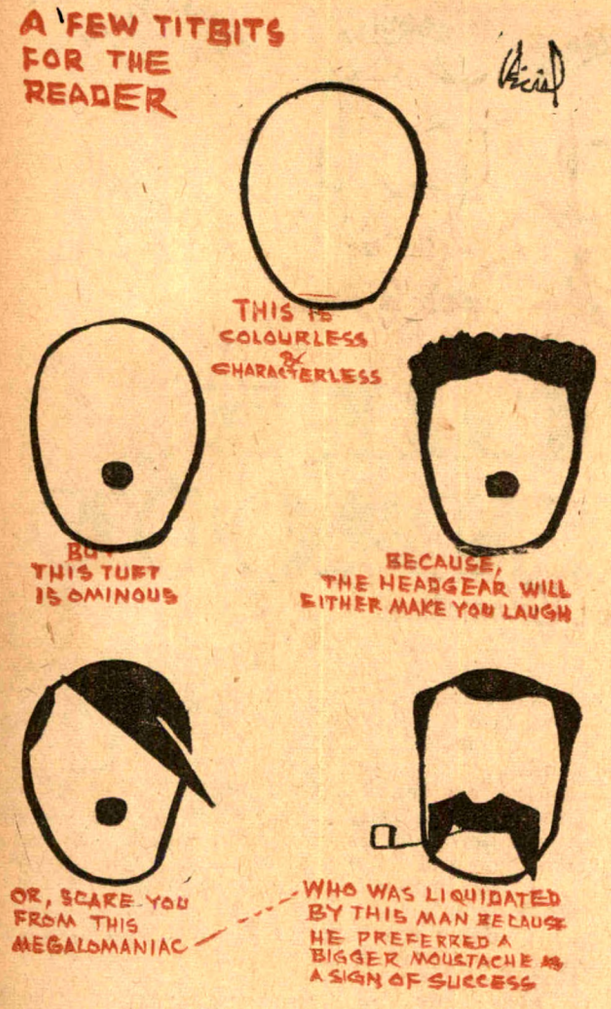
There are more reasons than one why you should cultivate moustaches, even to the exclusion of beards. First, because moustaches are the true and distinctive marks of manhood. Secondly, because they are the marks of character. Mouths speak but moustaches tell. Your mouth may utter untruths and give people false notions about you, but your moustaches can never lie,—they tell your fellow-men what you are and what you aspire to be. The face, they say, is the index of the mind, but nothing in the human face is so expressive and indicative of character as the moustaches. Think of the unmoustached, clean-shaven faces you see in the city streets; how colourless, characterless, bald and inane they appear to be! Even the hairy pates they may carry cannot retrieve that baldness or inanity. But if you come across here and there a moustached face, observe how it looks. The cut or curl, the turn or twirl, the upward or downward bend or curve of the moustaches following the curve of the mouth—everything tells eloquently about the character of the owner.

Moustaches vary with the minds and moods of men, and nothing can give us a better idea of the infinite variety of the human race than the manner in which moustaches are cut and worn, end-clipped or side-shorn, or allowed to grow luxuriantly on the upper lip, without let or hindrance like bushes, gradually encroaching on the spaces beyond. Short moustaches, long moustaches; thin moustaches, thick moustaches; 'pussy' moustaches, bushy moustaches, 'butterfly' moustaches, 'porcupine-quill' moustaches,—all have their value in the moustache market.

CHAPLINIAN WAY

These days some of the artists of the screen and stage are seen affecting a new style of moustache-wearing, a thin line of hair on the upper lip—so thin as to be almost invisible, as a bare apology for a moustache. They have brought about a hirsute revolution among younsters, who are crazy to follow their fashion. But even these "neo-film-star" moustaches have their value, for a thin line of hair is better than no hair on the upper lip and may serve as the thin end of the wedge in saving masculinity.

Chaplin, the greatest comedian of the world, set the fashion for another type of end-clipped moustaches, just a little tuft of hair in the middle of the upper lip beneath the nostrils which suited his clownish part very well, but when it came to be copied by one of the most powerful dictators in Europe, brought about the greatest tragedy on earth. Who could have suspected that moustaches that looked so funny and innocuous on the lip of Chaplin the jester, would appear so dangerously destructive on that of



Hitler, the Dictator. (When the true history of Germany is written, some future historian will undoubtedly trace the causes of Germany's downfall and Hitler's own to his too short, side-shorn moustaches!) All the veteran soldiers and Generals of Germany in pre-Hitlerite days used to wear long and picturesque moustaches. Think of the world-defying moustaches of Kaiser Wilhelm and Von Hindenburg which struck the very keynote of the character of the men who wore them.

THE SIKHS

In the long galaxy of moustached military faces in Europe, some striking ones were those of Lord Kitchener, and Lord Roberts, Sir John French and Marshal Joffre. In old days, it was the fashion for every soldier to wear a moustache and that is why, in English slang, an "old moustache" means an old soldier. But in these days of air raids and atom bombs, when personal prowess or military skill is of little avail, moustaches amongst soldiers are thinning and languishing day by day or fast disappearing and falling out of vogue. But for the Sikh veterans who consider the keeping of the hairy growth on their faces as one of the most sacred duties enjoined upon them by their great Guru, the Indian army would be but a poor spectacle having nothing to show in the way of picturesque moustaches and beards.

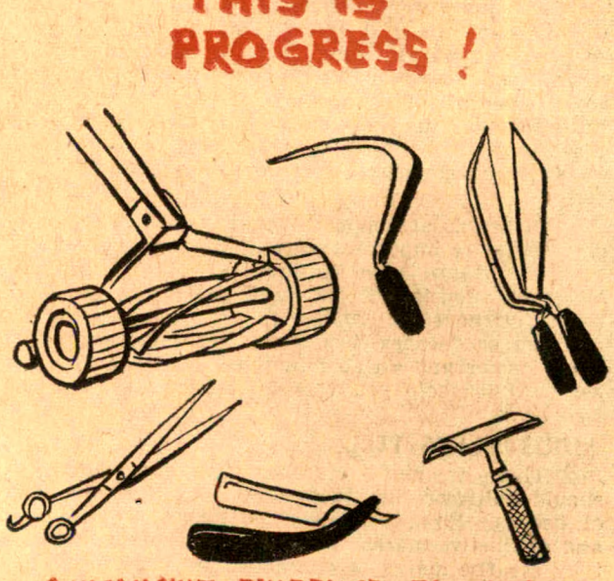
Among the greatest Generals of history, Napoleon appears without a moustache, and I wonder if it could not be said of him with greater truth that he lost the battle of Waterloo in a barber's saloon or a ladies' boudoir than that he lost it on the cricket fields of Eton. In the case of Julius Caesar, perhaps a pair of picturesque moustaches worn by him would have inspired more confidence in the minds of his subjects and saved him from the hands of assassins.

Bald pates and bushy moustaches go ill together. Perhaps that is why modern politicians most of whom think and worry themselves into premature baldness, are, willy-nilly, compelled to shave off their moustaches. Churchill because of his baldness had to bid good bye to his moustaches long ago, but why should Anthony Eden with beautiful locks of hair on his head follow his master's example in the matter of moustache keeping, though he follows his principles to the hilt? Eden and Bulganin both wear their moustaches with a grace that lends dignity to their statesmanly deportments. Is it not striking that Stalin with his picturesque pair of moustaches ruled Russia for quite a long time, which Malenkov without one could never do?

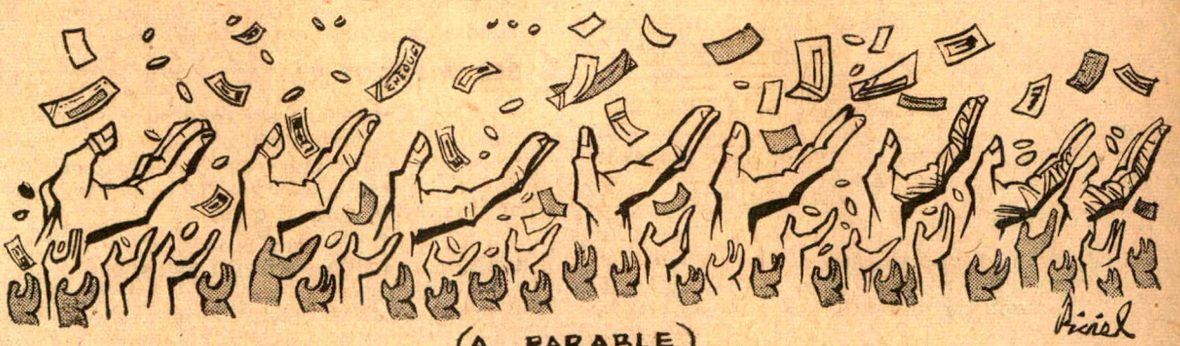
"ROYAL BENGAL TIGER"

There is no doubt about the fact that a man's personality is accentuated by a pair of prominent moustaches. Let me give one or two examples from our own country and province. Think of the late Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee whose bushy moustaches, coupled with his massive intellect, justified the title by which he is usually known—"the Royal Bengal Tiger." Think again of the veteran West Bengal Minister, who is most conspicuous among his colleagues because of his moustaches and saves the Assembly House from the dull, drab uniformity of clean-shaven faces.

All this leads me to the irresistible conclusion that it is the moustaches, and not the 'apparel' that 'oft proclaim the man.' Or I may go even further to remark that it is not manners but moustaches that maketh man, for your manners may be counterfeit, but your moustaches are genuine, unless it be that in attempting to disguise yourself or personate some one else for some purpose, you wear a pair of false moustaches that fall off at a touch, exposing yourself to all the gibes and taunts of by-standers! Grow moustaches of your own as long and thick as you can, but beware of wearing false moustaches!



WELFARE ESTATE



(A PARABLE)

By Krishnalal Shridharani

TIPU wanted to be like his gypsy Guru; free to travel; unbound to reach the sky; unfettered to become great.

The Guru would shake his head knowingly and sadly at Tipu's ambition : "My son, greatness is a bondage."

"I want to be big like you !" Tipu would beat his chest like Tarzan. "How people applaud the big !" Tipu would glow like a glow-worm.

"The applause is the sponge," the Guru would say. But Tipu emulated the wandering monk in spite of the gypsy's own advice.

As Tipu grew to manhood, prospective 'in-laws began to trip each other. They offered wealth. Sometimes Tipu would see a beautiful girl and his heart would be torn. But only for a moment. He knew that the path to greatness was too narrow for two, a lonesome trail.

Often Tipu saw his brothers playing in the lily pond with their attractive wives. For a moment he would think of marriage! At other times he found his brothers playing with their children in the park. And his heart ached. But only for a moment. His brothers and their wives were so happy, new babies kept on coming as regularly as bank calendars. A new face gave Tipu a new pang ! But only for a moment. He denied himself a wife and children because all his time was consumed by the pursuit of greatness.

"Come along, Tipu," his brothers and their wives and their boisterous children would say as they prepared for a picnic They knew how he would answer (I must finish my novel : It is time for my tuition : I have an appointment with the Anarchist : The Mayor is coming to see my paintings). So they would not wait for his apology.

By working day and night, by saving every penny, Tipu amassed fame and fortune early in youth. People whispered there-goes-Tipu when he went to the bazaar. The palace gates were open to him. Political leaders sought his advice. The University honoured him. His dinner table was always studded with visiting celebrities, and his garages were full of the latest models.

"Perhaps it is time I started on a world tour," thought Tipu as he woke up one morning. "I have more money than I can spend. And several foreign universities are eager to give the honorary degrees."

BROTHERS' UNION

By the time he had finished his *papita*, poached egg on *idali* and two cups of steaming coffee, his mind was made up. The secretary was called in to instructed to make all the necessary arrangemen and to send out a press release.

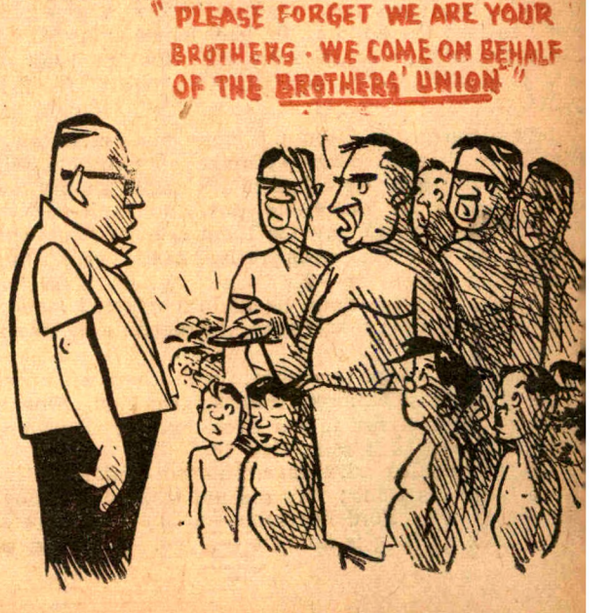
A week of fervent activities unfolded itself. The were Kashmir shawls that pass through an engag ment ring to be bought for the last remaining Kir There was an ivory fountain pen to be procured f the President of the United States of America wi which he wanted to sign the Peace Treaty officia ending the 8th World War. There were farew dinners. And there was the task of obtaining enou foreign exchange. Tipu was deep in it.

On the eve of his departure, Tipu's brothers ca in a delegation. The first thing they made cle was:—

"Please forget we are your brothers. Please for we are A, B. C, etc., approaching you for selfish en We have come on behalf of the Brothers' Union."

Tipu was quick to realize the entire impersonal of their approach. Tipu was quicker to realize t ethical impression that unions produce on pub opinion, because selfish axes being personal, unio cannot grind them. Tipu was duly impressed.

Finding him softened, one of his numerous b thers who had sired numerous children said to Tip



"Now look here, Tipu! How can you think of going on a world tour, throwing away your money on enjoying yourself, when we are starving? You have no wife, no children, and no responsibilities. You are free like a bird. But we have wives and dozens of children each one of us—a baker's dozens at that! They have no milk to drink, no money to buy textbooks. Our father's name is in mud because our children haven't anything decent to wear. We cannot make both ends meet because there are too many ends to tie. Now, aren't you ashamed of yourself? Don't you see your duty?"

By this time Tipu was ashamed and he had seen his duty. He decided to help his numerous brothers with their more numerous children even if it meant a postponement of his world tour.

GOD'S PLEASURE

He slipped a cheque in each brother's hand but with it he slipped a book on birth control by Usha Bhanot. The brothers accepted the cheques gladly,

but returned the books indignantly, saying: "Who are we to interfere with God's pleasure? Tipu was taken aback, and he felt guilty at his barrenness.

Months rolled by when Tipu realized with a wrench in his heart that his world tour was far from materializing. He felt like the Australian bushman who got a new boomerang and kept trying to throw the old one away. He worked harder and earned more to feed the children he had denied himself. But he could not keep up with the children that his sisters-in-law kept on bringing as a tribute to God's pleasure.

Tipu burnt the midnight lamp and produced a Five-Year Plan in order to make his brothers self-sufficient in food. He called in his numerous brothers with their more numerous sons, and explained the scheme. He was to buy for them a huge farm that should be run on co-operative basis, with Ford-Ferguson tractors and all. Tipu wanted to be free once more of obligations he hadn't incurred, and to sally forth on the narrow path of greatness, as free as a bird.

After few weeks, the numerous brothers with their more numerous children returned to Tipu. One of them, with holy fire in his eyes, exclaimed without any preface: "Is it fair, Tipu?"

Perceiving his advantage, this particular brother drove home his point: "We are not trained to plough the fields with Ford-Ferguson tractors. You are so clever that nothing is difficult for you. Is it fair, we ask?" This particular brother was vibrant with righteous indignation. "Must we plough the co-operative farm that you have set up, when you can do it in a twinkling of your eye!"

Tipu was humbled by his own realization of his self-selfishness. From the very next day he began to rise earlier to take out the Ford-Ferguson tractor to plough the Malabar Co-operative Farm that would make his numerous brothers and their more numerous children self-sufficient in food.

SERVANTS OF RAMA

The monsoon broke and soon the fields were green and lush through what the numerous brothers considered God's grace and the sweat of their brows. But there was a scourge. The monkeys were eating away swaying ears of corn.

All the brothers once more came to Tipu, not as individuals seeking personal gains, but as representatives of the Brothers' Union. 'What for all our efforts, if monkeys eat away what we grow?" a brother asked Tipu indignantly. They all knew that righteous indignation was what Tipu always deserved.

"Why don't you kill the monkeys to save the crops?" inquired Tipu innocently.

Wasn't it the last but one straw? "Kill sacred monkeys?" asked the same particular brother incredulously. "Are you out of your mind, brother Tipu? Kill the descendants of Hanumana who served Rama?" The effect was complete as no more words were necessary. "But if you have any scheme of killing the monkeys, brother Tipu, please do not make us partners in the cardinal sin by so much as an intimation of your diabolical design."

Tipu could not utter another sinful syllable. From next morning he began to get up earlier, at 4-00 a.m. At those wee hours, when his numerous brothers with their more numerous children would be fast asleep, and would not know what surreptitious things he was doing, Tipu would go to the fields and kill the monkeys that destroyed the crop. For Tipu knew that the only thing that stood between himself and the world tour were the responsibilities that he shunned and that his brothers never neglected to multiply.

Believing that their co-operative farm was *being fabulously in view* of the divine disappearance of the scare of monkeys, the numerous brothers with their more numerous children approached Tipu once more to say through one of their union ranks:—

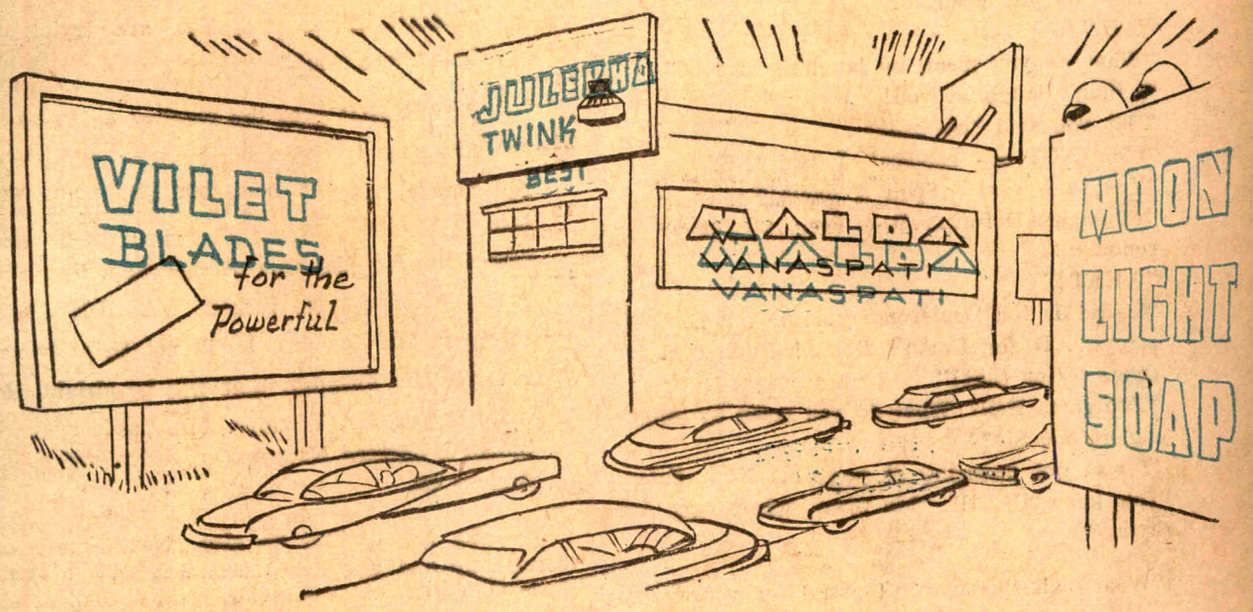
"Why are you so tight, brother Tipu? We are planning to earn so much more than you ever earned in your life. Why not lend us from what you have already earned to swell what we are planning to earn? I am thinking of your own unborn children rather than of our born children. In union there is strength. You must listen to organized reason. Besides, a mansion sits uneasy in a slum. Wars start that way. You should enrich others to save your riches. In your own interest you should give."

Tipu wrote out another cheque. This was not the first time he had been called a miser. He did not do much entertaining because he had to give money to his brothers. On the other hand, his brothers were reputed to be generous because they were free with money, knowing there was more where it came from.

"GIVE US SOAPS"

The rains were just right. There was neither a dry famine nor a green famine. In the Malabar Co-operative Farm there was a bumper crop. Tipu's brothers and their ever-increasing number of children had a huge feast to celebrate the victory of their

(Continued On Page 176)



IT'S ALL IN THE NAME

By Dude

SOMEBODY said somewhere: *"What's in a Name?"* And then to make it sound sillier added: "That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet." Perhaps. But I am not a rose. and I have no desire to smell. But I do wish I had another. No, not smell. Name. I wish I had another name.

Why is it that a man has no say in the one thing which he has to carry with him right through his life,—if not thereafter? I mean his name. And still worse, his surname. Why must I have to bear the burden of the shortest name in town, any town? Aye, "bear the burden" is right. Listen.

Senor Don Juan Iturriberrigorrigoicoerotaberrico Oec Haa. Read that. It is no good wincing. Read that, I say.

(Printer fella-me-lad and friend-of-my-youth, I could not help it. It is all in the day's show. Live and let live. Let by-gones be bygones. Anyway, if I could knock it off without straining a ganglion, surely you can get it off the lino or whatever you play with without breaking the thing. Have a heart!)

That was the man whom Ripley met in Buenos Ayres when travelling in the Argentina. Believe Ripley or not. And Pa Maung, in his "Glass Palace Chronicle of the Kings of Burma," mentions the name of,——now, don't duck,——King Siritaribhavanadityapauranditasudhammarajamah Adbipatinarapatisithu. Again, Ripley speaking, not I. I have checked it up.

Jaidev of Gitagovinda fame used to subscribe himself as "Sripadmavaticharana charana chakravarti." In recent times, there was a man in Orissa with the modest cognomen of "Srinandanandanharichandanbhramarabar Ray." You think that a handicap? Particularly in calls on the telephone? You are wrong. It is a godsend.

You don't believe me. Well, listen to this saga. It happened at Delhi. It can happen anywhere. For I am still carrying the same old tin can tied to the tail, "DE." I ring a man up. He is "not in his seat," but.....

"Who is speaking?"
"De."
"Name, I asked your name. What's your name?"
"De."
"Beg your pardon, but can't you tell me your name?"
"De."
"What do you mean by 'he'gh'?"

"Not 'heigh'. De, pronounced Day."
"Ray?"

"No. De."
"How do you spell it?"
"D-E."
"What do you mean by laughing at me?"
"I didn't laugh at you!"
"But you said "hee-hee!"
"I did NOT say hee-hee! I said D-E."
"You said what? Spell it again!"
"All right. D for....D....for....D for Deuteronomy...."
"WHAT?"
"I said D for Deuteronomy....D for Dneiperstroy....D for Damn! Damn! Damn! D for Damn! Got that?"
"You go to Hell! What do you mean by swearing at me, Sir?"
"I was not swearing at you.....Now listen. You know DELHI, this town where we are living?"

"What's all this now? I asked for your name and you give me the name of the town!"
"I am not giving you the name of the town. I am trying to give you my name."
"WHAT! You want me to believe that your name is DELHI?"

"No, no. The first letter of Delhi,——D."
"I see. Why couldn't you say that before? And then what?"
"E."

"What do you mean by 'Ji'? Go on, spell the rest of your name!"
"I didn't say 'Ji'. I said E. E for....E for E for what? E for....let me see, E for Erysepelus. You know Erysepelus?"
"No, I don't know him. What has *he* got to do with your name?"
"Now look. You know Ettawah, town in U.P., don't you?"

"Again you are bringing in towns. Well, alright. I know Ettawah. Are you suggesting that the first letter of Ettawah is...."
"....the second letter of my name. Exactly. You have got it now."
"But that makes only D E. Go on, give me the rest."

"There is no 'rest.' That's my name."
"What do you mean? D E. D E. How can a man be just D E?"
"But I *am* DE. I can't help it but I am, Just DE, *bus*!"

"Did you say Dewas, or De Vyas?"
"No, no, not Dewas. Not De Vyas. Just DE."
"But it can't be!"
"It is."

"I don't believe you. You are trying to be funny, are you?"

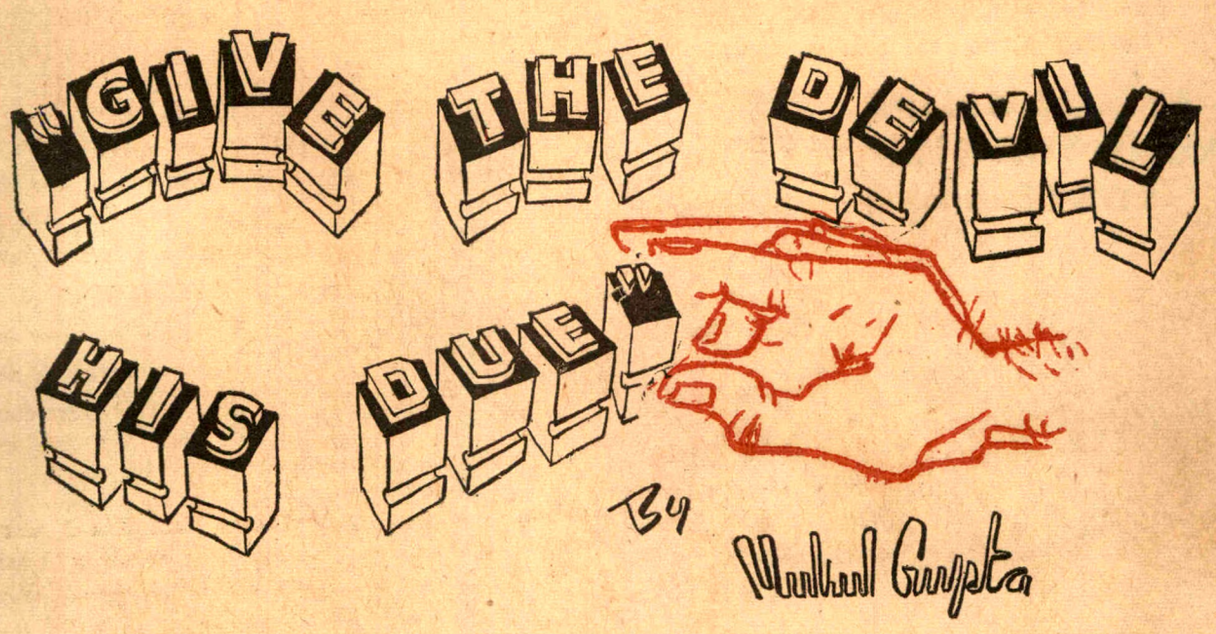
And BANG! goes the receiver on the hook.

And then I tried another tack. Better give the full handle instead of the surname only. So, the next time I gave my name as Asu De. And for fifteen minutes the man carried on a lively conversation with someone named "VASUDEV." "I am so sorry, Mr. Vasudev, I will not be at home then ....No, Mr. Vasudev, that will be alright. I shall write to you, Mr. Vasudev. Mr. Vasudev, Secretary, Indian & Eastern Newspaper Society, will that do?" And so on.

So, I gave that up also. Next time I rang a man up and was asked who was speaking, I said: "This is Lalchand Salimulla Aiyar speaking." When I went to Bombay, I added "Jijibhoy" to the front and "Tuntunwallah" to the rear. Jijibhoy Lalchand Salimullah Aiyar Tuntunwallah. And the clerk or servant would call my friend to the phone.

If, therefore, anybody in this town rings this number up and hears that it is Charuchandra Lalchand Salimullah Aiyar Mukherjee speaking, it will only be me, De. I believe that will go down with lesser trouble than the truth. "*What's in a name*," indeed.

IF YOU WANT TO KILL A STAMMERER, THEN TAKE HIM TO THE ZOO



THE Advertisement Manager was the least prepared for it ! Mr. Advertiser was obviously irate and annoyed beyond measure. The daily should not have treated so carelessly and frivolously his announcement in the Personal column which had such a meaningful significance for him and his dear wife. This was their first *wedding* anniversary. It should not have come out as the *welding* anniversary.

The Advertisement Manager was a resourceful man. He had perhaps been in such hot water before. "We regret the printer's devil," he pleaded, "but don't you agree the error has made your announcement all the more meaningful ? Hadn't you really been *welded* together — you and your sweet wife — on this date a year back ?"

Mr. Advertiser saw the subtleness of the explanation. Yes, what the Advertisement Manager said was true, very true indeed. He shed his anger before he left, happy in the novelty which the error had done.

The printer's devil creates many amusing situations. And here is a random harvest collected from the journalistic gardens all over the world.

"ACTING" HEAD OR "ACHING" HEAD

The *Daily Mail* had to announce the appointment of the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Leeds University. The hyphen just changed its position and Professor Richardson found himself associated with vice : "New Pro-vice Chancellor of the Leeds University is Professor J. H. Richardson."

No better was the position of another professor — Professor Price— when the *Mexico City College Catalogue* announced his *acting* appointment as : "Professor J. K. de Price, B.A., M.A., has been appointed as Assistant Professor and *Aching* Head of the Department of Education."

These are not the only instances when the printer's devil did an unmerited mischief. Look at the discomfiture of the leading provision merchant of Detroit who was out to advertise his stuff, promising more meat and less bone, but found the advertisement next morning reading : "Here is the world's tenderest fresh beef. It is cut to give you more *meat-less* bone."

Modern Motoring and Travel, a journal of considerable repute, let down an inventor when he sought to invite, through the medium of its pages, the attention of the people to his cooking gadget which did not create any fume or bad odour trouble. The advertisement read : "Mr. Harding has invented a new kind of cooker which cooks perfectly, economically and *omits* no odour." Just an *o* for an *e* made all the mischief.

One must have pity for the young girl who badly needed a household job in which she claimed herself to be able to *do well* but whose advertisement in the 'Situation Wanted Column' read : "Wanted position by young woman, *to hell* with household work." Obviously, she did not expect any enquiry after it.

The Advertiser who wanted some one to do general *house-work*, must have been shocked to see the text of his advertisement coming out as : "Wanted : Woman to cook and do general *horse-*

work." No woman would surely volunteer for such hard job.

"MAILED FISH"

The Trade Union leaders of Brighton must have felt very damped to read next morning the report of their vigorous performance at the Trade Union Conference at Brighton. The TUC was prepared to be in friendship with all but it would never welcome a *mailed fist.* No wonder that the leaders were profoundly annoyed to see the morning paper having converted the ~~fist into~~ fish : "To the people of all countries, we offer the hand of friendship. But if the Governments extend a mailed *fish,* what then ?"

The *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* did a disservice to the cause of the local Labour by omitting the "Sun" from Sunday. The Bulletin reported : "The Union is seeking a ten per cent increase plus improved benefits and double time for *any day* in which the workers work."

The house-owner of Pennsylvania, who expected to let out accommodation on attractive terms, was frustrated when he found that his advertisement about 'ever-falling' showers read something else in the *Sun* :

"Excellent country home, ten rooms, bath and *ever-failing* showers."

Decent housewives of Michigan, who were interested in learning new *hobbies,* naturally fought shy of taking advantage of the offer of the organisation which announced : "All women who are interested in crafts, sewing and new *hubbies* are requested to come to Armoury Wednesday morning.

Mrs. Hope of Cincinnati must have been rudely shocked to see her *rare* appearance being so frivolously reported : "Mrs. Hope made one of her *bare* public appearances when she presented the cup to the winner of the race."

No less perhaps would have been the embarrassment of Mrs. Winston Churchill if she had seen the *Malay Sunday Tribune* reporting her as : "Mrs. Winston Churchill told members of the YWCA Committee in Liverpool : Ninety per cent of the *mistresses* on YWCA hostel beds are not fit to sleep on." *Mattresses* are indeed a far cry from *mistresses.*

Rear-Admiral H. H. Good of USA was, really surprised to see an announcement in the *Washington Union Bulletin* saying: "Rear-Admiral H. H. Good will direct the *Alarmed* Forces Day Celebration for the State of Washington !" There was no cause for alarm in any case.

MINISTER OF 'EVIL' SUPPLIES

Two Ministers in India had certainly reasons to be offended with the Press. One of them — the Minister of *Health and Welfare* — found himself described as the Minister of *Health and Hellfare.*

The other — the Minister of *Civil Supplies* — had even the worse of it. He was described as the Minister of *Evil* Supplies.

But worse still was the description of the *Ministry of Housing* and Local Self-Government in the *Wolverhampton Express and Star*. It read : "About four acres of land would be provided for industrial development in slum clearance areas covering over six acres, a Wolverhampton Corporation solicitor told a public enquiry today. A compulsory purchase order made by the Council was the subject of the enquiry conducted by Mr. S. G. Bullstrode, an inspector for the *Ministry of Mousing* and Local Self-Government."

If the printer's devil causes amusing situations unwittingly, so do the texts of well-meaning advertisements by reason either of wrong punctuation or inappropriate placing of words. Take, for instance, the following from the *Chicago Daily Tribune* which reported as if Churchill was a cannibal : "Before the lunch Churchill conferred privately with Dulles. This conference had been set for yesterday afternoon but was put over because the 79-year-old Churchill took a long nap after a prolonged luncheon which included more than two dozen Congressional leaders."

MAGISTRATES CAUGHT DRINKING ?

The Magistrates of Liverpool had the charge of drunkenness put on their shoulders by being mentioned at the wrong place in the report of the *Liverpool Echo*. "Licensees in the Prestatyn Division," said the report "were congratulated on the fact that there had been only one case of drunkenness by the magistrates at the annual licensing meeting today." It was not the magistrates who were caught drinking; they were there to congratulate the licensees.

If one reads the following news item in the *Manchester Guardian*, one would naturally feel shaky about the future of Malta. Some friend of Mr. Mintoff of Malta was reported to have said that he had come to London for a ten-day long conference on the future of Malta. But the *Guardian* reported: "When I last met Mr. Mintoff, then the Leader of Opposition, it was in his home in Malta which is a rare thing on the island — a piece of modern architecture in a highly traditional setting. Now he is in London for the talks on Malta's *future which may last ten days*".

OMISSION THAT CAUSES FUN

Errors of omission are often as funny as errors of commission. If the printer's devil and misplacement of words produce amusing effect, so does the unintentional omission of certain words. Prime Minister Eden spoke on the recovery of Britain and in reporting him the *Northern Daily Telegraph* just missed to put in four words — "saying that Britain was" — and the result was :

"Despite rain, about 2,000 people heard the Prime Minister, who stood on a flag-draped lorry in the market square, with Lady Eden behind him .... producing, building, selling, earning, buying, saving and exporting more than she has ever done before."

Apart from printer's devil and ill-placement of words, not a little fun owes itself to what is called 'adjacent advertisements' or adjacent "news items". Apparently, one has got no connection with another, but slipping from one to the other makes an amusing reading. Take these two adjacent news items in the *Evening Standard* :

"132 pairs of nylons are to be bought for Essex policewomen. 50 pairs of handcuffs have been ordered for the police in Essex." Or, what effect do these adjacent advertisements in the *Irish Independent* make !

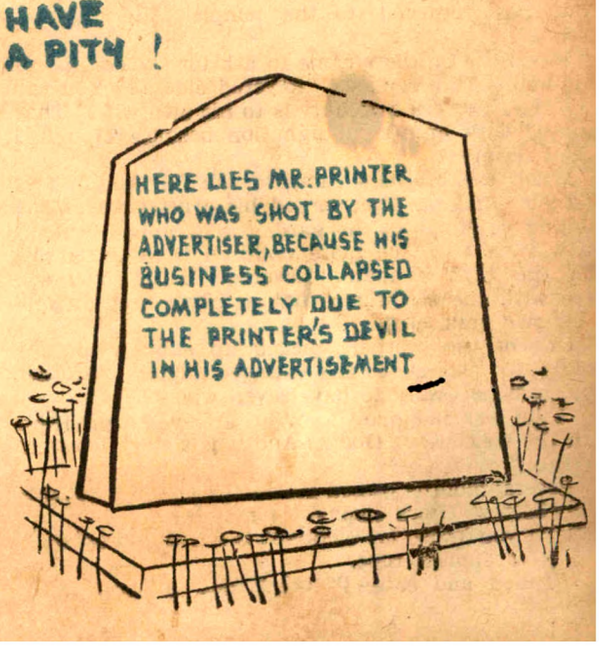
SPECIAL NOTICES

"Some like Sherry dark or pale.
But always give me Perry's Ale"

'Capital Idea'
Drink Dortmund Lager
Capital Bottling Co., Ltd.
Phone 78504 and 40444

Hydrochloric Acid
1 ton of 36 degree commercial hydrochloric acid for sale. Best offer. Box 37999

Does it not suggest that for a good drink, choose Perry's Ale, Dortmund Lager or Hydrochloric Acid, whichever you like ?



WELFARE ESTATE

(Continued From Page 170)

labours. Neighbours were invited, "and a good time was had by all," commented the local daily.

At last Tipu felt that he was free to start on his world tour. After packing, he came to say good-bye to his Guru. But when he returned home to pick up his luggage, his brothers were waiting on a deputation.

One of them spoke up : "Tipu, we do not know the merchants in the bazaar. Some time they keep us waiting for minutes. But all of them know you and respect you and all doors are open to you. It is so easy for you to sell the grain in our behalf."

To the town instead of the railway station Tipu went, and sold the grain. When he went to his brothers with the money that would make them self-sufficient, Tipu saw that several children suffered from ringworm. When Tipu said that cleanliness was next to godliness, his brothers protested :

"Have we any soap ? Have we any nurses ? You are so strong and healthy, and you are afraid of contagion. We are fearless. If you are afraid of the contagion, then you should send soap and nurses."

After sending soap and nurses to his brothers, Tipu went to his idol, the Gypsy, and cried out : "It seems my world tour will never start. There never seems to be any time for it, nor enough money I denied myself a wife and children. I never kept even a cocker spaniel", his eyes were moist. "I worked hard and won fame and fortune. I feel rooted as the yonder tree while I wanted to be a bird."

The Guru listened to the lament in silence, without so much as batting his eyes. Then he said : "Greatness is the ground that binds, I had warned you. The applause is the sponge. People praise you so that you would think for them and work for them."

"I know, I know," Tipu was in anguish. "But what is the remedy ? I am not happy here."

"To be happy is to be like them. They will bind you if you be yourself. It is the turtle's callus that helters his tenderness."

MAN'S FIRST DUTY !

All the way home Tipu pondered over what the Guru had said. On a sudden impulse, he sent messengers in all directions. "Tipu wants a bride ! Tipu wants a bride !" buzzed all the homes with marriageable daughters. He selected seven beauties, because his brothers had a head-start. He stopped killing monkeys in his brothers' collective farm and devoted most of his time to playing in the lily pond with his seven wives. The bazaars were buzzing : "Tipu has returned to the temple. He eschews violence."

When the brothers came to ask for ornaments for their wives, Tipu replied : "Revered elders ! You will agree that a man's first duty is to his own wife." They returned with unspent indignation because Tipu had quoted scriptures.

When the brothers came to ask for tuition fees for their children, Tipu spread his arms towards the toddling yearlings in the garden and replied : "Soon you will see with me more children than Anna saw with the King of Siam. Revered elders ! You will agree with the scriptures that a man's first duty is his own children."

One of the brothers picked up enough courage timidly to suggest to the changed Tipu : "Brother Tipu, is it necessary to have seven wives ?

Tipu was indignant : "Who are we to interfere with the pleasure of God ? And it is a duty I owe to the race."

Several months passed before the brothers returned to borrow Tipu's elephant for a day.

"Don't you know, my elephant is killed and eaten ?" Tipu gave enough rope.

"Killed and eaten !" cried out a brother in amazement. "But now you practise non-violence !"

"My elephant is killed because I practise non-violence," Tipu said enigmatically. Then he narrated the incident. It transpired that the King was to give a huge feast to his brother-princes for which he had ordered a hundred partridges. When Tipu heard of this, his soul rebelled at the thought of a hundred lives to be lost. So he requested the King to effect an economy in violence by serving elephant steaks, instead, and gifted away his own white elephant. The sin of killing the elephant was King's, but the merit of saving 99 lives was Tipu's. So the brothers' children had to do without their annual elephant ride.

Presently, Tipu requested the King to grant him a plot of land on the Jubilee Hill on which he planned to build a temple to God. The King demurred saying that the Jubilee Hill was like a city of temples already, and that there were more temples than worshippers, and that a school building was what was really needed. To this, Tipu put a poser : "What do you place first ? God or education ?" The King had to give in.

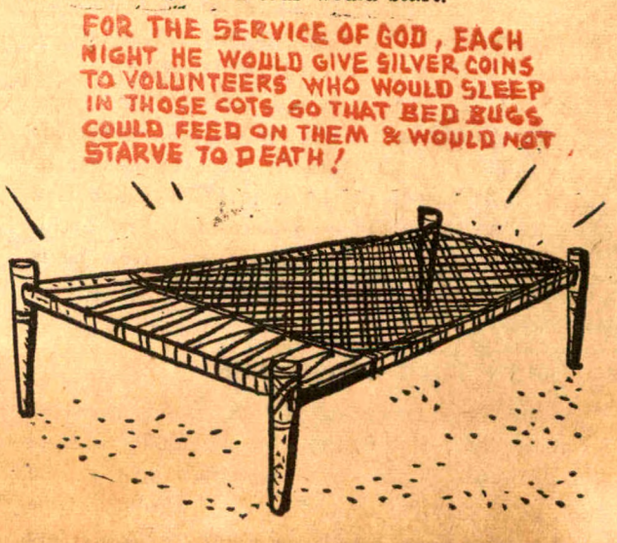
After that, whenever his brothers came to seek help, Tipu would say : "I keep enough for the bare necessities of my growing family. The rest goes to the service of God." People praised Tipu for preferring God to his own kith and kin.

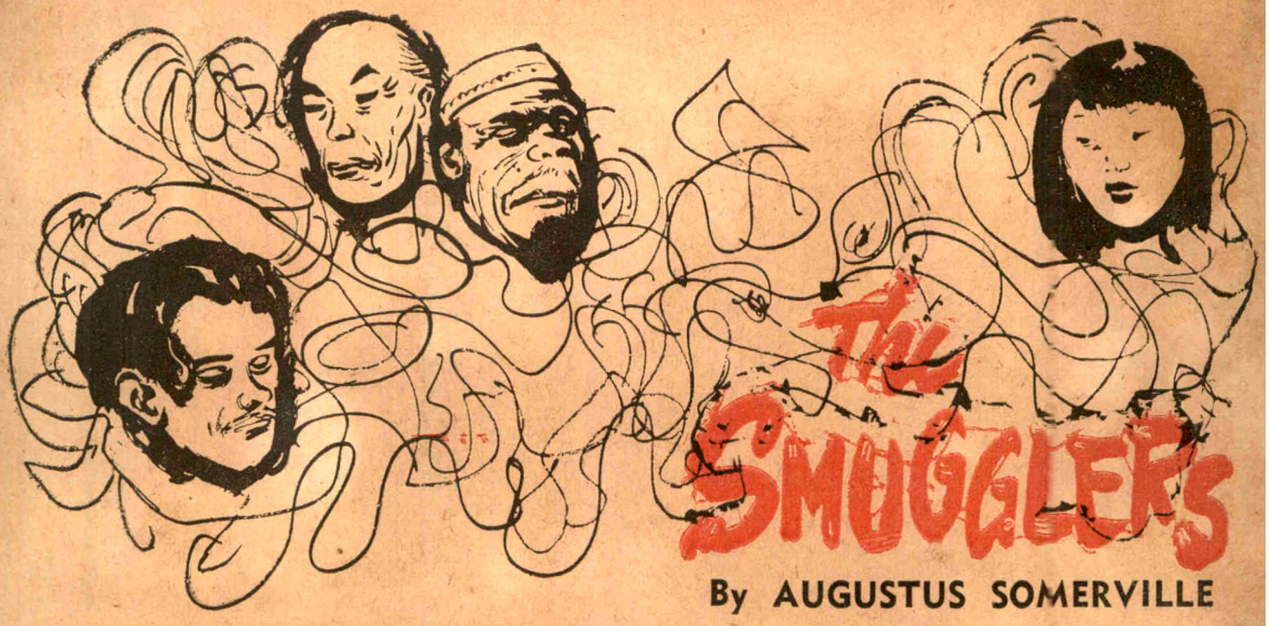
The city was full of multitudes who followed Tipu's creed of non-killing. These multitudes did not know what to do with bed-bugs. They were in a religious quandary. They could not very well commit the sin of killing bed-bugs, nor could they bear with them in their own beds.

Tipu spent a sleepless night thinking about the moral dilemma of his fellow devouts. With the rising sun he had an inspiration. He placed some empty cots and quilts in the temple he was building, and asked the devouts to deposit their bed-bugs in them.

Each night he would give silver coins to volunteers who would sleep in those cots and quilts so that bed-bugs could feed on them and would not starve to death.

Thus Tipu spent his fortune in raising a temple to God and in saving the lives of bed-bugs and in other good works. By now, he was like his brothers, and his residence and acres were barren. He organized these in what he renamed the Malabar Welfare Estate and invited his brothers to come and live with him in a common enterprise. It was the equality in impoverishment that gave them zest while they passed their time, waiting with Tipu for the day when the next world tour would start.





By AUGUSTUS SOMERVILLE

SAN LI crouched deep within the narrow confines of the slit trench. Overhead the bombers roared and the deep, soul-destroying crunch of the bombs as they rained on the unprotected city, filled him with such a deadly fear, that San Li swore that on the morrow, come what may, he would quit this accursed spot. Rangoon had dealt generously with him, but San Li was no sentimentalist; Calcutta could provide him with as rich a living, if only the Police could be induced to forget those indiscretions of the past.

His adopted son Abdul crouched trembling against him and San Li's mind, now definitely made up, brooked no delay in the furthering of his plans.

"Listen, son," he whispered, "this city is doomed. Tomorrow we leave. When you return home gather up all our valuables and hide them as I have instructed you. In the meantime I will try and secure passages on the steamer that sails at the end of this week."

But alas for San Li's much vaunted influence with dock officials; neither bribes, prayers nor threats, could secure for him the eagerly sought accommodation, and he returned to his foster son, filled with foreboding. The next evening, in company with many thousands of his fellow citizens, he fought and struggled for a seat on the train that travelled as far as Prome, and later joined that vast throng that crowded on the platforms, awaiting the time when they could join a group setting out for the trek over the mountains and through the densest forests on the long, sad trail to India.

Of his sufferings and strivings during those long, weary months, no records remain, but one thing is certain; no sooner did he reach Prome than San Li started organising a gang of cut-throats and robbers who preyed incessantly on the unfortunates who trekked with him those long weary miles to safety. The days grew into weeks and the weeks into months, until at last came the welcome news that Chittagong was but a couple of days' march ahead, and here fate dealt his final card. San Li who had overcome all the rigours of the road, who had survived the hunger, the thirst and the plagues that claimed its victims by the hundreds, now within sight of his goal, went down to a fatal attack of cholera. Knowing that death was inevitable, San Li called Abdul to his side.

"Listen carefully, son, to my final instructions," he gasped. "When I am dead, do not tarry by my side, take all the jewels we have accumulated and hide them about your person. Do not trust your companions. Once it is known that I am dead, they will slit your throat for my share of the loot. Also do not wait. As soon as it grows dark and the camp is asleep, slip out and make for Chittagong on your own. You know the pass words and the names of those in Calcutta who will befriend you. Go to them," and he relapsed into unconsciousness.

Abdul did as he was instructed. In the small hours of the morning he rose silently and slipped away, but before leaving he knelt by the side of the only man who really loved him, and whispered his last farewell. Soft as the words were, San Li heard them, and over his dying countenance there settled a wonderful calm.

Two days later, scarcely able to drag himself along, Abdul limped into Chittagong and collapsed on the station platform. Willing and merciful hands lifted him up and he was washed and fed, but when they attempted to remove the filthy, vermin infested rags in which he was clothed, Abdul resisted frantically, and the doctor thinking the poor fellow's mind was affected, signalled to the attendants to let him alone.

That night, in spite of his exhaustion, Abdul forced himself to sit up. From the hem of his ragged coat he extracted a small fortune in diamonds and rubies and these he concealed in a belt which he fastened tightly round his waist, and then only he slept. Next morning he awoke to find that his filthy

garments had been removed and fresh clothing had been provided.

Here he stayed a few days, resting and feeding, till a great part of his strength was restored, when he was placed on a train and a few days later arrived at Sealdah Station.

CUB RETURNS TO PACK

Here also, as at Chittagong, the train was met by a band of willing helpers, who attended to the sick and the wounded and as Abdul was now comparatively well, he was permitted to go home, once he had explained that he had relatives in Calcutta who would gladly keep him.

As he stood before the doctor's desk, filling in the necessary forms, an old Police Officer looked over his shoulder. Something in the boy's face had stirred a cord of memory and he looked closely at the entries in the form.

"Abdul?" he queried. "Have you no other name? Who was your father, lad and where did he live ?"

Almost did Abdul betray himself by giving the name of the one man who had been more than a father to him. "Abdul Hamid" he replied. "My father died in Burma many years ago." But that slight hesitation had not escaped the keen eyes of the old Police Officer, and as Abdul turned to leave the station, he made a slight motion with his hand to one of the crowd, who had gathered round the desk, and later as the boy boarded a tram that took him in the direction of China Town, this man followed every move he made.

When Abdul alighted at the entrance to Blackburn Lane, he paused a moment beneath the tree that stands before the little temple, known to all the inhabitants of this district as Cheena Kali.

Here he recalled the instructions given him by his foster father. "On your right as you stand by the temple, looking down the lane, are several small restaurants. The proprietor of one of these, an old man, named Mir Sahib, is a staunch friend of mine. Seek him out. He will assist you."

Abdul walked slowly down the lane. As he came opposite each shop, he paused awhile, scrutinizing the customers as well as the staff carefully. At last he paused at the entrance to one of the largest where sat a venerable looking Moslem collecting the money paid by the customers. Satisfied he entered and going to a table set well apart from the others, he ordered a simple meal. When the lad who served the food came to remove the plates, Abdul detained him. "Tell me, son, how is your master named?" he enquired, but the lad, with the impertinence of his class, replied rudely: "Go ask him yourself," indicating the old Moslem. This is all Abdul wished to make certain of, and rising he approached the proprietor.

"Salaam Ali Kum, Mir Sahib," he greeted him, bowing deeply. "Vale Kum salaam," the old man replied, looking up in surprise. He was not accustomed to courtesy from his customers, and the young lad intrigued him. "You are a stranger here," he continued. "Can I be of any service to you?"

Abdul hesitated, then going closer he set down the price of his meal on the desk and whispered, "The sun has risen."

"But it will set again" came the answer, without hesitation. With a quick look round the old man rose and calling to one of his assistants to take his place, he led Abdul through a narrow doorway, to the back of the shop, where he had his living quarters.

"Be seated friend," he invited courteously, "and give me your news. But first tell me of my old friend San Li. Is he well and prosperous?"

Abdul hung his head, sighing deeply, and the old man, seeing the dejected face of the lad, realised the truth.

"Ah, well," he murmured, "'its an end we must all come to some day — Allah rest his soul. But you must be the bearer of tidings, lad. Tell me of all that has befallen you, since your father left us."

And so Abdul gave him the whole story. From his carefully hidden store of jewels, he extracted two beautiful rubies, which he gave the old man. "These my father bade me give you as a token of his esteem and friendship, bidding me place myself in your hands."

Mir Sahib sat for a long while, contemplating the rubies, then with a sigh he stood up. "I grow old, son," he said, "and mayhap my brain is not as quick as it was in the old days when your father and I worked together. But abide here. Consider this humble dwelling your home, till such time as I have arranged ways and means of advancing your interests." With that he returned to the shop and Abdul was left to his own devices.

THE HUNT

Detective Inspector Bose, of the C.I.D. perused carefully the report that had just been handed to him. "So" he mused, "the wolf-cub returns to the pack." Before him were two other bulky files, and as he refreshed his memory with their contents, a grudging admiration filled his mind. San Li and Mir Sahib had been two of the greatest smugglers he had ever known. Working in unison and perfect accord they presented the most formidable combination that had defied the brains and organisation of his Department. With his fingers on the pulse of every international racket, San Li, worked in complete understanding with his Indian partner, and the two, with an ingenuity and cunning that had baffled the entire resources of the Police, had carried out successfully, coup after coup, that must have amassed for them a considerable fortune.

Inspector Bose was worried. Only a major undertaking could have induced San Li to send his adopted son to Mir Sahib at such a time and the method selected was perfect. No one would suspect a refugee, flying from the vengeance of the Japanese, to be a smuggler. By coming overland from Burma, San Li had overcome in one bold stroke, the usual Police surveillance, the Custom's check, and the many possible means by which the boy's true mission could have been suspected.

Unaware of the actual facts, Inspector Bose built up a crime of almost international importance, while Mir Sahib, knowing the workings of the Inspector's mind, hugged himself in joyful anticipation and as a preliminary precaution sent Abdul on a mission that took him far from the city.

A week later the Police struck. The search was organised and carried out with machine-like precision, but for all the evidence it yielded, it need never have occurred. Mir Sahib was questioned again and again. Yes, a boy answering to the name of Abdul

entered his shop on the morning mentioned, but to what had happened to him subsequently, Mir ib was completely unaware.

Inspector Bose, back at headquarters, sat at his k in an evil frame of mind. Mir Sahib had been dowed for weeks, his shop was under constant veillance, and still no trace of the missing boy ld be found. Suddenly he had an inspiration. To peon who came at his urgent summons, he gave lip of paper and a moment later was handed a file, t he opened with almost reverent care. The utiful, piquant face, that gazed up at him from cover page, filled him with a strange nostalgia, a mory of a hectic youth, that was now buried and

he beautiful piquant face that gazed up at m from the cover page filled him with a range nostalgia, a memory of hectic youth....

one. Below the photograph was the name and idress "Rose Lee". He read and taking a sheet of aper and a plain envelope from the rack before him, e wrote only one word, "come." Then addressing ne envelope, he gave it to his personal orderly with structions to post it immediately.

The months slipped by. Mir Sahib knew that all olice supervision had ceased and he was worried. hat devilment could they be planning he wondered and increased his own vigilance in proportion, but as the ensuing months brought no information, he decided that the Police had dropped the case and recalled Abdul. And this is where Mir Sahib made his first mistake.

Inspector Bose had placed one of his cleverest men to shadow Mir Sahib, and one day he reported the return of Abdul. Inspector Bose did not waste an instant. That very day the postman handed Rose Lee a letter in which there was just a line "the cub has returned."

Mir Sahib was a devout Moslem. It was his custom to attend the mosque that graces the entrance to Dhurrumtolla Street, every Friday, and this week he took with him his young protege. As Abdul stood, shoulder to shoulder with the old man, he intoned reverently the beautiful, age old prayer —

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Say — He is God alone.
God the Eternal,
He begetteth not and He is not begotten,
And there is none like unto Him.

and then he gazed towards the entrance where the impatient crowds went hurrying endlessly by, and in a moment the prayer was forgotton. Standing indolently, just before the entrance, was a beautiful Chinese girl. Mir Sahib heard the gasp of the youth by his side, as the young man's eyes took in the lines of her perfect figure, and he smiled indulgently, for had he not been young himself, and in that perfect figure he recognised Rose Lee, the fairest flower in China Town.

Leaving the Mosque, when the prayers had concluded, Mir Sahib, urged on by the young man at his side, approached the girl. Smiling gravely he introduced his companion and thereafter stood aside, filled with amazement.

With an impetuosity unusual in members of his race, Abdul insisted on escorting the girl back to China Town. A taxi was called and Mir Sahib relegated to an obscure position near the drive, leaned back silently while his companion questioned the girl as to where she was living, what were her hobbies, who were her friends and a thousand and one perfectly foolish questions, all of which Mir Sahib reflected he could have answered and in very much more detail.

Thereafter matters moved moved rapidly. Within a few weeks Abdul discovered that his quarters with Mir Sahib were unsuitable and he shifted ot a quiet but expensive flat in the heart of China Town. Over these extravagances Mir Sahib smiled indulgently. Youth, he reasoned, must be served, but when he learned that Rose Lee was also installed in this flat he grew alarmed. The work undertaken by Abdul needed not only careful handling, but complete secrecy and he doubted if this close association with a woman would ensure such secrecy.

Abdul, duly warned, retorted indignantly, "I could trust her with my life. She is incapable of any

mean act", and so this intimate association continued.

Now that mysterious but highly efficient grapevine, by which news filters into the right channels, duly acquainted Mir Sahib with the startling intelligence that silks, watches and opium in unheard of quantities were shortly arriving in Calcutta.

That morning Abdul, on his arrival at Mir Sahib's shop, had discovered seated at his side, an old Chinaman. The two were in earnest conversation when he arrived, but at his approach lapsed into silence. Piqued at this obvious sign of distrust, Abdul would have retired, but Mir Sahib backoned him to a seat beside the Chinaman.

"Abdul," he said, "this is Wang Ho, one of your father's most trusted friends. He brings important news and I am glad you are here to discuss it." He then went on to explain that the s. s. "Nupsan" had berthed that morning, and they were discussing how the valuable consignments of silk, opium and other articles eagerly awaited by consumers in various parts of the town were to be brought ashore, without the vexatious and officious knowledge of the Police and Customs Departments.

At the mention of the word silk, Abdul experienced a real thrill of pleasure. Now he would be able to satisfy the constant demands of his beautiful Rose.

That night as she lay cradled in his arms, Abdul whispered, "That silk dress you want. How many yards do you need?"

For a moment the girl tensed. "Oh, Darling," she murmured, "how sweet of you to remember, Never mind the length just now, only let me see and approve of the shade. Can you bring it tonight?"

"No," Abdul whispered, "not tonight, nor even tomorrow night. For you see, I have some important work to attend to and will have to leave you early. But after that, you can have all the silk you want."

The next morning Abdul hastened away early and no sooner had his form disappeared round a bend in the road, than the girl beckoned to a lad seated on a step opposite her door. "Take this, you know where, and hurry." On the little slip of paper was written "Tomorrow night. The silks only."

Inspector Bose read the slip and smiled. In a way he was sorry for Abdul. "The lad has not a chance," he murmured. "She would enmesh the Devil himself." But he had little time for sentiment. To the Sergeant who came at his urgent summons, his orders were clear and precise. "Don't arrest a soul," he concluded, "we do not want the silks and other trash. This is only chicken-feed; what we are after is the opium. An arrest now would warn them and the opium would never come out. Watch carefully and report when the silks are taken out. I will have them shadowed."

The next night, Abdul disguised as a ship's carpenter, in loose overalls and carrying a bag filled with tools, passed easily through the Police stationed at the Dock Gates. The "Nupsan" lay at the further end of the dock and as he climbed the gangway, an old Chinaman in whom he recognised Wang Ho paused a moment by his side to whisper — "Follow me." Quickly they crossed the decks, to where in the shadows stood several men. Here his bag was taken from him and another substituted and Abdul was led to where the other Chinamen were busy at work taking

'Oh Darling!' She murmured 'how sweet of you to remember. Never mind the length only let me see and approve the shade.....!'

up the deck planks. Here he worked with the rest of the gang, and when in the early hours of the morning, he was relieved by fresh hands, he took up his bag and followed the others back to the entrance of the docks. Here with a cursory check he was permitted to go but as he left he was conscious of the keen scrutiny of an old man seated at the desk, who smiled at him benignly.

"There goes our decoy, Sergeant Sen. He is taking out the watches and mighty smart about it too. Follow him and note the address to which he goes. We will rope in these receivers later."

THE TRUMP CARD

From Inspector Bose's point of view, that night had been a failure. Although he could now lay hands on the receiver of the silk and watches, his primary object had not been achieved.

He was kept well informed by Rose Lee of every move the gang made, but she was still unable to say when the opium would come ashore. He had doubled the number of watchers, promised larger rewards, but all to no effect, until finally the Port authorities informed him that the "Nupsan" was ready to put to sea again and would leave the docks next day. In desperation he sent an urgent message to Rose Lee.

That young lady had in the meantime been active in more respects than one. Abdul now hopelessly in her coils, hastened to gratify every wish, but Rose Lee knew instinctively that any attempt to pry into

s private activities would instantly rouse his sus-
cions, so she hit on an ingenious method of obtai-
ing the information she most wished to have.

The day she received the message from Inspector
ose, she set herself out to please. Abdul returning
om Mir Sahib's shop that evening found a radiant
ose impatiently awaiting him.

"Come, darling, let us go out tonight. I have not
een to a picture for weeks and I would like to dine
t one of the big restaurants in Chowringhee".

Abdul's instant and joyful agreement came as
omething of a shock. But Rose Lee was too skilful to
etrary her real motives. That night she played her
rump card.

"Abdul," she whispered, "I have a confession to
ake. You know we are Chinese and addicted to
pium smoking. It is true I don't smoke myself, but
oth my father and mother are heavy smokers, and
ave begged me to ask your help. Opium is impossible
o obtain now, and if you know of any source from
vhich we could buy a small quantity, they would be
o grateful to you."

At the word 'opium' Rose felt the man grow tense
n her arms. Instinctively she knew she had aroused
is suspicions, and a chill of fear crept down her
pine.

"No, Rose," he replied, removing her arms from
ound his neck, "I know of no source from which
pium could be purchased."

Desperate now and determined to allay his suspi-
cions, she flung herself on him with fierce abandon.
Abdul was young and this passionate affection, slowly
dulled his fears. Determined not to lose her advant-
age she renewed the attack.

"If not tonight, could you find out by tomorrow
night?"

Abdul considered. "No", he said finally. "Not
tonight and not tomorrow night, but after that I
may be able to get in touch with some people who
could supply it."

Rose was satisfied. The "Nupsan" was leaving the
docks tonight, so nothing would be done, but once
in the main stream an attempt would be made to
get the stuff away.

Inspector Bose considered the information care-
fully. Abdul's promise to supply her with opium on
the third day, indicated that the stuff was still on
board and that the attempt would be made the night
she lay on the river, or the next day as she sailed
down stream and he made his plans accordingly.

"MEAT" INSIDE HUSK

On the morning of the "Nupsan's" departure,
Inspector Bose sat on an easy chair on the front deck
of the Police launch. In his hands were a powerful
pair of binoculars and with these he scrutinized the
"Nupsan", carefully, as she drifted slowly down-
stream. Nothing unusual appeared to be taking place.
The activities on board were normal. At one place the
sweepers were busy cleaning the decks, and as he
watched he saw the men raise a large basket filled
with empty coconut shells which they dumped in the
river and returned for others.

Inspector Bose gave a shrug of disgust as he
watched the husks floating past the sides of the
retreating vessel. He remembered his own street and
the filth caused by careless consumers who no sooner
had they drunk the contents cast the empty shell on
the road, and hurried away indifferent to the con-
gestion and annoyance caused to the people of the
locality.

Thinking thus Inspector Bose swung the glasses
round, to survey the broad expanse of the river.
Carelessly he watched the fishing boats as they tossed
about on the waves caused by the passing of the
"Nupsan" and then he paused.

"Extraordinary," he muttered, "what do they
want with that filth. The streets of Calcutta will
provide tons of coconut shells —" and then the truth
flashed on him.

"Sergeant Sen", he called, "you see those fishing
boats gathering coconut shells from the river. Take
the boat we are towing and two serangs As I pass
one of those flats moored in mid-stream you will
drop astern and conceal yourself behind the flat.
From here watch these boats and when they
make for the shore follow them, but go cautiously,
so as not to arouse suspicion. On no account lose
sight of the coconuts, follow them to their destina-
tion, then come to Head Office and report"

Sergeant Sen did as he was ordered. From the
stern of the anchored flat, he watched the fisher-
men fill two large baskets with coconut shells and
then make for the shore. A little below Princep Ghat
they landed and assisted by two other men who
awaited their arrival, the baskets were lifted out and
removed to a jeep standing to the side of the road.

Quickly Sergeant Sen followed. Signalling to a
passing taxi, he bade the driver follow the fast re-
treating jeep and half an hour later, just as the
jeep turned into the entrance to China Town, he
stopped the taxi, and on foot followed the jeep as it
passed down Blackburn Lane and turned into a blind
alley at the back of Mir Sahib's shop. Here the
baskets were quickly unloaded and carried into the
premises. Through the open door Sergeant Sen
watched their final disposal in an old godown, then
he returned to Headquarters.

Abdul hurrying that evening to Mir Sahib's shop
to learn of the success of their scheme, stopped in
amazement as he noticed the watching crowd and

the armed constables patrolling before the entrance. Signalling to the urchin who served the customers, he enquired the cause of disturbance. The lad, hesitated, looking round carefully, then hissed, "Someone betrayed the Master. The opium has been found."

Abdul stepped back as if he had been struck. That word "betrayed" touched a chord in his memory. He now recalled the extraordinary ease with which the purchasers of the contraband silk, watches and other articles had been traced. All at once he realised the truth. He had been the decoy, for Mir Sahib had left to him the final disposal of these goods. He remembered now the number of times Rose Lee had insisted that he should bring her a length of silk or some jewellery and how the next day the shop he had visited had been raided and the contraband recovered.

For a long while Abdul stood at the street corner, his head down, his face pale with emotion. So, to satisfy this woman, he had betrayed his friends. Men who believed and trusted in him. And how cleverly she had led him on. Now too late, he realised the story of her parents wanting opium was only to get him to betray the date on which he knew the stuff would be sent ashore. And this was the end. Mir Sahib would be sent to jail and for that frail old man a term in jail was actually a life sentence.

Abdul fingered the long, slim, stiletto that hu from the money-belt, round his waist. Slowly made his way back to the house where he had sp so many nights of blissful happiness. He marvel that a woman, so fair and so loving, could be so v

Without knocking he opened the door of th bedroom softly. Rose Lee sat on the bed. Before were heaped all the jewels, the trinket and the mor he had given her. With a cry she sprang up to fa him as he entered. Something in his eyes must ha warned her, that her days for scheming were at end.

"I see you are packing for a long journey, Rose. is strange you never told me; I could have broug you some more silks and jewels."

Tongue-tied and trembling she could find words to answer him, and when he took her in h arms and fiercely crushed her to his breast, s made no sound at all, only sighed deeply a crumpled up in his arms.

Abdul laid her gently on the bed. With her silk scarf he wiped away the thin trickle of blood th oozed from her parted lips, then gathering up all t jewels and money, he left as noiselessly as he h come.

Rose Lee sat on the bed. Before her were heaped all the jewels, the trinkets and the money he had given her. With a cry she sprang up to face him.....

SYLVAN MOONLIGHT

By

NARAYAN GANGULI

MOONLIGHT had spread all over the forest. On both sides lay thick woods of sal trees, tall and luxuriant. But the sheds of leaves, dense as they were, were not matted with creepers and shrubs. The full moon was peeping through a network of leaves and branches. The forest looked enchanted amid the delusion of light and shade.

Shiukumari was gliding along the narrow walk. The water-pail at her waist was swinging to the graceful rhythm of her body—parched sal leaves under her feet seemed to sing in a wave of joy. In this eventide, it wasn't safe to pass through the jungle all alone. There were tigers and bears, there were elephants, musk-oxen and boars in plenty—what wasn't there in this vast forest? Yet Shiukumari was not afraid. That apart, the tigers of the Dooars are non-violent to the marrow, they won't claw a man if they can help it. People of this area firmly believed in this hearsay.

Through the forest Shiukumari was walking alone. Moonlight was glimmering upon the silver ornaments she wore. Odour of wild flowers was rising from thick-set bushes where the water of spring cut a deep wound upon the jungle's breast and flowed in a serpentine course. Drunk of the moonlight, a green-dove was whistling ceaselessly—deluded by the moon-lit night, the warbler too had sent away sleep from its eyes. Only a peacock was now and then screeching shrilly and beating wings—perhaps it had set upon somewhere a young of a python, finding it at a vantage point. Even amidst such magnificent moonlight and superb unconcealed beauty, the primitive violence of the wilds could not forget itself—the green-dove's melody and the peacock's screech were together making an exotic concept of fury and suavity.

At the wood's end lay an expanse of coarse sands—sands that hadn't the soft tenderness of silty mud nor the velvety smoothness of fine pearl-dust. Here the powdered stone-chips were sharp as gravels. The boulders the river Jaldhaka carried down from the Himalaya's heart during the peak of monsoon were lying scattered all over that vast sandy expanse looking like some gigantic turtles.

On that side stood the dark mountains of Bhutan and below them lay extensive wilds—endless ranging from the Dooars to Terai—the forefinger of resistance barring access, the inviolable rampart of the divine lord of the mounts, a dark revolt heaving from the earth's bosom under the light-washed firmament. And in front flew the furious hilly river Jaldhaka.

What a small river and how much water it contained! Doubtful hardly breast-deep. One could cross it on foot, it seemed. But that's all—in fact it couldn't be crossed by a boat even, let alone on foot. Gallons of water were gushing downward with a tempestuous current at thirty miles an hour, leaping from mountains to plains, from plains to the sea. It gave out the thunder-roars of a torrent that had woke up suddenly from a dream. The under-current was pushing onward a legion of sandy stones and heavy heaps of granite boulders. Stones clashed below—above, waters thundered breaking through coarse sands. Rumbles of so small a stream could be heard even a mile off.

The Jaldhaka was dazzling in the moon-light. The curved sword of a quiet sleeping light she was not—she looked exactly like what hillmen called "golden python." Roaring wildly, the stream was rushing forward zigzag like a hungry golden python—as if she was on an expedition against a prey that had slipped off her grabbing mouth.

The water-vessel at her waist, Shiukumari stood still awhile; forests at the back, wilds and hills on

the side opposite, and the river in between: the moon beaming in the sky.

Her mind was agog with joy; delighted, she felt a keen desire to burst into a song. It's on such a moon-lit night that her beloved was to arrive. The sloping spiral path had alighted along the mountain's side. Sal forests on both sides were shivering in wind. The hill tamarisks were ceaselessly hissing a monotonous sound. Smeared with the moon-beam hue, the wild plantain leaves were trembling. And down that path was trotting, a stallion—the rider was descending. A swing of intoxication touched the blood in the heart, all the veins and sinews stirred up in a restless and anxious abidance. The beloved was coming to a tryst.

Shiukumari had to stop again ere she had walked a few steps humming a tune. The heavenly music of sylvan moon-shine that the moon in the sky and the illusive earth were playing in concert suddenly lost its melody. Her body became eerie all over in a profound fright.

What's that whitish thing lying at the water-edge? A stone?—no, not that. Just in the evening she had washed herself over there—then it wasn't there! And within so short a time such a big stone couldn't possibly arrive there flying on the wind's lips! Then?

A man—yes, a man it must be! But how could a man appear here? Has someone killed him? Has an animal slain him? Both are possible.

A non-regulated area—here the tentacles of law were rather lax. The wild folk of this wild realm judged the right and wrong themselves — for that they did not need to run to courts at headquarters. And it was nothing unusual for some animals to move about waters after sunset; particularly, movement of bears in this part was a bit frequent.

Shiukumari hesitatingly stood motionless a few moments. What should I do? Should I move forward? An unknown danger may be lying there in wait, who knows! This jungle and this lonely river bank—what can I do if any peril comes upon me! . . .

But no good hesitating—let me see at least. The Bhutani maiden's intrepid unwavering mind gradually regained self-confidence—she slowly stepped forward that way.

Yes, it was a man—but an alien, a Bengalee. He lay by the water-edge senseless. Surely he had not been attacked by a bear, else his eyes and nose couldn't have been left intact. His body had no blood stain anywhere, neither did it bear any wound mark. His wears were quite in order and the gold buttons on his white shirt were glittering in the light. And, and—how strange, he was not dead! Swinging his whole body like waves, he was breathing heavily. The poor fellow had perhaps swooned for some reason.

Now she had nothing much to deliberate. Filling her pail with Jaldhaka's ice-cold water melted in moon-light, she knelt down beside the man in profound tenderness. Directly she fanned him a little with her veil after sprinkling some water upon his face and eyes, the long languid breathing of the

The poor fellow had perhaps swooned for some reason.

senseless gradually began to regain ease and natural colour. A few minutes more and Mahitosh opened his eyes. Bewildered and vacant was his look. All his thoughts seemed to be turning round within his brain at a quick measure like an indistinct nebula—piece by piece, broken in parts: they had no form, no shape, no consistency.

Shiukumari sped up fanning him and sprinkled some more water. The Jaldhaka's icy touch could startle even the dead, and Mahitosh had merely swooned! Slowly he raised himself up. Opposite him was a young maiden, staring at him with a solicitous and distracted look. There was moon-light in her dark eyes, moon-light on her handsome face,

moon-light on her ear-rings. Beside them was flowing Jaldhaka, murmuring sharply. It was not the police, nor the enemy chasing behind. All the restlessness of a roving, frightened, erratic life had as it were stopped here stock-still. Had a fairy descended beside him from the heaven resting upon wings of a dream? Had he, Mahitosh, died at last due to extreme fatigue and languor, and after death reached a wonderland! Marble-white alien nymph! She was staring at him with the unwinkling look of a statue, a look in which surprise and curiosity had burst into speaking at a time. Yet, it was not a marble-statue nor a fairy—it was a human being, yes, of flesh and blood!

"Where am I?" Mahitosh asked.

"On the river bank," the girl replied in broken Bengali with Hindi accent.

On the river bank! Mahitosh recalled—they were fleeing, he and Arabinda. Somewhere in the sal forest Arabinda was lost, he could not be traced out. But he could not stop, neither wait for him. Run, run, run hastily, much more hastily! The day before he had not had a bite of food, neither could he afford to sleep a wink the night over. Hunger and thirst had rendered his whole being rigid and limp. Then running and running he came across this water and rushed towards it like a drouthy beast. Thereafter? No, he could recall no more.

"How did you come over here?" the girl asked again.

Mahitosh did not answer. What would he, how could he? He listlessly spread open a pair of drowsy eyes heavy with languor and set them fixed at the deep dark wilds and the colossal horizon of black hills across the stream.

"Can you get up?" asked Shiukumari. "Then let's go our home." Mahitosh was still brooding. Where shall I go? Where will this unfamiliar mysterious maiden lead me? Which unknown world does her look invite me to?

Ultimately he rose to his feet. Owing to weariness his whole body was shaking, his head wanted to reel down to earth. Holding with one hand the water-jar at her waist, Shiukumari unhesitatingly extended the other toward Mahitosh: "Come, hold my hand and walk on."

Had it been some other time, Mahitosh would have hesitated. On account of his inborn training and natural instinct, even the very thought of seeking prop of the fair hand of an unknown, unacquainted young woman would have given his blood a swing. But his consciousness had not yet bloomed fully; as if he was visioning amid a drowse or a deep dream. Rays of the moon, sands of the bank, roars of the stream and murmurs of the wilds—all these had turned the whole universe into an unreality. Here mind would not question, heart would not falter. Against such an amazing background, everything was possible, everything normal.

Taking into his grip the girl's wet cold hand, Mahitosh dragged his legs along the sandbed reclining the whole of his body-weight on her well-built and well-shaped body. An aroma, entering into the blood through nostrils, seemed to slowly overpower his senses. But whether the maiden's body or the great forest or the moon in the sky was emitting that fragrance Mahitosh could not make out.

The jungle lay beyond the sandbed. A walk common for men, deer and bears ran through the sal forest. Fallen sal leaves sent back the rustling echo of the sound of steps. No peacock was screeching, but the breeze was carrying a green-dove's tippling tune. Nowhere could be heard roars of wild beasts —rather a stag's melodious call flashed into the ears: allured by such astonishingly charming moonlight, he was perhaps seeking his hind. Indistinct sounds, amorously emotional, were coming out from within the bushes—perhaps somewhere a couple of wild fowls had become maddened with the spell of an irresistible desire.

On a night as this would come the beloved—Shiukumari recalled. Shades quivered on each leaf of the wild plantain, all along the hilly tract—long sighs of distraction and affliction for separation swept over the tamarisk wood. And along the stone-paved path was coming the distant-dwelling beloved riding a trotting white stallion—to celebrate in the sal bower their first night of union.

Was she humming a song?—nothing he could realise. This silvery moonlight, this sylvan music, this mystery-pleasant rhythm of walking—all these together were slowly benumbing his consciousness. Gradually his heavy weight was pressing increasingly upon the girl's lean body. Had he fallen asleep again or lost senses completely?

* * * *

This part of the jungle was comparatively thinner; deforestation had lessened much of its density, and the other part bore little trace of it. The stroke of man's axe had fallen upon the forest's unimpeded domain. Wood was wanted for fuel, for shelter, for civilisation's endless needs, and even for the handle of the axe that destroys the forest. The lacerated jungle was growing leaner day by day. As its last protest, the great aged tree fell flat on the ground crashing underneath plants and trees, large and small, and heaps of shrubberies; to the unending demand of man the earth's original dwellers were silently giving themselves in. Only burning pangs piled up in the afflicted heart sometimes burst out in the shape of a forest fire. And that made a wonderful spectacle. Setting dry leaves on licking flames and burning shrubberies to ashes, flows of fire ran whizzing this way and that like the current of a stream. It rushed forward in a zigzag course—running straight, it suddenly took turn to the right or the left. The forest's heart-burning tossed about like a serpent of fire. For a day, for two days, for three days, the fire raged on till the blue clouds floating along from the summit of the Himalayas showered downpours painting every bough of the sal wood with the motley hues of a peacock's tail-feather. Where the jungle had grown thinner, there stood a small slum of the Bhutanees. This area was of course not within Bhutan—it was the extreme north of Bengal. It abounded in hills, springs, woods and tea-gardens. A small railway track passed through the dense forest a little way off to meet the needs of tea and timber—the trains that ran upon it were even smaller. The engine drove back at the sight of a wild elephant—train-running stopped if sal trees fell upon the track. This being a non-regulated area, people here didn't care much for the nuisance of police and outposts. A circle officer there was, but where he lived or what he did was, like the incorporeal Supreme Being, a subject of serious philosophical thought.

Here—a little way off the tea gardens and timber depots and the railway line—Kulabir ran his country-liquor shop—the spring from which tea

garden labourers and wood-hewers drew their elixir of life. The way through the jungle was not safe after sundown, there were chances of encountering troubles and perils.

Yet the coolies came — they could not but soak their throats with the strong intoxicant at least once at the day's end. Not that Kulabir's income was ample, but he could somehow make both ends meet.

Wheels of the night rolled on. The moon behind the jungle-screen was nearing the mid-sky. Hyenas were crying somewhere. Coolies left one by one; the sound of tambours and the lingering note of confused songs of the Santhal coolies slowly died down far off. Suddenly it struck Kulabir that his daughter hadn't yet returned. She had been to the river to fetch water, thereafter.....

His mind startled: she has not fallen prey to a beast, I hope! Shiukumari returned as he was about to go out sheathing his sparkling dagger. Not alone, Mahitosh too was coming resting upon her shoulders. It won't be correct to say he was coming, rather Shiukumari was carrying him along.

For some time Kulabir remained gazing at them astonished. Expanding wide his tiny Mongolian eyes, he asked mutteringly, "What's this?"

"Hush!" she said placing a finger on her lips. "Now give him some thing to eat, father, and get him a bed to sleep on. You'll hear in the morn whate'er you may want to."

* * * *

One of the legs of Kulabir was made of wood. He had returned from the war of 1914. Flanders, roars of cannons—western front. Blown by a shell-splinter, his left leg had perhaps taken refuge into the English channel.

On termination of the war, Kulabir came back home. The Bhutan Government gave him some landed properties, the reward for his loyalty. But those very properties ultimately turned out to be the cause of various troubles up with which the old fellow could not put. One fine morn, he loaded all he had upon a pair of ponies and arrived at the Dooars' jungles passing over Bhutan's hills and crossing Jaldhaka's ice-cold knife-edged current.

Since then days had been wearing on—ill and well, in weal and woe—some trivial, some considerable. The little girl of seven was now a bloomy virgin of nineteen. Day by day, Kulabir was becoming debilitated, spent-up. For want of a leg, some flagginess had crept into his body too, powerful as it was as a wild horse. Mostly for this reason Shiukumari had not been married so long: she was to her father what a stick is to a blind man.

It was hidden behind the night's gloom; now the radiant shine of the fresh sun revealed on the horizon the golden peak of the Kanchanjangha. The sal wood did not seem so very thickly spread. The great mountain's contour was drawn with a deep azure tint, and a luxurious growth of dense jungles extended all over like a mass of curly hairs.

Sitting on a charpoy and smoking a tobacco-pipe, Kulabir heard Mahitosh's story in details. His flat brownish face became overcast with a dark shadow of anxiety.

"How can I let you stay here, Babu? It's a British territory. Had it been my own country Bhutan, there would have been no difficulty, but here....."

Shiukumari came out holding a vessel of country-liquor. The maiden who had looked in the sylvan moonlight superbly dreamy showed now in the splendour of daylight a flat nose, and a pair of small eyes. The veil she wore had turned discoloured. Upon her fair face had fallen an unclean shade of habitual carelessness, in her neck's notches had collected dirt in a black mass. With fatigue removed and ease restored, the educated Mahitosh found all his dreams shattered on the rock of reality. She, this girl, was utterly commonplace, nothing more than any of those hill girls one met with here and there. The maiden who had, like a fairy, descended down resting on wings of light on the canvas of the sylvan moonlight and of the cutting stream whizzing past like a golden python was, alas,not the one standing before him.

Mahitosh cared not to utter a word; the answer came from Shiukumari : "No, father. The Bengalee Babu must be kept here a few days. The police will arrest him soon as he gets out of here. You are a free Bhutia, father, why do you object to giving shelter to a free Bengalee ?"

Now it was Mahitosh's turn to be taken aback. Strange, how could this dirty hill girl say such a thing ? Did it spring spontaneously from the free hill blood or was it influenced by this wild open world ? Mahitosh kept gazing at the girl : a well-built physique — it had more firmness than loveliness; the two small eyes bore a sharp look; from her ears hung a pair of heavy silver ornaments— these would have torn the ears had they been soft as those of a Bengalee girl. In an instant it was realised that she was indeed the brave woman capable of bearing the free soldiers of Bhutan.

But Kulabir was impressed by her argument. Yes, he belonged to a free nation that had not to carry the humiliation of foreign shackles day in and day out. Apart from that, he himself had fought a war—fought in bomb-devastated swampy trenches, under brilliant sparks of exploded shells, amidst incessant volleys of bullets and against sharp blades of bayonets. He did appreciate a soldier's honour. And Mahitosh was a soldier indeed : whoever fought for freedom was a soldier.

Thoughtfully smoking his tobacco-pipe, Kulabir said, "All right, stay here. Nothing to fear now— this time of the day none will drop in here, but in the evening when they all come from tea-gardens, you may have troubles should you chance to run into them." "You need not worry for that, father," Shiukumari assured, "I will manage all that."

Fast upon her gladdened glittering countenance Mahitosh fixed for once his grateful deep eyes.

"Awfully kind of you, Thapaji," he muttered in a choked voice. "Not at all, not at all, that is no kindness. Stay a day or two when you have come." Kulabir smiled a little, then walked into the room, his wooden leg making hard sounds. He could not rid himself of anxieties for hiding a fugitive in his house.

But though he got a shelter it would not be possible for him to stay here. Mahitosh began to think. These small huts of hillmen, these small cots of rope, this strong smell of liquor ! Those blue forests all around stood like a vast prison shutting the entire world out of sight. There were little means to know or guess from here whatever was happening in the large turbulent world abroad along with the rapid gyration of history. Was it a shelter or exile in the Andamans ?

Shiukumari came forward. Placing a hand upon Mahitosh's shoulder with the unhesitant ease of an innocent hill girl, she asked, "Bengalee Babu, what are you thinking of ?"

"What ! I am not thinking of anything," he replied absent-mindedly.

"No, you need not think of anything. You have nothing to fear, here the English won't find you out."

"Are you quite sure ?" a melancholy smile flashed upon his lips.

"Sure. But if you have to stay here, sitting

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The Tricky Tiger

By
DHIRENDRA NARAYAN ROY
(Lalgola Raj)

I DO not know if you had ever been to the Maharli Shooting Block in the district of Chanda in South C.P. It is extremely hot there during the summer. Jungles and forests wither away during this time of the year and the green bosom of the land faces a complete desolation except for a few patches of browned grass and shrubs. The beasts also leave for elsewhere, maybe to some hilly tracts. The forest is calm and quiet, undisturbed by any human intrusion. The residual number of beasts that still stay on there, wander about as they like. They are even found to occupy the verandah of the Dak Bungalow and rest there comfortably. That place is then fixed up for their haunt instead of any use for human beings. There is none to stop them. The forest guard or the peon of the Bungalow finds it convenient to sanction his own leave and retire to sweet home. But in the rains the jungle becomes inaccessible, mainly because of hordes of insects and gnats who make it a risky affair to go there. After the rainy season, it becomes lush green and full of life when the fugitive beasts of the forest come back and again lay out their grand charm in the woods.

In the month of Aswin, when the Puja holidays set in, people are found to gradually make their appearance there. The jungle roads which are washed away by the rains are again taken up for proper repairs with earth works. The forest with men at work collecting jungle wood and produces before the winter would set in. The peans too are found to come here on shooting paigns during the Christmas.

WE START OFF

It was during the Puja Holidays that I hac to this forest. The roads were not till then repaired. I secured a letter of introduction fr friend of mine to the Divisional Forest Office was allowed by him to hold my expedition in Chanda. But the officer did not forget to ment his usual way, with a squint caressing his mous

"This is no time for hunting—the flower the bamboo has set in."

I looked at him askance. This time the carefully trimmed the pointed ends of his cosn cared moustache and explained to me clearly

"Flowering of the bamboo takes place thirty or fifty years, you see. We get its seeds and all old thickets dry up altogether The new of the bamboo become so thick that you car any animal even at a distance of three feet. A enter into the jungle—oh, it is impossible! I gi the pass, now try your luck.'

However, we arrived at the Dak Bungalow some food to last for some days, servants, a

Jhanu Gonda, the guide along with his followers, or seven in number. They are from the same k as the Baiyegas—about whom I have written in other hunting tales.

I had also a friend of mine with me, nicked 'Talkie.' They were two brothers—'Hockey' and kie.' The elder 'Hockey' was a good sportsman, cialising in Hockey, and the younger, 'Talkie', was rn speaker and could give a colourful account of talent live with jokes and humours. To crown all, was now after a chance in the films. Tall and he bore a decent appearance.

POET'S DREAM

There was only one road from Maharli to Ta-. It was a dense jungle all around. There is a in Taroba, so wonderful it appeared to be the m of an unknown poet. There was still another e Telinala—that could be found to contain r even in the furious summer. It was about a and a quarter from the Bungalow. Our hunting red round this spot.

It was with great difficulty that Jhanu could re three young buffalos from far off villages use baits are not easily available there. s are placed here and there to hold out allure-ts to the tiger. We roamed about in the forest six or seven days and every morning our duty isted in watching if any bait had been a 'kill.' s to fasten the baits in the morning and to take back in the Dak Bungalow formed our daily ramme—but there could be found no trace of tiger. I wondered if the tigers were suddenly erted to Vaishnavism or if they were launching n-co-operation. Some more days elapsed, when, ir great excitement we found one bait killed. The two, however, were untouched. We brought back to the Bungalow, and instructed Jhanu to a platform close by the "kill."

There was a pretty shower just before our ng on to the platform in the evening. We took eats on it tightly enough. Rain water had still rolling down the branches making intermittent is on the leaves—tap—tap—tap. At times, with mild wind, the branches of the trees shook and monotonous sound of water-drops was broken. s fell from the trees. I was listening to the of that endless dripping sound.

ACK OF GNATS

Soon I had the painful experience of a pincers of gnats from all sides and it upset me altor. The mosquitoes were attacking me vehement-t I kept quiet. I could not move my limbs lest ger should get any hint of my presence. To kill nats was beyond question as it would make s. I knew it for certain when a tiger had per-d a kill and tasted of its fresh blood, it would nly come back to it for his sumptuous feast, ime towards the evening. My waiting was for gust arrival. The night was intensely calm and the earth seemed deep in sleep,—only the stars e deep blue above were awake and below, was this weary yet incorrigible hunter in the weird realm of the woods.

The night rolled on to its end, but the tiger showed no sign of his approach.

Having had a sleepless night, I got down from the platform next morning and started for the resting place. I thought it was unusual that in spite of the kill the tiger did not come. But then he might come for lunch, so I came back to the spot at I P.M. and to my despair found that he really came and fed upon the beast and neatly escaped. The tiger was doubtless tricky for it would not allow any notice of its approach. Now I should be free from anxiety and so retired to our Bungalow. Sleep came down on my weary eyes.

FUTILE WAIT

Three days passed in vain, when on inspection I came across another kill out of the two remaining baits. Like the mite of a miser, I kept the last bait carefully in the Bungalow and set for arranging another platform. In the evening, when I went there fully prepared, to my utter dejection, I found that the vultures had torn the flesh of the animal beyond identification. Vultures fly in the sky, but their eyes are riveted to carcass below. Tigers take great care to hide their kills under the bushes but can seldom escape the eyes of these vultures.

What else could I do than breathe out a deep sigh in that forest and come back? There were certainly prospects for a good sleep but a great anxiety was there. Not only that, there were the pangs of loss of a sure game. 'Talkie' however was attempting to humour me with amusing stories and this and that, but I could not be pacified with bribes of consolation.

Next afternoon, our expert guide Jhanu, found out a suitable spot and erected the platform there. Close by it, our only remaining bait was kept to trap the tiger. When Jhanu and I went there, we found that the bait was still untouched. But the animal had a queer, frightened look in his eyes—his whole body trembled, his movements were strange—he wanted to trace out something dismal. This is most uncommon with them as generally they are mild in nature and give no sign. We moved forward and at a distance of about fifteen feet, we came upon the foot-prints of a leopard that had just crossed that road. My anxiety grew bitter, for the leopard was there so close by but the bait was yet unhurt. It was no doubt very uncanny.

MONKEY THE HERALD

On both sides of the unmetalled road there were the impregnable jungles—nothing could be seen through. Suddenly my eyes were attracted by some shrubs, and I guessed that the tiger must have gone through the shrubs as the long grasses that had been trampled down by him were trying to come back to their normal position. Perhaps, the tiger got hints of our approach and made good its escape nearby. My guess was substantiated by the cries of the black-faced monkey indicating that the tiger was nearby. Jhanu and I purposely began to talk aloud and proceeded onwards. In front of us stretched about a hundred feet of a gradually sloping land and I found that our 'Talkie' was coming from that direction. He was quite a Baboo and had a decent punjabi on with the front tuck of his cloth hanging low in elegance having made a flower at the end. He had fashionable shoes on with a fancy stick in hand and looked a full-

fledged Baboo. He had not yet bagged any bird or animal but was very bold indeed.

I cried aloud, 'Beware, the tiger is nearby. Be on the guard!'

We knew that tigers generally do not come where they suspect any human existence. So our conversation went on loudly.

He too replied:

"How can I be so, with only the stick in my hand? Besides, I too have heard something passing by."

"So please come to us, be quick."

'Talkie' was intelligent enough to fabricate his own language, and uttering them all aloud started to join me. In the midst of his panegyric we heard the atom bombs of his own peculiar laughter.

INCORPOREAL BEING?

Now we were three and when we came to the bait we found fresh pug marks of a leopard just on the prints of our shoes. The claws of tigers come out when they are on prowl, just like those of cats. But how strange—was the tiger incorporeal ? We waited for full one hour and then completely vexed, we unfastened the bait and proceeded towards the Bungalow. Suddenly Jhanu cried out.

"Look here, the bait bears taints of blood on its neck."

The position was perfectly clear to me now. Early in the morning, when we came for an inspection of the bait, the tiger must have jumped on it and left a wound on its neck, but could not break it. Getting scent of our approach, he had fled away.

Suddenly the idea came to me—I do not know how—that the tiger must be bagged today. Our last bait was in such a plight that it would not survive more than a day or two. So we finished our midday meals and went to the platform with the bait at 2 P.M. Generally a hunter takes his seat on the platform after the bait has been killed. We had been twice deceived and so adopted a different method. We fastened the wounded bait nearby and Jhanu and I got upon the platform and seated ourselves fully ready.

Jhanu was really an expert of forests—and was inferior to none either in words or deeds. This time, with the help of his followers, he had camouflaged

the platform so neatly with leaves and branches, it could not be detected from outside, and looked like a big shrub.

The day glided on to afternoon. Evening came and was almost over but "our Lord" was invisible. I did my evening prayers sitting on platform. Since I had my initiation to the Thread, I have never missed my daily prayers t a day except in illness. When I would be on hur I would perform it in mind.

The wrist watch recorded nine. How long sh I wait still? I was greatly perturbed. The disgu hours were to be passed with much difficulty. At time, the bait suddenly dropped down. I thoug was hopeless now, for no bait ever showed this tude if it was not free from any fear or anxiet gave up all hopes.

A ROYAL "DARSHAN"

But where there is a wil there is a way. after a peculiar buzzing sound like that of sand thrown over bushes and leaves came to my ears. mediately I could perceive that it was caused some running animal and then something stealthily near the bait and dropped down. Wit losing time I lighted the torch that was fixed or rifle and found that nothing was there, but the lay dead. What a worry—was it the act of the spirits? Otherwise where could the tiger go?

Darkness was dense all around but my light pierced through it and was focussed on this that object. When the light was projected on a about ten or twelve cubits from us, a gigantic tiger was there, full with the vehemence of p and strength, looking at us with burning eyes. appeared just like a still lightning—his gait was tremely majestic. The front and rear paws amply extended, the robust legs resembled the p of a massive building. His limbs expressed an in tion to the jaws of death. O, what a sight it wa

But I must not let it go—come what may.

I pulled the trigger. The tiger vanished.

The torch too was put out by the recoil o gun—I lighted it again but nothing could be Jhanu also had a torch: he too lighted it and re noitred around. Suddenly he gave out a cry:

"The tiger has been killed."

I wondered: there was no sound, no uproar tiger fell down and died—what was there in it be sure, I shot another round according to pra and found that there was no more of that flash lightning in the tiger—only the shot struck its that moved a little only to be still again.

DEVOTED YOUNGER BROTHER

Gracious Lord! Now we could come down the platform in perfect peace of mind. When I the tiger, it appeared to me that it was the bi of all I bagged as yet. The foot-prints led me t pect not more than a mere spotted leopard, b must thank my lot that, instead, I got a st Royal Tiger. Was it then that the younger br had left his claim over the bait in favour of elder brother? Brothers live separately—this is popular saying—and then the leopard must be a brother to the royal tiger. Besides, he should abi the law of primogeniture! It might be due to that a leopard and a royal tiger are generally seen to roam particularly in the same forest.

Our Talkie Baboo, with no arms or amm tion, had secretly hidden himself on the branch tree nearly, escaping our notice. I was startled touch on my back. Soon he gave out colourful l ters in which I found myself completely drowne drew out a tape from his pocket eulogizing me:

"Look here, I was confident that the terr

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SYLVAN MOONLIGHT

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and brooding over won't do. You have to work. e, let us fetch wood from the jungle."

This opportunity to do something seemed to lightened the load of an uneasy uncertainty. tosh rose up at once : "Let us go."

The path ran through the sal wood the lower on of which had been burnt here and there by t fires. Scorched, the sal plants stood like some posts. But they would not die merely because had been burnt. This was the preliminary of their life-force, their initial fire-crowning for ning in future the glory of forest-giants. The would render them lifeless for three or four burning their branches and foliage, but there- they would attain immunity from flames like orshipping eremites. With the passage of time, would grow taller and straighter and spread selves abroad—from the Dooars to Terai.

Birds on every bough—known and unknown, of us species, of motley shades. The playful run acocks and wild hens. Herds of deer appeared moment and vanished like a lightning flash. of spring water here and there; rich growth een bushes on both sides; tall grasses and hosts d flowers; clusters of blue-pink orchid blossoms ing every inch of the ground.

The pair walked along collecting firewoods and eaves. Mahitosh was feeling fine. Did he know e that the shape of life was so varied, so ant ? But no more could he gather grass-stalks ng down—his back was aching.

Bengalee Babu !" Shiukumari called.

Yes," Mahitosh raised eyes.

You are tired. Such works don't suit you, it ? Come, let us have some rest."

They sat on a heap of dry leaves at the foot sal tree. It was blue cold shade; there was a creeping shiver of breeze in the rough sal leaves; doves were calling; fluttering butterflies of varied colours were resting upon orchid buds; monkeys jumping from one branch to another; a quiet graceful sleeping wood. The ferocious night having ended, the wild forest-inmates were at this hour sunk in careless sleep inside bushes and grassy thickets.

you feeling frightfully uneasy, Bengalee Shiukumari asked almost inaudibly.

Shiukumari asked almost inaudibly, "Are you feeling frightfully uneasy, Bengalee Babu ?"

"No, not at all," Mahitosh heaved a long sigh.

"Not feeling uneasy ? Where have you chanced to come leaving your dear hearth and home ! It is a jungle, and we are all jungle-folk. There is no earthly reason why you should like it."

"Yet it's far better than a British jail," Mahitosh smiled.

"That of course I must admit."

Suddenly her mind grew laden with sorrow—only so much better, far better than a British jail ? Is here nothing better than that ? The jungle's calm cool shade—the sal flowers shaken down by breeze—the intoxicating moonlight at night — Jaldhaka's pleasing murmur—Kanchanjangha's golden crown. The wild plantain leaves on the stone-carved path on distant hills shake in wind, the sound of stones set rolling by some animal's fleeting legs make her imagine that her beloved from a far-away land is coming to a tryst riding a grey. She then feels a burning desire.....

But Mahitosh did not share Shiukumari's desire. Mother India in shackles—26th January—night-long devotion behind prison bars—the August movement —do or die. Away from that turbulent world, away from the swinging stirring great life, where has he been cast off ? Agitated Bombay—frenzied Calcutta. Cries of Bandemataram on every street—bludgeons—guns—blood—law and order. All these move round before the eyes like a motion picture. Separated from there, flung out by the rolling waves of that roaring sea, shall he ever lie inert on an unknown shore of life like the rocky sandbank of the African wilds ? Will a cold meteor ever lie sunk at the bottom of the deep sea of death, disorbed from the firmament where clusters of spinning stars and blazing nebulae are together forming a cataclysm of destruction and creation ? "You were kind enough to give me a refuge," said Mahitosh, "Don't know how I shall repay this debt."

"We don't accept repayment of the debt of kindness, Bengalee Babu," her voice grew sharp. "That is not our custom. But let us go now, the day is gone far."

The taunt took him by surprise. What was the meaning of this sudden cut ? It was indeed vain to try to comprehend a wild woman's character, incomprehensible as the jungles of the Dooars. Without a word, Mahitosh took up the small burden of wood.

A breach of measure had occurred in the sal wood's poetry, softened by shades. On the hill far off, a wild elephant gave out a cry that came by air like a grave thunder hushing up Jaldhaka's tumultuous murmur.

The meteor is displaced from its orbit : but it does not want to get cold—it burns within the heart without cease. Yet there's no way out; a shelter must at any cost be had for a few days till Arabinda returns.

And Mahitosh knew—at least his mind positively knew—Arabinda would come back. Wherever and

however might he be, he must find him out, by any means. One might evade even the claws of death, but to evade Arabinda's eyes—it was impossible; as if his two eyes, growing into millions, lay scattered everywhere—in the sky, air and forest.

Even so, days wore on. He gathered grass-straws, hunted wild hens with Kulabir's shot-gun and searched for deer. Walking through the jungles, he felt that perhaps Arabinda would presently appear before him from somewhere like a shadow-figure.

But Arabinda did not turn up. Instead, Shiukumari would appear from nowhere like the sylvan goddess—a water-jar held at her waist and a wet sari clinging fast to every nick and crease of her elegant body. Flashing a smile and darting a sharp glance, she would ask, "Got a game ?"

Mahitosh stopped startled, his look caged by her faultless physical grace. His heart got tinged. A confession of subconsciousness came out unconsciously : "I think I have got one."

"Really ?" her eyes were set on flames.

"Really." As if the unseen satan gave his shackles a pull—Mahitosh advanced step by step : "I seem to have got it after a pretty long search."

Not tarrying further, Shiukumari quickly vanished into the woods, raising in each of his blood corpuscles a violent wave of her luscious body movement. But the next moment he felt like rid of the stupor of a nightmare. He thought himself guilty, despicably fallen from his vow, devious from his devotion. Things have come to such a pass at last ! Rambling about wilds and woods, I'm making love to a hill girl throwing into oblivion the vow of the 26th January !

Mahitosh pressed his head with both hands. No, no more. What's this snare I am slowly getting enmeshed in ! A freedom's soldier I am—wailing of mother India in fetters echoes from Cape Comorin to the snow-capped peak of the Everest. What's this illusion I am gripped in ! Am I doing my duty in this fashion ?

At Kulabir's shop a rendezvous of liquor-greedy coolies and hillmen went on right from the evening till nine in the night. Handicapped by a wooden leg, Kulabir could not look after everything alone; Shiukumari assisted him. She served liquor-pots to customers along with a heart-robbing smile; their hearts became tinged—tinged with the hue of intoxication, with the colour of Shiukumari's mellow eyes. They paid more than due by mistake.

And during all these hours, Mahitosh sat silent on a cot behind the hut wearing a pair of Kulabir's loose shorts. For this period he had to go into self exile. Coolies came, came their headman. Sometimes some of the forest office staff stepped in. From his hiding Mahitosh could hear their bustle and uproar and snatches of unintelligible songs; their ribald reckless gusty laughter threatened to shake Kulabir's tiny thatch-hut. And—piercing through all these radiated a light sharp laugh—Shiukumari was laughing.

Mahitosh longed to rid himself of his illusion. But can anyone really get rid of it ? Shiukumari is laughing—the hill girl is laughing a practised laugh just to please her liquor-customers. That matters little to me. But does it not really matter to me ? Why then do I feel such heart-burning, why do I think she is deceiving me ?

The sylvan moonlight had ended, now had appeared the dark moon—and the wild darkness. Buried in the evening gloom, Mahitosh sat quiet, set upon by swarms of mosquitoes. Within his heart rose a helpless wail of woe—Arabinda, Arabinda ! Where have you gone now leaving me in the lurch ? Should I myself go away ? Should I get off at once through this sal wood shrouded in black gloom, wading across the sharp stream of the black-dyed Jaldhaka ?

But this idea too did not encourage him much. Someone seemed to have robbed him to the last ounce of all his strength. He was afraid of going away alone, of plunging into a fresh uncertainty once more. Was he imprisoned for ever in these jungles, within this small cottage of hillmen ? Did he lose his power to proceed forward ? Arabinda—if only he were here now !

Clamour in Kulabir's shop was gradually dimming down. No more could be heard Shiukumari's peals of laughter. There were now only sweet jingles ringing at intervals—Kulabir was counting coins striking them on the wooden box.

Suddenly a kerosene lamp's flickering light fell upon Mahitosh's face : before him was the fairy queen of the forest realm, a lamp in hand, an amusing look playing in eyes : "Come, Bengalee Babu, come inside. They have all left."

Spellbound, he got up. Shiukumari stretched her hand as easily as she did on the first day : "Come along, come along."

And that wiped everything off his mind. The heart-burn her reckless laughter had caused him a little while ago no longer pierced his ears. Has this girl completely fascinated him ?

* * * *

Days were passing on—but did not pass any further. Life's inevitable complexities appeared on the scene. One day Baldeo, the timber-merchant, showed his face at the liquor-shop under cover of darkness. Spreading a crooked smile all over his countenance, he asked, "How do you do, Shiukumari ?"

Her blood turned cold; Kulabir cast a timid suspicious glance. A dangerous devil he was, this Baldeo. Not addicted to liquor, he would not have come over this way had he not had a design in his sleeves. But what could it be ? Kulabir tried to guess.

He was a man of consequence, this timber-merchant—and as crafty as he was cruel. There was none that did not fear him. Yet, Shiukumari did never fear this man. One day between two lights, Baldeo had caught hold of her hands and made love to her. As much money you want—he had proposed.

But he could not finish. When he had raised his head coming round from the dizziness of a powerful slap, there was no trace of anyone on the river's sandy spread. Only the roars of waters had been laughing at him.

Baldeo had galloped his pony off. But Shiukumari knew well he had not forgotten the slap's burning pain—neither would he forget it so easily.

"I am quite all right," she replied pulling a long face.

"Yes, you look quite all right," again he smiled a savage smile. In his two narrow eyes shimmered a serpentine flash of hilly revenge.

Ordinarily Baldeo did not take drinks, but heaven knew what had happened to him today—he

went on quaffing liquor, pot after pot. Handing a tenner to Kulabir, he said, "Go on, Thapaji, go on."

The night grew on. All the customers left one by one, but Baldeo would not get up. Impatient, his pony was repeatedly striking ground with legs and chasing mosquitoes with tail-lashes. Baldeo did not fear encounters with wild animals on forest-ways; immeasurably strong in physique, he could slay a tiger with dagger-stabs.

He stepped forward soon as Kulabir went inside the room on some business. Fixing fast his blood-shot ferocious eyes upon Shiukumari's, he asked, "Have you given shelter to an absconder ?"

"Who has told you ?" She shook violently all over from head to foot.

"Can you throw dust in my eyes ?" Baldeo said riveting his gaze on the helpless face of the prey in his grip with the mirth of a satiated malice. "As many as seven eyes I possess. Right tomorrow the police will be informed. Not alone that Bengalee Babu, you too shall be handcuffed, and vour father as well."

A shriek came out of her parched throat.

"Listen, Shiu," he continued, "none else but myself knows this. I can save you, can also spare that Bengalee Babu, I can. But, look, not out of pity. Tonight I shall be waiting for you. If you come, there will be no trouble. If you do not, well, all of you shall go to police custody tomorrow."

With vacant speechless eyes, Shiukumari remained gazing at him.

Drawing his glittering dagger out of its sheath, he tested its edge as if purposelessly, and then said, "Money is no consideration. You will have whatever you desire if only you can satisfy me. Possibly you know I traded in timber during the war. But remember—tonight. Should you fail, do not blame me for what may happen tomorrow morning."

He rode on his horse staggeringly and galloped out of sight at full fling illuminating the woods with the dazzling flash of a seven-cell hunting torch.

But all this Mahitosh was not aware of; he was then sunk in a sound sleep lying on a rope-cot within the hut; without was blowing a gentle breeze raising a soft murmur among sal leaves; coming in through holes in the walls, it caressed him all over with its tender touch. He was dreaming. What dream ? Not of the 26th January, nor of the 9th August. The surging waves of the banner-bearing frenzied multitude have dived somewhere into the deep of oblivion. The sylvan moonlight lies asleep on Jaldhaka's rough sandy lap. Is it a marble figure fanning him with a veil after sprinkling water on his eyes and face ? Or a nymph of light descending from the heaven resting on wings of dreams ?

He woke up startled. Someone had dashed upon his chest. Heavy breaths fell upon his face—he could clearly feel tossings of an agitated expanding heart. In the dim light of the kerosene lamp he saw it was Shiukumari !

"Come, let us flee. Take me away."

Confounded by a sudden passion, Mahitosh ardently took the hilly girl in his arms and pressed her fast to his bosom : "Where shall we go ?" she was choked, her voice was shaking violently in an unbearable emotion : "Wherever you please."

Mahitosh was gradually regaining his senses : "But....how can I take you away ? Surely we can't run away from here empty-handed. There is danger at every step. Money, money is needed to

(Continued On Page 204)

Fixing fast his ferocious bloodshot eyes upon Shiukumari's, he asked, "Have you given shelter to an absconder?"

m a bit sceptic !

Prafulla Kanti Ghosh

"Malyadan"

The Garlanding

Rabindranath Tagore

Translated By Sheila Chatterjee

THE morning had been rather chilly. At midday the breeze warmed up a little and began to blow from the south.

From the verandah where Jatin sat the meadow outside could be seen through a gap between a jackfruit tree on one side and a Sirish on the other at one corner of the garden. That empty meadow glimmered in the sunlight of early spring. An unmetalled road ran along one side of it. Emptying its load, a bullock cart was returning leisurely along it towards the village. The cartman with a *gamcha* on his head sang as if he had nothing to do in the world.

Just then from behind, a laughing feminine voice said, "What, Jatin, are you thinking of some one you knew in your previous birth?"

Jatin said, "Why Potol, am I so unfortunate that if I have to think I must draw on my previous birth ?"

The girl who was known as Potol among her relatives said, "Stop bragging. I am well informed of your affairs in this life, sir. Shame, shame! A grown up man, you could not bring home even just a wife! Even Dhana, that gardener of ours, has a wife. Quarrelling with her twice a day he lets the people of the entire neighbourhood know that he really has a wife. And staring at the fields you pretend as if you are meditating on someone's moon-like face! Don't I see through all these tricks? They are only a show put up to fool others. You know, Jatin, a known Brahman does not need a sacred thread to be identified by. Does that Dhana of ours stare out at the fields like you on the pretence of suffering separation? Even on the day of the greatest separation I have seen him spend his day with a hoe under the trees, but I never saw such a dreamy look in his eyes. And you, sir, in all your life haven't seen the face of a wife—you have grown old only dissecting dead bodies in the hospital and learning lessons by heart—why do you stare at the sky at midday with such a soulful look? No, I don't like all this nonsense. It makes me burn with irritation."

Jatin folded his hands and said, "Enough, enough, that will do. Don't shame me any more. Your Dhana is really blessed. I will try to follow h

ideal. I won't waste more words. I will exchange wedding garlands with the first *Kath-Kurani* (a girl who picks up stray bits of wood and twigs for a living) whose face I see on waking up. I can't bear such ignominy any more."

"Then this is final?"

"Yes."

"All right. Then come with me."

"Where will I go?"

"Come and see."

"No, no, some mischief must be brewing in your head. I will not move from here."

"All right, then sit here." Saying this, Potol walked away quickly.

* * * *

Let the parties be introduced. Between the ages of Jatin and Potol there was but the difference of one day. Because Potol was a day older than Jatin, he was unwilling to show her any kind of social respect. They were first cousins. They had all along played together. Because she was not addressed as Didi (elder sister or cousin), Potol had in her childhood complained much to her father and uncle against Jatin; but no form of punishment proved effective—she remained just Potol even to the only cousin younger than herself.

Potol was plump and round, full of the spirit of joy. No one in society had any power which could keep down her joking laughter. She had never been solemn before her mother-in-law even. At first there was much talk about it. But in the end all had to admit defeat and say, "That is her nature." After that it turned out so that the seriousness of the elders crumbled to dust, struck by Potol's uncheckable joyousness. Potol could not stand heavy hearts, long faces or worry anywhere about her. The air about her seemed loaded with electricity with her endless stories, laughter and jokes.

Potol's husband, Harakumar Babu, was a Deputy Magistrate transferred from the Bihar side and posted in the Excise Department in Calcutta. Through fear of plague he stayed in a rented garden house at Bally from where he travelled to Calcutta and back. He was about to bring his mother and one or two relatives from his country home as he would have to go often to the mofussil on inspection of excise work when Jatin, newly passed out as a doctor and without any practice or reputation came invited by his cousin to spend there a week or so.

Coming from a Calcutta lane into the midst of trees and shrubs Jatin sat in the shady quiet verandah, drowsy with the charm of a spring noon when the above mentioned teasing began.

When Potol went away, he settled down again comfortably in his chair, at peace for a moment. His mind wandered in the alleys of the fairy tales of childhood, following the mention of the *Kath-Kurani.*

Then again he was startled by Potol's laughing voice.

Dragging another girl by the hand, Potol came and placed her before Jatin. She said, "Listen, Kurani" (foundling girl).

The girl asked, "Yes, Didi?"

"How do you like this cousin of mine?"

The girl began to observe Jatin without em-

I won't waste more words. I will exchange wedding garlands with the first Kath-Kurani whose face I see on waking up.

barrassment. Potol said, "Well, isn't he good looking?"

The girl judged solemnly, inclined her head and said, "Yes, he is good looking."

Jatin, red with embarrassment, rose from his chair and said, "Oh! Potol, what childishness is this?"

"Am I being childish or are you behaving like an old man? You act as if you were older than all the hills and trees!"

Jatin fled. Running after him, Potol cried, "Oh Jatin, don't be afraid, don't be afraid; you won't have to exchange wedding garlands at once. There is no auspicious hour in these months of *Phalgun* and *Chaitra*. There is still time."

The girl, whom Potol called Kurani, remained amazed. Her age would be about sixteen. Her body was slim. Of the look of her face there is not much to be said except that there was one thing extraordinary about it—somehow it seemed to remind one of a wild deer. Bluntly speaking, it could even be called want of intelligence, but it was not idiocy; it was only immaturity of intelligence which had not spoilt the beauty of Kurani's face but on the contrary given it a distinction.

In the evening Harakumar Babu returned from Calcutta, saw Jatin and said, "So you have come, Jatin? It is good. You will have to do a bit of doctoring. While we were up country during the time of the famine we adopted a girl and have been bringing her up. Potol calls her Kurani. The girl's parents and she herself were lying under a tree near our bungalow. When we heard about them and went there we saw that her parents were dead. The girl was just alive. Potol has saved her life with great care. No one knows about her caste. If any one questions it Potol always says—'She is twice born, a Brahman. She died once and was born in our home again. Her former caste has got lost somewhere.' At first the girl had begun to call Potol 'Mother.' Scolding her, Potol said, 'Don't you dare call me Mother; call me Didi' (elder sister). Potol says, 'If such a big girl calls me Mother, I shall feel old.' Perhaps due to the starvation during that famine or due to some other cause she has something like a colic pain from time to time. You must examine her well and see what is wrong with her. Tulsi, go and call Kurani, will you?"

Kurani while doing her hair came to Harakumar Babu's room with her unfinished plait swaying down her back. She remained looking with her deer-like eyes fixed on them both.

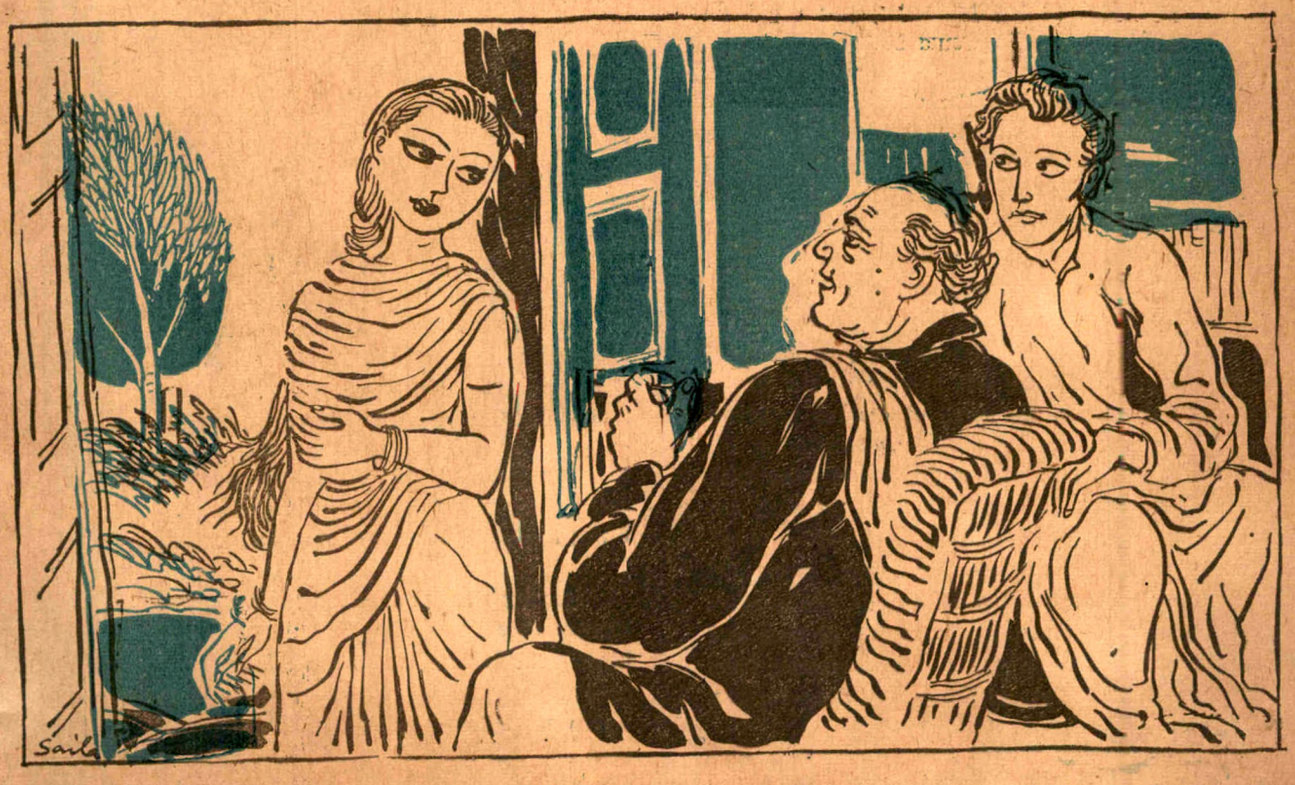
Seeing Jatin hesitate, Harakumar Babu said to him, "You are embarrassed for no reason, Jatin. She looks very much grown up but, as in a green coconut, there is only water splashing inside her. Up till now there isn't a sign of any kernel inside. She understands nothing. Don't mistake her for a woman, she is a forest deer."

Jatin began to carry out his medical duties. Kurani did not show any hesitation. Jatin said, "I don't find anything wrong with her physically."

Potol entered the room suddenly and said, "There is nothing wrong with her heart either. Do you want to have it tested?"

Saying this she went near Kurani and, touching her chin, said, "Kurani, do you like this cousin of mine?"

Kurani nodded her head and said, "Yes."
Potol asked, "Will you marry my cousin?"



She remained looking with her deer-like eyes fixed on them both.

Kurani again nodded her head and said, "Yes."

Potol and Harakumar Babu laughed out. Not understanding the cause of their laughter Kurani covered her face with a smile in imitation of theirs and looked on.

Jatin became red and embarrassed and said, "I say, Potol, this is really too much. It is all wrong. Harakumar Babu, you give Potol too much indulgence."

Harakumar Babu said, "Else I too can't expect any indulgence from her. But Jatin, you are so upset only because you don't know Kurani. I am afraid, with your embarrassment you will teach even Kurani to feel shy. Don't feed her with the fruit of the tree of knowledge. Everybody else has been joking with her—if in the midst of it all you show seriousness then it won't be fair to her."

Potol said, "That's why I could never get along with Jatin. Constant quarrelling has been going on between us from our childhood. He is too serious."

Harakumar said, "Is that why you have made a habit of quarrelling? Now that the cousin has slipped away....."

Potol said, "Lying again ? There is no fun in quarrelling with you. I don't even try."

Harakumar said, "I acknowledge defeat at the very beginning."

"As if it were a great achievement! If instead of admitting defeat at the beginning you could do so at the end, how happy I would be!"

At night Jatin opened the doors and windows of his bedroom and thought of many things. What a terrible shadow must have been cast on the life of the girl who had seen her own father and mother die of starvation! The cruel incident had made her so grown up. Was it right to make fun of her? The Creator had in His mercy cast a veil over her intelligence. If this veil were raised, then what terrible signs would be seen of the destructive play of Fate! That afternoon when Jatin was looking at the spring sky through the trees, the smell of distant jackfruit blossoms became fainter and was overwhelming his senses, his mind beheld the entire world hazy with a mist of sweetness; that unintelligent girl with her two deer-like eyes had dissolved that golden mist. The world, miserable with hunger and thirst—its body hardened with pain—which stands like a giant behind the songs of birds, the humming of bees and the murmur of leaves in the spring, appeared from behind the artistic beauty of the parted drop-curtain.

The next evening Kurani had an attack of that pain. Potol hurriedly sent for Jatin. Jatin came and saw that there were cramps in Kurani's hands and feet due to the pain; her body was stiff. Having sent for medicines Jatin ordered hot water to be filled in bottles. Potol said, "Are you so great a doctor that you can't rub her feet with a bit of hot oil? Can't you see, the soles of her feet are cold like ice?"

Jatin began to rub the soles of the patient's feet vigorously with hot oil. The treatment went on till late at night. Returning from Calcutta, Harakumar Babu asked again and again for news of Kurani. Jatin understood that Harakumar Babu's condition was coming to a standstill through Potol's absence after his return from work; that was the explanation of his frequent enquiry about Kurani. Jatin said, "Harakumar Babu is getting restless; you go, Potol."

Potol said, "Of course you will put the blame on someone else! I have understood who is restless. You will feel relieved if I go. Yet you blush with shame at every word. Who would know all this was hidden inside you?"

"All right, for heaven's sake stay here. Spare me. I shall be relieved only when you shut your mouth. I had misunderstood the situation—perhaps Harakumar Babu is at peace; he doesn't often get a chance like this."

When feeling soothed, Kurani opened her eyes. Potol said, "To make you open your eyes, your bridegroom has begged at your feet for a long time today. Is that why you took such a long time today to come round? Shame! Shame! Take the dust of his feet."

Understanding this to be her duty, Kurani at once solemnly made obeisance to Jatin, touching his feet. Jatin walked out of the room quickly.

* * * *

From the next day there began a regular campaign to tease Jatin. Jatin had sat down to his food when Kurani came and began nonchalantly to fan the flies away. Becoming concerned, Jatin said, "Let it be, let it be; there's no need for it." Surprised at this forbidding, Kurani turned her face round to glance once at the room behind and then again began to sway the fan. Addressing the one hidden inside, Jatin said, "Potol, if you worry me like this, then I won't eat. I am getting up now, leaving my food."

Saying this as soon as he was about to arise, Kurani threw down the fan. Jatin saw a line of intense pain on the unintelligent face of the girl. At once repentant, he sat down again. Jatin also had begun to believe that Kurani understood nothing, that she did not feel shame or sorrow. That day in one moment he saw that there was an exception to every rule, and no one could say from before when

that exception would suddenly take place. Kurani flung down the fan and went away.

Next day in the morning Jatin sat in the verandah. The *Kokils* had begun to clamour very much in the trees and the breeze was heavy with the fragrance of mango blossoms when he saw Kurani, a cup of tea in her hand, seem to hesitate a little. There was a look of pathetic fear in her deer-like eyes, as if she could not make out whether Jatin would be angry or not if she took his tea to him. Feeling sorry, Jatin went forward to her and took the cup from her hand. Could one inflict pain on this fawn in human form for a trifling reason? As soon as he took the cup he saw Potol suddenly appear at the other end of the verandah. Laughing silently, she shook her fist at him, as if to say, "Now you have been well and truly caught!"

That evening Jatin was reading a medical journal when startled by the smell of flowers he saw Kurani enter the room with a garland of *Bakul* flowers in her hand. Jatin said to himself, 'This is going too far. It is not right to allow further indulgence to this cruel joke of Potol.' He said to Kurani, "What a shame, Kurani! Don't you understand, your elder sister is making fun of you?"

Before his words were finished Kurani was about to go away, frightened and shrinking. Jatin then called her quickly and said, "Kurani, let me see your garland." Saying this he took the garland from her hand. A radiant happiness came out perceptibly on Kurani's face. At that moment a bubbling sound of loud laughter from someone unseen was heard.

* * * *

Next morning on going to Jatin's room to tease him Potol found the room empty. Only a piece of paper was written,—'I am running away. Shri Jatin.'

"Kurani, so your bridegroom has fled? Couldn't you keep him?" Saying this, Potol tugged at Kurani's plait and went away to her household work.

It took Kurani some time to understand the situation. She stood like a picture staring fixedly before her. Then slowly coming to Jatin's room she found it empty. The garland she had presented the previous evening lay on the table.

The spring morning was sweet and soothing; the sunlight had come through the shaking branches of the *Krishnachura* and, blending with shadows, fallen on the verandah. A squirrel ran about with its tail on its back and all the birds singing in many tunes failed in spite of all their efforts to finish what they had to say. The joy of life was bubbling over in this corner of the earth, in this portion of the world created partly by the shadows of thick leaves and partly by sunlight. In the midst of it all, the girl devoid of intelligence was unable to comprehend any reasonable meaning of her own life and of everything about her. What had happened? Why had it happened this way? And after that why did this morning, this house, each and every thing become so entirely empty? She, whose capacity to understand was limited, was suddenly lowered down one day by someone into the mysterious bottomless cavern of pain of her own heart—without even a lamp in her

Jatin then called her quickly and said, "Kurani let me see your garland".

hand. Who could draw her up again to this world, to this self-forgetful noise of trees, deer and birds where life overflowed of itself?

After finishing her household work, Potol came to look for Kurani and saw her in Jatin's deserted room lying on the floor, holding on to one post of the bed, as if she was entreating the empty bed by its feet, as if she was pouring down in fruitless hope at the feet of emptiness the bowl of nectar which was hidden in her heart. Crumpled on the floor, with dishevelled hair and disarrayed clothes, that girl seemed to be saying in the language of intense silence, "Accept me, oh, accept me. Do take me."

Becoming surprised, Potol asked, "What are you doing, Kurani?"

Kurani did not get up; she remained lying as she was. As soon as Potol came near and touched her, she began to sob wildly.

Potol then understood and said, "You silly girl, you have completely ruined everything. You are lost."

Potol told Harakumar of Kurani's predicament and said, "What an awful calamity has taken place! What were you doing? Why didn't you forbid me?"

Harakumar said, "I am never used to forbidding you. Would it have been any use even if I had done so?"

"What kind of a husband are you? If I make a mistake, can't you stop me by force? Why did you allow me to play this game?"

Saying so, she ran and putting her arms round the prostrate girl's neck cried, "Sweet sister of mine, tell me in full what you have to say."

Alas ! What language had Kurani in which to present in words the unspoken mystery of her own heart ? She lay with her entire heart pressed on a pain which was beyond expression. What that pain was, whether that happened to anyone else in the world or not, what people called it, — of that Kurani knew nothing. She could only speak through crying; to express the thoughts of her heart there was no other way.

Potol said, "Kurani, your Didi is very naughty, but she never even dreamt that you would believe her words like this. Why did you make such a mistake ? Kurani, look up once at your Didi's face, forgive her."

But Kurani's heart had then turned away. She could not look up at Potol's face at all. She remained hiding her face down between her arms even more closely. Without understanding everything properly, she was angry with Potol in a blind way. Potol then slowly disengaged her arms and got up, and standing silently like a marble statue by the window she stared at the row of areca palms glimmering in the spring sunshine while tears streamed down her eyes.

* * * *

Next day Kurani could not be seen any more. Potol used to dress her lovingly in fine clothes and jewellery. She herself was easy-going and took no care of her dress, satisfying all her desire of dressing up through Kurani. Those clothes and jewellery collected over a long time lay on the floor of the room. The Balas and bangles of her wrists, even the little clove-flower nose-stud she had taken off and left behind as if she had tried to rub off her body all the long love of her Potol-Didi.

Harakumar Babu informed the police so that they might search for Kurani. That year so many people were fleeing in so many directions on account of the plague that singling out one particlar person from the crowd of fugitives became difficult for the police. Having experienced much suffering and embarrassment through running after wrong persons a few times by mistake, Harakumar Babu gave up the search. She whom they had

"Why did you make such a mistake? Kurani look up once at your Didi's face, forgive her."

received from the lap of the unknown hid herself again in the lap of that same unknown.

* * * *

Through special effort Jatin had got himself appointed as a doctor in the plague hospital that year. One day having finished his midday meal at home he went to the hospital and heard that a new patient had been admitted into the women's ward. The police had picked her up from the streets.

Jatin went to see her. The greater part of the girl's face was covered by a sheet. First Jatin lifted her hand and felt her pulse. The pulse did not show much fever but extreme weakness. Then removing the cover from her face for examination he saw that it was none other than Kurani herself.

Meanwhile Jatin had collected all information about Kurani from Potol. Those two deer-like eyes of hers, shadowed with the unexpressed feelings of her heart, had constantly spread tearless sorrow on Jatin's meditating gaze during intervals of his work. That day the long eyelashes of her eyes closed in illness had drawn a line of darkness on her wasted cheeks. The moment he saw her, someone seemed to clutch at his heart. After moulding this one girl with such care, lovely and soft as a flower, why did the Creator float her down from famine on to plague ? How did the delicate heart, which lay exhausted on the bed that day, bear the blows of so many disasters, the burden of so much pain, in its little span of life ? Where did it hold them all ? Why did Jatin come into her life like a third calamity from somewhere and get entangled in it ? Suppressed sighs kept striking at the door of his heart — but the pressure of those blows struck at least one rapid sequence of notes of happiness on the strings of his heart. That love which is rare in the world had suddenly fallen of itself at noontide on a day in spring like a bunch of full blown *Madhavi* flowers at Jatin's feet without his asking for it. Who in this world could lay a claim to that love which fainted like this after coming up to the door of death, the love which was an offering fit for the gods ?

Sitting beside Kurani, Jatin began to feed her with sips of warm milk. She went on sipping the milk and after a long time opened her eyes with a sigh. Staring at Jatin's face, she tried to remember him like some distant dream. When Jatin shook her gently, placing his hand on her forehead and called her, "Kurani", then the last haze of her unconsciousness suddenly disappeared; she recognised Jatin, and at once a tear-softened veil of love came down over her eyes. A vast soft serenity gathered on Kurani's eyes like the heavy solemn-looking monsoon sky at the first gathering of clouds.

Jatin said with tender care, 'Kurani, drink up this little milk." Kurani sat up a little and, looking fixedly at Jatin's face from above the cup, she drank up that milk slowly.

A hospital doctor cannot sit all the time beside one patient. The work suffers, neither does it look well. When Jatin stood up to attend to his other duties, Kurani's eyes became full of anguish with fear and despair. Holding her hands Jatin consoled her, saying, "Don't be afraid, Kurani. I will be back again soon."

Jatin told the hospital authorities that the newly admitted patient was not suffering from plague; she had become weak only through want of food. It might be dangerous for her if she were kept there with plague patients.

With much special endeavour Jatin obtained permission to remove Kurani elsewhere, and took her to his own lodgings. He also wrote a letter to Potol giving her all the news.

* * * *

That evening there was no one in the room except the doctor and the patient. At her head a kerosene lamp shaded with coloured paper spread a shadowy dim light, and on the bracket a timepiece ticked away in the silent room, swinging its pendulum.

Placing his hand on Kurani's forehead, Jatin said, "How do you feel, Kurani ?"

Giving no reply to his question, Kurani kept Jatin's hand pressed down on her forehead.

Jatin again asked, "Are you feeling better ?"

Closing her eyes a little, Kurani said, "Yes."

Jatin asked, "What is this round your neck, Kurani ?"

Kurani tried to hide the thing, hastily drawing up her clothes. Jatin saw, it was a dried up garland of *Bakul* flowers. Then he remembered what that garland was. While the timepiece went on ticking, Jatin sat silently and went on thinking. This was Kurani's first effort to hide, her first attempt at concealing the feelings of her heart. Kurani had been a fawn. When did she become a young woman burdened with the sufferings of her heart ? The light and the heat of what sun had dispelled the fog overspreading her intelligence, and so suddenly revealed her shame, her anxiety and her sorrow ?

At about two or half past two at night Jatin had fallen asleep while seated in his chair. Suddenly waking up startled by the noise of a door being opened, he saw Potol and Harakumar Babu enter the room with a large bag.

Harakumar said, "Getting your letter I went to bed thinking I would come tomorrow morning,

At midnight Potol said, 'If I go tomorrow morning, I shall not be able to see Kurani. I have to go immediately'. Potol could not be persuaded anyhow to stay on there. Sending for a carriage we set out at once."

Potol said to Harakumar, "Go and sleep in Jatin's bed."

With a slight show of protest Harakumar went and lay down in Jatin's room. It did not take him long to fall asleep either.

Returning, Potol called Jatin to a corner of the room and asked, "Is there any hope ?"

Going near Kurani, Jatin felt her pulse and shook his head, signifying that there was no hope.

Not showing herself to Kurani, Potol took Jatin aside and asked, "Jatin, tell me the truth. Don't you love Kurani ?"

Giving no reply to Potol, Jatin came and sat down beside Kurani's bed. Holding her hand, he shook it and called, "Kurani", "Kurani".

Opening her eyes, Kurani said with but the hint of a serene sweet smile, "Yes, Dada Babu ?"

Jatin said, "Kurani, put this garland of yours about my neck."

Kurani kept staring at Jatin's face without a wink, no sign of comprehension in her look.

Jatin said, "Won't you give me your garland ?"

Receipt of this little indulgence of Jatin's affection revived in Kurani's mind a slight piqued feeling caused by his previous want of love. She said, "What's the use, Dada Babu ?"

Raising her head between his hands, Jatin said, "I love you, Kurani."

Hearing this, Kurani remained still for a moment. Then tears in abundance coursed down her eyes. Getting down by the bed, Jatin knelt and placed his lowered head near Kurani's hand. Taking the garland off her neck, Kurani put it round Jatin's.

Then Potol went near her and called, "Kurani."

Forcing brightness into her emaciated face, Kurani asked, "Yes, Didi ?

Going near her, Potol held her hand and said, "You aren't angry with me any more, sister ?"

With serene soft eyes Kurani said, "No, Didi."

Potol said, "Jatin, will you go to the other room for a while ?"

When Jatin went to the side room, Potol opened the bag and from within it took out all of Kurani's clothes and jewellery. Without disturbing the patient much, she wrapped carefully a red Banaras sari over her worn clothes. She slipped on a bangle on one hand after the other, and then two Balas. After that she called out, "Jatin".

As soon as Jatin came, Potol made him sit on the bed, and put into his hands a gold neck-chain of Kurani's. Raising Kurani's head slowly, Jatin put it round her neck.

When the light of dawn fell on Kurani's face, she did not see that light any more. The look of unfaded beauty on her face made one think that she was not dead — but she seemed immersed in a dream of bottomless bliss.

When it was time to take the dead body away, Potol fell on Kurani's breast and said crying, "Sister, you are fortunate. Your death has been happier than your life."

Looking at Kurani, at that serene peaceful picture of death, Jatin began thinking, "The Owner of the treasure has taken it away. He has not deprived me either."

Chaitra, 1309.
(March-April, 1902)

Mälyadän. — The reference is to the exchange of garlands between the bride and bridegroom which is an essential part of the Hindu wedding ceremony. According to one of the ancient forms of Hindu marriage, the Gandharva, only the exchange of garlands could be regarded as a complete wedding.

Kuräni — A foundling girl. Also 'Kuräni' is an abbreviation of Käth-Kuräni, a girl who picks up stray bits of wood and twigs for a living — hence a beggar maid. A figure of Indian fairy tales akin to Cinderella. Reference to a Käth-Kuräni was made by Jatin in a joke before he had met Kuräni.

Potol put into his hand a gold neck-chain of Kurani's ..... Jatin put it round her neck.

The BOX of JEWELS

By PREM CHAND

CHANDER PRAKASH had no choice after passing his B.A. except to take up a job as a private tutor. His mother had died when he was still quite young. The father also closed his eyes on the world the year Prakash passed his B.A. With his father's death, all his dreams of a successful career vanished from the horizon. His father had held a high office and with his assistance, Chander Prakash was certain of a promising career. The father's death put an end to all his hopes and his ambitions. Married as he was to an educated girl fond of good living, Chander Prakash found the meagre thirty rupees that he got as tuition fee not even sufficient for a bare living. But the Thakur Saheb whose son he taught provided him with a free furnished house next to his. This to some extent, compensated for the low salary; for, a house like that itself would have cost Prakash at least twenty rupees a month. The work was also light. He taught the boy only for two hours a day. The Thakur and the Thakurain were both very fond of Prakash and considered him almost as a member of the family. There was no household matter on which he was not consulted.

* * * *

It was evening. Prakash had just finished his lessons with his ward, Virendra, and was about to leave when the Thakurain came in and said, "Don't go just yet, son, there is something I have to consult you about." Prakash wondered what it could be which even Virendra was not supposed to know. Taking him aside, Umadevi, the Thakurain, said, "I have received a very good offer for Viroo. Should we get him married ?" Prakash smiled and said, "This is a matter which Viroo Babu alone can decide, I am afraid." "No, I want your opinion", said the Thakurain. Prakash hesitated for a moment and then said, "What can I say ? Undoubtedly, he is already twenty and is therefore of a marriageable age. But if he gets married he will not be able to study any longer." "So in your opinion," observed the Thakurain, "he ought not to get married as yet." "You are the best judge of this," replied Prakash, "I have put before you both the pros and cons." "In that case we had better get him married", said the Thakurain, "I am afraid if he is left alone for long he may fall into bad company." "There is no such danger", said Prakash, "so long as I am here; but there is no harm in getting him married either if you think that he ought to". "You will have to make all the arrangements", said the Thakurain. Prakash smiled and nodded assent.

The marriage was fixed and preparations began for it. Thakur Sahib was one of those people who completely lacked confidence in himself. In his eyes Prakash's degree was worth much more than his sixty years of experience. The entire arrangements for the marriage were therefore left in Prakash's hands. To be entrusted with spending nearly twelve thousand rupees was no mean honour. The poor tutor of yesterday found himself overnight as the sole manager of Thakur Sahib's affairs. The whole day was spent in talking to cloth merchants, grocers and electricians. If he had wanted, he could have easily made a little fortune on these arrangements. But his conscience did not allow him this meanness especially to a man like Thakur Sahib who had implicit faith in him. The day, however, jewellery worth five thousand rupees was purchased Prakash's feet tottered. Returning home he said to Champa, his wife, "What an unfair world this is. On one side there are people like us who can hardly afford a square meal; on the other are people like Thakur Sahib who spend thousands on jewellery alone. To-day he has purchased ornaments worth five thousand rupees for the daughter-in-law to be. Some of the pieces are really exquisite, masterpieces of good workmanship." Champa spoke in her usual jealous tone, "What satisfaction is that to me ? People like us are born only to slave their way through life." "God is such an unjust creature," said Chander Prakash, "we toil the whole day and

get just enough to eat at the day's end whereas people like Thakur Sahib enjoy life without doing any work, on money left behind by their forefathers." "It's one's stars that are to blame", replied Champa, "if your parents had left you money, you would have done the same. And why talk about jewels alone. I haven't even decent clothes to wear. I am wondering how I shall go to the Thakurain's house for the marriage. I hope I get ill. That will provide a good excuse." And saying this she started crying. Chander Prakash felt both annoyed and ashamed at

I am wondering how I shall go to the Thakurain's house for the marriage. I hope I get ill.' Saying this she started crying.

is situation. Trying to placate his wife, he said, I shall get you a new saree. Our days are also ound to turn some day. And if I am still alive nen, I shall cover you up with jewellery from head o foot." Champa smiled. "Your usual stories gain," she said, "I am satisfied if we keep on get- ng enough to eat." Prakash lowered his head and it his nails not being able to fulfil his boast im- ediately.

When they turned in at night after finishing their meals, the ornaments were still on Prakash's mind. "I could not even dream," he said, "that such beautiful jewellery could be made in this town. You would look like a queen if you wore them." "Jewellery hardly enhances one's beauty," replied Champa, "I have seen women who still look very ugly even after wearing jewellery." "What a selfish man Thakur Sahib is, really," said Prakash, "he did not even offer a piece for you after all the work I am doing for him." "Don't be childish", reprimanded Champa. "What is so childish about it"? argued Prakash, "Hadn't he been such a miser as I know him to be, he would have certainly offered a piece." "I haven't come across any one so far," observed Champa, "who would offer his own daughter-in-law's jewellery to somebody else just like that". But Prakash was not convinced. "I am no mere somebody else", he went on, "I am the tutor of his son and am looking after all the arrangements for the marriage. It won't have hurt him at all if he had given me a piece worth a hundred or two hundred rupees for you. But wealth has such a crippling effect even on the most enlightened minds that generosity and large-heartedness have no place with them."

It was nearly getting on to midnight. Prakash could not sleep. The ornaments appeared again and again before his eyes and disturbed his sleep. Suddenly he got up. "Not even a thing on Champa", he said to himself, "this is the age for girls to enjoy themselves; but look at her. She has to go without even the smallest thing in life." And with these thoughts he stealthily walked out of the room, on to the roof of the house. The roof of Thakur Sahib's house was joined to his and only a five-foot wall separated the two houses. Prakash jumped over the wall and landed lightly on Thakur Sahib's side. There was a deadly silence in the house. "I had better go down the steps straight into Thakur Sahib's room", he said to himself, "if he wakes up I shall merely say that I heard footsteps coming towards the room and followed them. Nobody will doubt my words. If on the other hand, I can lay my hands on the box of jewels without waking anyone up I would have accomplished my mission. Everyone will blame the servants. I shall also say that they must be responsible for the theft. Nobody will even suspect me. After the marriage I shall leave the house and give the jewels to Champa one by one so that she won't also be any the wiser." Even in spite of a perfect plan however, Chander Prakash could notice a sinking feeling in his heart as he went down the steps.

* * * *

It was broad daylight. Prakash was still asleep. Suddenly Champa came running to him and said, "Get up. There has been a theft in Thakur Sahib's house last night. The thieves took away

the box of jewels." Prakash asked, without getting up, "Hasn't anyone been able to catch them ?" "Not a sound was heard", replied Champa, "and the surprising part is that they only removed the box of jewels. How they found the key and how they knew where it was kept is a mystery." "Must be the servants", replied Prakash, casually, "it cannot possibly be an outsider." "But all their servants are old hands", observed Champa, "they have been with the family for years." "It doesn't take long for a man to become dishonest", said Prakash, "they must have got the opportunity and took advantage of it." "Go and help them," said Champa, "The Thakurain is crying her heart out. She calls your name and says how carefully you chose every design and how many months you laboured getting them ready." Prakash got up and went to the Thakur Sahib's house. "Champa just told me about the theft, mother," he said to the Thakurain, feigning worried, "what a calamity." Thakur Sahib was sitting holding his head in his hands. "The surprising thing is," he said, "that no locks have been broken, no doors have been removed, there are no signs of any openings in the walls. From where could the thief have entered the house ?" Thakurain was still crying. "We are undone", she said, "the marriage is so near. But for your ceaseless efforts the jewellery would never have been ready in time. It must be an evil star under which it was purchased." Prakash whispered into Thakur Sahib's ear, "One of your servants must be responsible for the mischief." The Thakurain overheard him and opposed the suggestion. "No," she said, "it cannot be the servants. At times I have left as much as ten thousand rupees lying about in the house and not a pie has ever been lost." Thakur Sahib was, however, inclined to agree with Prakash and said, "You don't know how quickly a man can become dishonest. It can never be said that just because a man has not stolen before, he will never steal. I must report the matter to the police. They will conduct a thorough search and question every one. I am sure the culprit will blurt out the truth when the police manhandles him." Prakash shuddered at the suggestion. For, he thought, if the police did not find the culprit among the servants, they were bound to search his house also. And that would be his undoing. "I don't think," he said, "much would come out of a police investigation." Thakur Sahib was surprised. "You talk like a child, Prakash Babu," he said, "you think the thief will own up all by himself, without any effort on our part." And then as if on second thought, he added "Perhaps you are right. Perhaps it won't be any use reporting the matter to the police. I don't think we will get the jewellery back anyhow." "But something must be done", said Prakash. "It is no use," observed Thakur Sahib, "but if we could get a detective, it might help. But where can one get a detective here. The best thing is to keep quiet." "You can keep quiet," said Prakash "but I cannot. The thief must be found." "I have full faith in the servants," said the Thakurain again "Though I don't know how and from where the thief came but I am sure that the theft has been committed by an outsider. He can come from your side also, you know." Prakash's heart missed a beat "I close my door every night," he said, "the only possibility can be that he entered the house earlier in the evening and hid himself somewhere." .The three went up the roof. Footsteps were visible where Prakash had landed on Thakur Sahib's roof and continued towards Prakash's side. Thakur Sahib saw all this but kept quiet. Prakash said, "There is no doubt now that the thief entered the house from my side." Thakur Sahib nodded and said, "But this is hardly any help. Such clues won't bring back the jewellery. The best thing is to arrange for money and get some new ones made". "I must leave my house immediately," said Prakash. "But it is no fault of yours", replied the Thakur Sahib. "You may not consider it my fault," said Prakash, "but the fact is that the thief entered the house from my side. And my door remains open till late at night. I do not get back from work till ten o'clock

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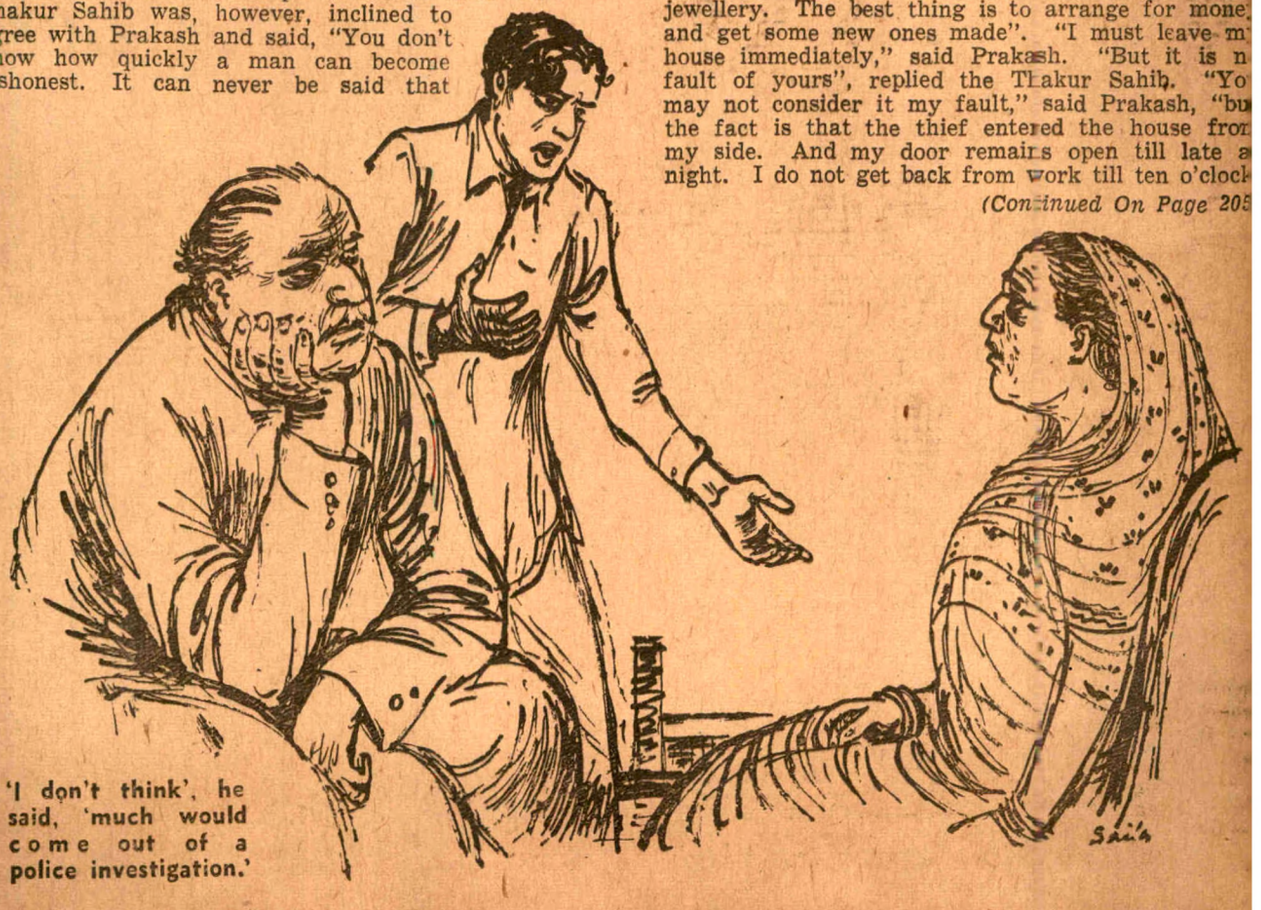

'I don't think', he said, 'much would come out of a police investigation.'

SYLVAN MOONLIGHT

(Continued From Page 192)

avoid them. We have to flee far off, and that is not possible without money."

"Money ?" Shiukumari got up. "How much you need ?"

"Two hundred—three hundred. I can then take you to Sikkim, over to Gangtok direct. That is better, over there we will start life afresh. Let what lies behind be left behind." Mahitosh looked intoxicated. "We will start life anew."

Two hundred—three hundred ! Shiukumari stood like a stone. Where can I have so much money ? A rummage of father's cash-box will bring out not a pie more than a score of rupees; who else better than I knows it !

Mahitosh greedily stretched his hands towards her. But she stepped aside. Two hundred rupees ! Baldeo will be waiting the night over. Thoughts began to boil together like melted metals of a volcano. Only once ! Pollution of a single night ! The life as will come thereafter will wash away everything along with its pure clean flow, will wipe out all her impurities, all the painful memories of the vicious nightmare.

"Come over to my breast," Mahitosh said.

"I am coming after collecting money," Shiukumari went out staggering like a drunkard. A fire was burning in her thoughts—as if she had drunk off a pot of strong wine. Knave is his hunger, this Baldeo's, for he is not prodigal enough to spend as much as three hundred just for a night's pleasure. This trick of his is only to take revenge—to ransack me by treading and crushing my youth as long as I will retain it. I am not the first woman to step into his snare !

But, for me it will be only one night's affair. For all my life lying before, I will give in to the basest defilement and the vilest humiliation of a single night. Then....tomorrow and day after ? By that time we were perhaps crossing over the hills of Bhutan on our way to Sikkim !

Shiukumari vanished into the dark in the manner of a delirious patient that tries to rise up and rush out, maddened by the tearing pain of intense fever raging in all the veins.

And Mahitosh lay on the bed—bewildered. What was this strange swing in all his blood ! He seemed to have been fascinated by a nocturnal spirit. His own past, his life's vow—all had turned false and illusive. The call of the new—the call of an unknown untasted life—a life so varied, so full ! This police chase—these troubled tantalised moments—what harm if he got over them and took a plunge, what loss if he let himself float on a wondrous ocean of adventures !

"Shiu, Shiu !" Mahitosh called in an ear-kissing voice.

Shiu did not come, it was Arabinda. Yes, Arabinda indeed. An inhuman man rose out of the woods; Mahitosh felt struck by a shiver of ice-melted water running through his whole body.

Flashing torch-light upon his face, Arabinda said in a thunderous tone stern in command, "I have found you out after a long search.

"Look, you have a lot to do besides making love to a hill girl over here. Get up."

"Where ?" the voice sounded confused, nervous.

"Twentyfive miles off. You will find there a nice shelter, our party men as well. It won't be hard to do from there underground work in the town. Rise up."

"Just now ?"

"Just now." Teeth in his mouth grated—in his left hand appeared a small revolver. "Why, have you become so ease-loving after passing a few nights in hillmen's home ?"

Mahitosh stood up like a mechanical toy—the hint of the revolver was a bit too obvious.

"A big horse stands ready outside," Arabinda said. "We both have to ride the same horse. Hurry up."

The torch went off. Country-liquor diffused its smell in the quiet dark inside the hut. At a distance the Bhutias were beating cymbals raising tremendous jingle-jangles—they were trying to drive out evil spirits.

Did the stepping sounds of evil spirits vanish along with those of horse-hoofs ?

* * *

Notes worth three hundred rupees earned through extreme humiliation and bitter pain !—the bunch of notes was soaking in sweat within her grip. Shiukumari was running fast through jungles panting. Thick black darkness—a person a cubit off was not visible. Shivers in sal leaves—flaming eyes of wild beasts here and there.

Mahitosh—where amid this black darkness would she find him ? The forest had swallowed him up, had sunk him into its womb leaving no trace. Yet Shiukumari was looking round in the dark. Lacerated by sal seedlings, her feet were bleeding, her whole body was getting scarred by thorns. So much darkness ! If in such impenetrable darkness a little light could be found !

Light was found. It turned sharper and sharper. Cracks of the leaves on fire—fear-stricken outcry of wild hens all around.

Not the sylvan moonlight — it was forest fire !

(Translated from Bengali by Sourin Choudhuri)

THE TRICKY TIGER

(Continued From Page 189)

the forest must be killed today and so I have come prepared with it."

I taunted: "You know everything much in advance—now just measure out how big it is."

I held the rifle under the arm and held two torches in both the hands. Talkie and Jhanu leaned over the tiger and measured him carefully not once but thrice to be sure and declared, "Oh, the tiger is as big as ten feet nine inches." It must have escaped the target of many a hunter and could be so big in size, I thought. Talkie Baboo's vociferations knew no bounds—he chose the best words he could manage:

"Oh, you have showed extraordinary courage and restraint in tolerating the intensive bites of mosquitoes—you have taken to fast—you have kept awake throughout the four periods of the night—and today is the closing ceremony. These must have brought you the *siddhi*. I give you the honoured decoration 'Giant Killer' and shall address you as such henceforth."

It is natural for man to be elated with praise on his success. I achieved it after a long waiting and that too with such a big game. I embraced Jhanu in my bosom and in my joy placed a caressing kiss on the rather unclean cheek that was full of pricking beards. Then I turned to Talkie and he, the ever-wakeful dainty creature, kept a few steps off from me and with folded palms, expostulated :

"Don't you do that I say. I don't care for any kiss from lips used elsewhere, you know!"

And then in his usual manner he laughed a laugh that reverberated in the dense forest.

THE BOX OF JEWELS

(Continued From Page 203)

It is quite probable that the thief may make another attempt, now that he knows the way. Champa is all alone in the house the whole day and is mostly busy in the kitchen. It is not possible for her to keep an eye on who comes in. The best way out is to close this route." The Thakurain got very perturbed. "Oh, don't do that son," she said, "we would be completely helpless without you." "That is very kind of you, mother," replied Prakash, "but I must move out as soon as possible. The theft is due entirely to my negligence, and I must suffer for it." When Prakash had gone, the Thakurain said, "What a decent boy he is. The mere fact that the thief came from his side is killing him." "One thing is certain," said the Thakur, "he will not live in this house any longer. We will probably have to pay him twenty rupees extra every month towards house rent." "I don't think he will accept that," observed the Thakurain. "He will have to," said the Thakur, "he cannot possibly live on thirty rupees a month."

* * * *

Prakash left the house the same day, aware as he was of the dangers of living there; but he spent the whole day at Thakur Sahib's house till the marriage took place. As a prelude to the offer of ornaments he said to Champa one day, "I have taken up a part-time job with a Seth Sahib on fifty rupees a month and am not going to withdraw a single pie out of it. It will all be used for your jewellery." Champa was beside herself with joy. Her faith in her gods strengthened.

Up till now there was no secret between Prakash and Champa. She had access to everything he had and knew what was where. But now Prakash kept to himself the keys to one of the boxes. Many times she enquired what it contained but he always evaded an answer or just said that he had packed up some of his old books that were lying about. Champa did not suspect anything.

One day she went into the room to give Prakash a betel leaf and found that he was sitting in front of the box looking at something inside it. Seeing Champa he immediately closed the box. Champa wondered why he was in such a hurry to close it but not being of a suspicious nature she did not give much further thought to the subject.

It was impossible for Prakash not to have a look at the ornaments whenever he got a chance. After all such a lot of wealth could not be left around without bothering about it. Whenever Champa was away he opened the box and made sure that the jewellery was there.

One day a theft took place in the neighbourhood. Prakash started sleeping inside the house. Even the heat of June was preferable to leaving the jewellery unguarded. Champa tried to persuade him many times to sleep outside but he was adamant. "The thieves do not risk their lives for nothing," Champa would argue, "what can they expect to find in this house ?" Prakash used to get annoyed at her insistence and would say, "For a poor man even the household utensils are valuable."

While cleaning the house, Champa once unwittingly moved the box to another corner of the room. Prakash immediately noticed the change when he came and enquired, "Did you move the box ?" "No", said Champa, "why should I ?" "Who moved it then ?" asked Prakash highly agitated, "after all there is nobody else in the house except you." "All right, I moved it," replied Champa, "what wealth is there in the box that you are so agitated." Prakash realised his mistake. Controlling his voice, he said "Oh nothing. I just noticed the change and wondered who had moved it." But he could not rest till he got an opportunity to look at the jewellery. As soon as Champa went into the kitchen, he opened the box and started examining the pieces. Champa had made 'Pakories' and thinking that Prakash liked them while they were still hot she took some to him. As soon as he heard her coming Prakash quickly slammed the lid of the box and locked it. Turning to Champa, he said, "What have you brought ? I don't feel hungry at all today. Oh you have made 'Pakories', have you ?"

Champa began to wonder again why Prakash always hurried to close the box as soon as she came. Her woman's curiosity was aroused. She was dying to know what it contained. Unable to find any keys that would fit it, she one day called a roaming locksmith and got a duplicate key made. Opening the box she was amazed to find jewelery in it. From the description she had heard of Thakur Sahib's stolen jewels there was not a moment's doubt in her mind as to where this jewellery had come from. Her head hung with shame. Closing the box she went and lay on the bed. "How could he stoop so low," she said to herself, "I have never bothered him for jewellery. And even if I have, it does not mean that he should go and steal it. Hasn't he a conscience left any more ?"

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From the day she discovered Prakash's secret Champa was not the same person any longer. She used to be sad and picked up quarrels with him on mere trifles. Whereas they had no secrets between them before, a wall now separated the two. Whereas they used to plan for the future together before and sympathised with each other, they now did not even talk to each other for days.

Many months passed by. A vacancy occurred in the city bank for an Assistant Manager. Prakash had passed the Accountants' examination and stood very good chances of getting the post. The only hitch was that the bank required a cash security of ten thousand rupees. He could not think of anyone who would lend him such a large amount. One day he casually mentioned it to Thakur Sahib. Thakur Sahib immediately suggested that he should apply. "But where will I get the money," said Prakash. "Don't bother about the money," said Thakur Sahib, "if all other requirements are met, the security will be arranged." Prakash was surprised. "You mean you will put in the security money," he asked, unable to believe his ears. "What is so surprising about that ?" replied Thakur Sahib.

Prakash came back to his house. Though the chances of his getting the job were bright now he was feeling restless and sad. Thakur Sahib's goodness was trampling under its feet his own wickedness to him. Reaching home he gave the news to Champa. She did not seem enthusiastic either and turned away her face. After a moment she said, "Why did you rope in Thakur Sahib ? It is a matter of money. A little slip on your part and the poor man will lose ten thousand rupees. We are all right as we are." Prakash smelt suspicion in her tone and said, "What do you mean by a little slip on my part ? You think I am so incompetent." "It is not that", replied Champa, "only it does not take long for a man to become dishonest." Prakash looked piercingly at her but could not fathom the hidden meaning of her remark. "Could it be," he wondered, "that she had come to know about the

box of jewels." To get an answer to this question he was impatient. As soon as they finished their meals, he asked again, "What were you thinking of when you said that it does not take long for a man to become dishonest ?" "I didn't have anything in particular in mind," replied Champa, "it was only a general statement." Prakash was not satisfied, and asked again, "So in your opinion all bank employees are liable to become dishonest." Champa wanted to get out of the argument, and said, "I was only thinking of the money you made in Thakur Sahib's son's marriage." Prakash felt relieved, smiled and said, "Oh you mean the commission. But taking a commission is no crime. Even the highest of officials take commission." Champa replied, her voice full of hatred, "To cheat a man who trusts you so implicitly even of a pie is a crime in my eyes. I would have considered you honest only if you had gone and returned to him all the money you got as commission. Look at his treatment towards you, during the last six months. You left the house of your own accord yet he still keeps on paying you twenty rupees a month extra. Whenever he gets anything from his lands he always sends some for you. You did not have a watch; he gave you his own. Whenever your servant is absent, he sends his own to do our work. During my illness he paid all the doctors' fees, and used to come twice a day to enquire after my health. And now he has offered to pay the security money on your behalf. It is no small matter. Most people will not make such an offer even to their close relations. Ten thousand rupees is after all no meagre sum. On top of it is the danger that he loses the entire amount on the slightest mistake on your part. One should be prepared to sacrifice even one's life for a person like Thakur Sahib instead of cheating him."

Prakash lay down after eating his food. His conscience was pricking him. Champa's words had brought him face to face with it and they struck him almost as a surgeon's knife strikes a ripe boil. He could see himself as he really was — lowdown, thankless and cruel. The words affected him almost as a social or political cartoon affects us when it portrays the baser side of our nature. They awakened in him his sleeping humanity. The box of jewels started pestering his soul.

* * * *

Prakash got the job in the bank, and held a feast to celebrate the occasion. Thakur Sahib, his wife, Virendra and his newly wed bride, all were invited. After the feast Thakur Sahib got up to go. Prakash said, "Dada, I don't let you go at this hour. You must stay here the night." Champa did not approve of the suggestion. There weren't enough beds in the house, nor enough beddings; nor was there space enough to accommodate them all. But Prakash kept on insisting, and Thakur Sahib ultimately gave in.

It was twelve o'clock at night. Thakur Sahib was sleeping upstairs. Prakash was in the verandah. The three women slept inside the room. Making sure that everyone was asleep, Prakash got up, removed the keys from under Viroo's pillow and went into the room. Opening his box he removed the box of jewels and went to Thakur Sahib's house. Many months ago also he had entered that house, like this. But whereas then he was out to commit a crime, today he was out to make amends for it. Whereas then his steps receded at every move he made, today they urged him to go on.

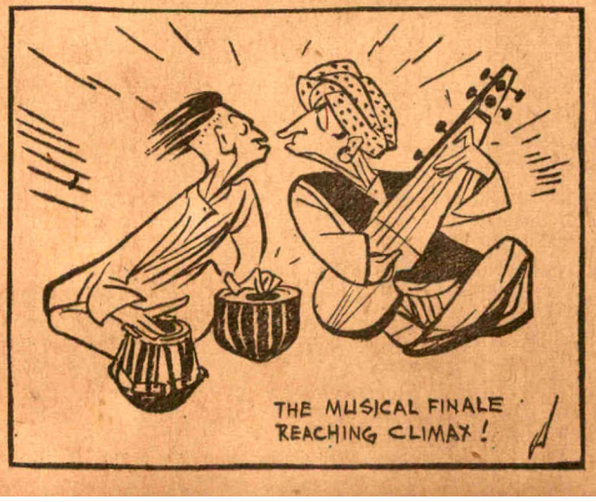
Going inside the house quickly, he deposited the box under Thakur Sahib's bed and came out. Even Hanumanji could not have felt such joy at bringing the piece of mountain with 'Sanjeevani' as Prakash was experiencing now. His feet refused to touch the ground. Viroo was still asleep when he came back. Slipping the bunch of keys under his pillow, Prakash went off to sleep.

* * * *

Thakur Sahib went home in the morning. Prakash used to go in the evenings to teach Viroo. Today he could not resist the temptation of going earlier and reached Thakur Sahib's house in the afternoon. The moment Virendra saw him, he shouted, "Babuji, it was a very lucky feast at your house yesterday. The box of jewels has been found." Thakur Sahib also came in and said, "It was really an auspicious occasion. Not even a thing is missing from the box." Prakash feigned surprise, opened the box and said, "It is really remarkable that the box should have come back after six months, without a thing missing. I cannot understand it." "You are not the only one," said Thakur Sahib, "nobody can understand it. I am inclined to agree with Viroo's mother that the supernatural has a hand in it." "If I had not seen it with my own eyes I would have never believed it," said Prakash. "The occasion must be celebrated," said Thakur Sahib, "you must come and dine with us tonight." "Did you consult any Pundits about the loss", asked Prakash. "Yes, a number of them", replied Thakur Sahib. "Then it must be due to their efforts", said Prakash, "that you have found the box."

Reaching home that evening, Prakash gave the news to Champa. She came running, embraced him tightly and started weeping. It appeared to her as if she had got back her long lost husband. "There is a feast at Thakur Sahib's house tonight", said Prakash, "we have also been invited." "I also want to feed a thousand beggars today", said Champa. "It will cost you a hundred rupees", retorted Prakash. "I don't care what it costs." replied Champa, "I am so happy today that I could spend a thousand rupees." Seeing her so happy tears rolled down Prakash's eyes.

(Translated by Madan Gupta)



MOY-DANAB

By TARASANKAR BANDOPADHYAYA

IT was a very big workshop — turning out fire bricks and supplying fire clay. All of a sudden with the very onrush of the war it went on expanding in body like the Vindya hill. Modern Vindya would not yield to any Durbasa. Rather it might yield to Basista — why might ? — it would. The day Basista would appear in the garb of peace it would then bow down its head. In other words, the workshop would go on expanding till the hostilities were over. The iron-works of the country were being supported by its production. Wagons for transport were arranged by the War Department. They were despatched by telegraphic message. The local railway staff always showed favour to the workshop authorities. Now it had stepped up. Under governmental order the police was to keep special eye on the workshop — to render immediate assistance as soon as there was any possibility of any disturbance. The manager of the workshop drew a salary of Rs. 1000. The officer-in-charge drew a pay of Rs. 125——; he too always showed favour — now the heavy burden of governmental order was tightly pressing down on the weight of the pay exceeding Rs. 875. Previously when the officer met the manager he would hail him with "good morning, Mr. Bose." Of course with reverence. But now that reverence had been mixed up with fear. With a touch of awe he would now address "good morning, Sir," if they met. Formerly he would wear a smile as he hailed. Now it had vanished. There was enough of adequate respect in past receptions but the reception of that day beat all records. The officer stood up from his chair and said "you, Sir ? Please come in ! Please come in ! Please !"

"I have come to have an entry in the diary."

"Diary ?"

"—Phani Mistri——; certainly you know him—that old mistri ?"

"Yes, Sir, I know him very closely. He's in your workshop from the very beginning."

—"Oh yes. That man."

"A hard drunkard."

"Yes."

"—But a ripe, experienced man."

The manager simpered.

The officer again expostulated, "He is a great well-wisher of yours, Sir. I am here for 5 years. Such a faithful man is rare."

The manager asserted — "But the man fled away yesterday with several machine tools."

"—Phani has stolen and fled !" The officer was surprised beyond measure.

"—Oh, yes. Please make an entry in the diary."

The manager stood up and said, "I was going to the station. But on the way I thought that I should personally go and inform. Other people too would come up. Please investigate into the matter personally."

He opened the door of his motor car and insisted "You must find that devil out. We shall reward you from our company for this work."

Though on the wrong side of sixty, Phani Mistri was no less active than a robust young man. Only he felt slightly fatigued now-a-days. Standing over at the site where parts of big machineries weighing 10 to 15 maunds were being lifted, he would feel chagrined. Suddenly he would come forward and stopping the operation cries make a face and shout "Hei-o ! Hei-o ! Hei-o ! Gluttons — all. Be off" Then he would put his shoulder under the lifting rod and slowly would erect himself. Blood would rush into his face and eye and it seemed that forthwith blood would burst out. The muscles of his back chest and hand would stiffen up like the hard, rocky uneven black earth. One could see through the chink of his expanded lips, the two sets of teeth — closely knit as the indented wheels of the machine are knit. He would move forward like an eel by the deft and two-fold application of his skill and the momentum of the iron-skeletoned machine.

Even yesterday Phani was there. Even in the evening he smoked his *biri* in the old engine room. Now and then he quaffed wine drawing the bottle from his pocket. Just at 8-30 P.M. he was found in the club-room listening to the Radio songs. Others might not make correct guess but he guessed correctly that between 8-30 P.M. and 9 P.M. some female singers would sing and he further discovered

that those songs were not recorded songs. So believing in the infallibility of his reasoning and judgment he would sit before the Radio and listen to the songs and would sense the proximity of the singer. Mentally he constructed the imaginary figure of the songstress and would shout "bravo" as the tune possessed him. Even yesterday he went through that routine.

In 1919 or 1920 immediately after the last great war, the foundation was laid for this workshop, It started with a three-roomed hut, a small kitchen, and a big shed — all straw-thatched — built on a stony tract of high land where formerly there was a forest of *Palash* trees. The total strength consisted of 5 people — the swarthy-coloured, big-bodied, large - mouthed, big - toothed, balled - eyed manager, one darwan, one office clerk, one goods clerk and that Phani Mistri. Two more local persons were added — one cook and one servant. Again the manager did not stay permanently. Coming in the night of Thursday, he would live there for 3 days from Friday to Sunday and would depart in the Monday morning after passing all these days in great uproar and excitement battering down the fabricated goods, ordering new ones and consuming wine and goat-flesh. As soon as the manager left, Phani was all in all. To talk about his learning, what he knew was no better than illiteracy. Under necessity he would send secret messages to the manager scribbling them in irregular lines of thick letters. "Dear Sir, something amiss here. The nearby foreign firm is after us for our removal and scheming vigorously. Please come sharp and every thing will then be told. The attitude of the goods clerk is doubtful. Please bring with you several numbers of 'Harinaran Boltu' and strong 'tape'." Then he put his signature in irregular English letters as P. Mistri which was of course unintelligible, long-drawn-out as it was looking either as undecipherable scrawling or as the signature of a pucca Burra Shaheb.

"Harinaran Boltu" is holding nut bolt and "tape" — belting. These are the self-made jargon of the industrial workers like many others as "shaftu" for shaft, "Tily" for trolley, "Valbu" for valve, "goz kak" for gauze cork, "Humbor" for hammer and the like that is found in constant use among them in the industrial area of that part of Bengal which is now included in Bihar.

* * * *

Some 25 years back before the workshop was founded, it was to strike this "Humbor" that Phani left his home to work in a colliery. Born in an iron-smith family, he joined it as a strong and able-bodied young man and it was in its iron-smith shop that he heard that hammer was called "Humbor". That colliery was owned by this company and the company at that time existed merely in name in the printed letter-head. The proprietor had an imposing figure and was given to high living. When he came to the colliery he brought along with him basketfuls of fruits, vegetables, foreign liquor in packed cases and soda water in baskets. If it was winter, there were big lobsters in addition as there would be Hilsa fishes in the rainy season and crabs as big as the skull of a tot. The colliery was named "Kuthi". Everything was on royal scale in the Kuthi at that time. Every labour group was presented with goat and wine was paid for. There would be feast in the officers' mess and they shared the store brought by their master. In addition money was sanctioned for goat. He halted in the Manager's Dak Bangalow. At the time of his departure, tips ranging from an eight-anna-piece to a five-rupee note flowed freely.

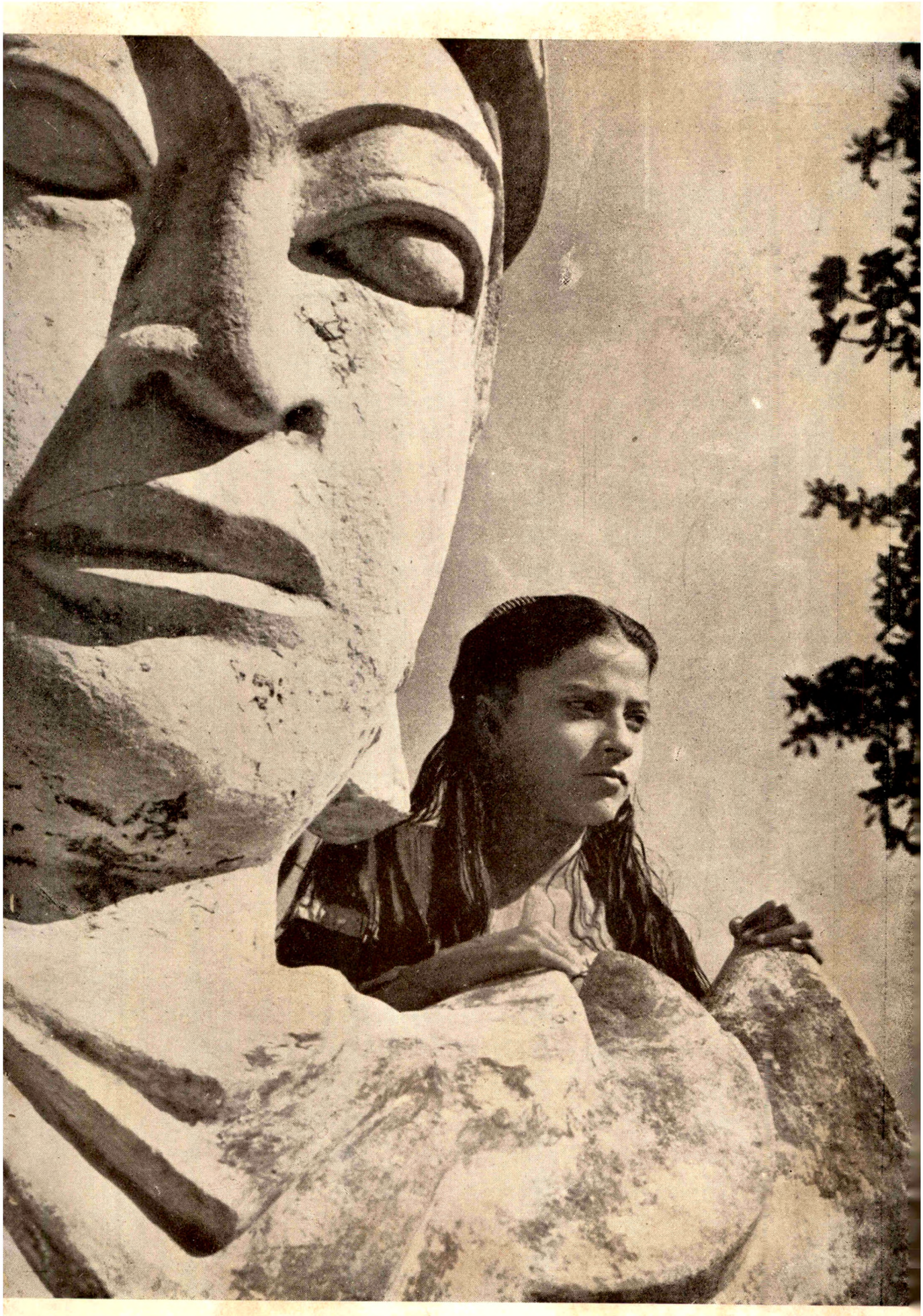
After the lapse of 4 years Phani fell into the good graces of his master. Then he left the hammer and became the junior mechanic. The senior mechanic, his preceptor, would usually sit idle and pat him. Phani worked like a demon and did not allow his preceptor to do anything. The old man too loved him dearly and unreservedly poured out to the dregs all his learning to his disciple — not merely his mechanical art but his character, philosophy of life and everything also. In a wondrous way he was taught all the secrets of the engine, boiler, pump shaft, pulley and of all mechanical gadgets. The old mechanic would piece together the opened parts of the engine and attaching the hose to the steam released its power. "Look at it !" — he would accost Phani.

The engine began to operate. The gleaming, oil-besmeared piston pushed in and out and made the master-wheel circle about at first slowly and then with faster to faster speed. At the pull of the belting attached to the wheel, all other wheels were set in motion and in the twinkle of an eye, the interior of the tin-shed began to reverberate with sounds. The roof above and the floor beneath the feet vibrated under the impact of the sound and the speed of the whirling machineries. Or he would tighten the brake or stop the steam and the engine too would come to a dead halt by degrees. With wonder-waiting eyes Phani looked on !

Step by step he mastered the details. Like a mature sitarist knowing the subtleties in musical notes he developed the sense of fine distinction in sound and could tell what sound the machine would produce with a small loose bolt. The loud flourish of the noises forming out of the varied machines was like a grand symphony or the buzz of the numerous strings of a gigantic iron sitar. As taught by the master he could instantly guess the wrong notes and knew where to tighten or where to loose. He acquired, at the hand of his teacher, that power of discernment in the matter of machine which is displayed by an Arab Sheik in case of a horse or by our villager in case of a cow. At the mere sight, he could tell the horsepower of the machine or the power it bore or the power to which it was reduced.

Simultaneously he was taught the art of charging sale commission in the matter of machine-transaction.

He was also taught — "The owner is the lord who maintains you. You are under his parental authority. The manager is to be bowed down to, to be recompensed with presents in place of commission but in reality, he is the devil incarnate. The owner offers service — the manager fires the opera-



ne Thinkers

Sudhir Bane

tive. You are pardoned by the owner inspite of your fault. Whatever good is done by you, the manager palms it off as his own."

Another lesson he learnt was the art of drinking. He was told that it was the veritable steam. Uncorking the bottle he would ejaculate "open the 'stop-kak'. Go on with the steam, guy ! The ten H.P. engine would gallop with twenty H.P."

Quaffing his measure, he would hand out the bottle with enthusiastic Hindi "Take it, fellow ! steam yourself up."

Another lesson was — "There is nothing more enjoyable than the flesh of a woman". "Why don't you look around ? — who is an exception ? — the Proprietor, the Manager, the Office Babus, the Darwan" ?

He took him to the brothel at Ranigunj. On entering into one of the hovels, he called out the girls and lined them up.

"Tell me, whom do you like ?" inquired the preceptor.

Another further lesson was — "If you are to injure anybody, injure your boss but never a poor man. Never, never. If you find a poor man caught in theft turn round your face and go away. If you are sitting then just turn round. Be warned, never do him any harm. If you do so, what's the difference between you and that roguish manager ?"

* * * *

This workshop was built by his own hand by Phani. After bringing the machineries, beams for the shed, rafters, angles, tees, bolts and nuts and commencing the work of construction he brought in old Enayet from the neighbouring European factory where even in his old age this white-bearded turbaned Enayet was passing his time as a junior mistri. On the other hand the work-shop here dealt with chinese clay — a job with which he was not familiar. Along with the fiendish manager, the proprietor came there on that day. A big goat was slaughtered before the evening and its one-inch-thick fat filled up the small tumbler. Two were sitting together uncorking the diminutive-sized flat whisky bottle. Phani was called up.

He sat with folded hands after making obeisance.

One longish fat bone of that big goat was being tackled by the manager between his teeth. His two big eyes were reddish like the Kootch seed. The owner sat demurely.

None spoke anything. After a brief silence, Phani broke the ice "my lord."

The proprietor turned round "I want a brick-mistri within a week."

Phani replied "I am trying my level best."

"Must be inside the week."

Perhaps at that moment the bone between the teeth of the manager was pulverised to dust. He rejoined "or I will chew up your head."

Phani scratched his head and replied "Let me try, sir."

The owner assured "Don't worry for money."

"As you please, sir." Phani bowed down and said "I am looking into it tomorrow."

"Stop."

"By your command."

"Take that. The bottle of wine."

Making another obeisance, he came out with the bottle in his hand. He drank it and danced on that day. He was presented with a bottle by the owner !

Uncorking the bottle he would ejaculate 'Open the stopkak. Go on with the steam, guy !'

— foreign brand. How delicious ! How intoxicating !

On the very next day, with fifty rupees cash down, he enticed away a handsome young female labourer from the European firm. The girl was in the keeping of Enayet.

On the next day, Enayet came to kick up a row. Phani ordered the Darwan to sit with the gun. It did not end in a row but there was a verbal duel. At the end, Phani prepared a chillum of ganja and argued "Let us avoid the disturbance. Come to our workshop as the senior mistri and you will get Rs. 10 more. The woman will live in your house and she will not have to do any work. She will have her daily wages".

Enayet could not give any reply to it.

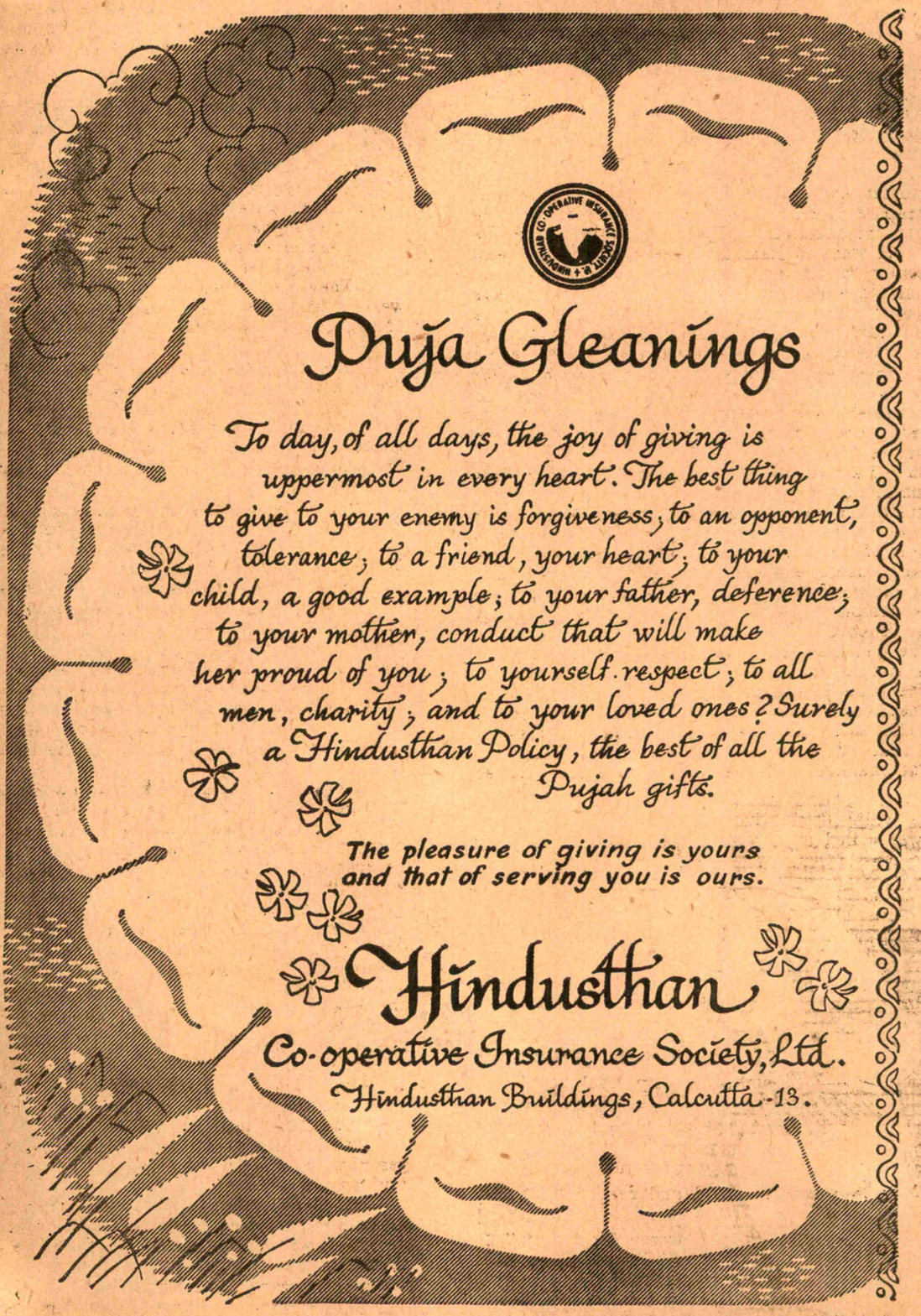
Phani held before him the chillum and invited him to take a puff or two.

Enayet came and took his seat and puffed at the chillum. On the next day at dead of night he arrived with two more mistresses. His luggage was brought down by the cart of the workshop.

Thereafter the workshop went on with the swiftest speed. Kiln after kiln was being made by Enayet. Phani set up the boiler, the engine, the pump in the nearby river and the grinding machine to pulverise the earth to dust. The manager showed him many diagrams from the book. Phani made hand-made tools after those models. The carpenter fabricated varieties of moulds under his guidance. The workshop was in working order. The earthen articles made of black earth came out of the machine burnt, hardened and cream-coloured. The joy of Phani knew no bounds on that first day when the entire materials were released from the burnt kiln.

On that day, he enjoyed his drinking bout. On

(Continued On Page 211)



Puja Gleanings

To day, of all days, the joy of giving is uppermost in every heart. The best thing to give to your enemy is forgiveness; to an opponent, tolerance; to a friend, your heart; to your child, a good example; to your father, deference; to your mother, conduct that will make her proud of you; to yourself respect; to all men, charity; and to your loved ones? Surely a Hindusthan Policy, the best of all the Pujah gifts.

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(Continued From Page 209)

his most favourite machine — on that engine — he laid himself down and kissed it and patted it profusely.

* * * *

Phani was all-in-all in that workshop. Every thing in it was in his finger-tips. He remembered all the accounts from the big machine down to the minute needle. The godown account could not be reconciled. One new "mercury level" was missing. Missing too were some trolly lines, several engine-parts that were newly indented. Even the pump that was first used was found to be lost. The goods clerk was in absolute desperation — he lived from hand to mouth and was the son of an ordinary householder and timorous. To top it, the darwan was keeping guard before his quarters under the order of the manager. Phani was absent from the place. He went to Raniganj on company's business. The senior mistri sent him to inquire about iron materials in a colliery. He spent there eight days in place of four. On account of sale commission he earned nearly hundred rupees out of which only rupees twenty and some annas were left in his pocket. Besides, he had a bill to the tune of rupees twenty five as travelling and halting charges. A gold ornament was presented to the girl with whom he lived there. Though not so much worth, it cost him rupees fifty.

On his arrival he found the workshop in a state of commotion. Even the owner had come down from Calcutta. Discussion was raging whether the goods clerk would be handed over to the police. The manager of the Calcutta office was in its favour. He was a pucca shaheb. Whenever there was any talk of showing mercy or of his being an old servant of the company, he would stop the discussion by saying "Rubbish".

The manager said "clap him into the room and give a good spanking."

The proprietor kept mum.

Phani heard everything and bowed down before him. He said "Let me try if I can reconcile it. About that old pump — it was not worth much."

The manager of the Calcutta office argued

The manager said 'Clap him into the room and give a good spanking!'

"whether it was or was not is not the point. Where is it gone?"

"Where can it go, sir? When the new pump was indented, it was taken out and thrown away in that site where the plinth of the new Dak Bangalow was being dug out. It is now covered with earth and can be found out if the earth is removed."

The matter was recalled by the manager too. Earth was forthwith removed and it was actually found out.

"Engine parts ?"

"Why, Sir ? They are fitted with the engine. They were taken direct from the station into the shed. I took them out and fitted them."

The owner and the two managers were taken before the engine. The fitted parts and their foreign trade marks were checked and found correct.

"The old parts ?"

"I am looking into them, Sir ?"

"Trolley lines ?"

"They are affixed in the new shed. Some tees were short. As they were lying idle, they were affixed there. Our Manager Babu was apprised of it."

This time the manager remembered it. "Oh yes. Now the old engine parts and the mercury level ?"

"Let me inquire about them, Sir." Taking the goods clerk along with him, Phani stepped out. The clerk gripped his hand and waited "mistri, save me !"

"Save ! what have you done with those parts ? You took them direct from me in the godown."

"—when my daughter was being married —" he could not finish it and wept out.

"Hum ! Sold at what price ? To whom ?"

"To that Marwari, the store-supplier. I borrowed rupees five hundred from him. There were repeated demands and even litigation was threatened. He took them. Price has not yet been settled."

"Hum ! I know the level was stolen by the bricklayer Ebrahim. But be warned ! Don't divulge it to anybody. Then you would be done for. Take the money and send some one to the bazar to have it."

Towards evening Phani appeared before the management and said "The level was with Ebrahim. While the engine was working, I had hastily to take it from the godown. It was handed over to Ebrahim as soon as I did with it. That assine fool kept it with him."

"Engine parts ?"

Phani scratched his head and went on, "Oh the dead bone ? Could there be their accounting ? With the indent of the new materials, the old rubbish was thrown away. They were lying scattered around the engine house for a pretty long time. They might be found by removing the earth or the workers might have taken them away."

The proprietor gripped in his hand the glass of wine. The Calcutta manager told Phani, "In that case you will have to pay for the same ?"

"Of course, as I am guilty."

The proprietor emptied the glass. "Well, Manager Babu, rupees fifty as reward to Phani. Please pay him now."

Phani bowed down and pleaded "Sir, the poor goods clerk borrowed rupees five hundred when his daughter was married. Without any fault of his, that poor man——"

He began to scratch his head.

The proprietor ordered "Let him have an increment of rupees ten."

* * * *

As if suddenly the time changed. At least Phani thought so. He relished the excitement of 1930

(Continued On Page 213)

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(Continued From Page 211)

Swadeshi movement. He too wore Khadder, stopped sale of liquor in shops but distilled it near the river bank. But all those disturbances ceased and suddenly strikes in workshop came into vogue.

Phani was flabbergasted. He could not decide what side to take up. When the first meeting was convened, Dulu Singh—at one time a learner under him—proposed him to the chair. The first flush was not disliked by him. Sitting in the chair with garland of flowers around his neck, his chest was prettily extended.

But after some time, he became restless. What the speaker was driving at? "So long we were telling that the proprietors were in *loco parentis* to us. They were our masters and lords. We thought that they fed us, gave us our raiment. They taught us to say all those things all along and taught us to memorise them just as a pedagogue would teach to memorise the alphabets of the language. The owners are not our parents or lords. They might be owners of the workshops but no owners of the workers therein. They don't feed us or give us raiment. Not a single item of our daily ration—atta, salt, rice, curry and the like—is doled out to us out of grace. They have become partners of our bread. They coax us and impart wrong ideas and by that process they impose a share on our daily necessaries. Just ponder what bone-breaking labour we render from dawn to evening! We poke coal into the boiler, keep the engine going and from machine to machine we hop and work. We are heated by the fire in the kiln, we inhale dust in profusion and we are bespattered, all over the body with mud. It is because we work that the goods are manufactured. And those goods are sold by the owners and they make lots of money. They have *Polleau* and *Kalia* for their dishes, fine clothes for their dress and fine silken chaddar and costly shoes. They take their outings in motor cars, sleep in the high storey and daily thousands of rupees go into their coffers. They have all these at the cost of our living necessaries. On the other hand, if we protest, we are dubbed as traitors. Have we got any respect before them? We don't eat their salt, God has given us strength and with that strength we work and labour. What respect is there before those who cheat us of the earnings of our labour? They are traitors all."

In his presidential chair, Phani was exhausted by perspiration. He did not imagine that topic of that nature would crop up. Always he looked upon his proprietor as his master. His preceptor taught him not to do any harm to him. He got tips from his master, drank his tasted wine and felt tickled with his endearing abusive epithets hurled at him. He discovered streaks of affection in all these. What the man was imputing all about him? Had he not been the President, he himself would have started up a shindy. What the master would say when he would hear it? Besides the speaker was indulging in fantastic nonsense. To whom does the money belong? If they were driven like mongrels being too clever, they would die of starvation?

From his presidential chair he protested, "Well, Sir, what you are saying is entirely wrong."

From the speaker to everybody present—all felt a bit startled.

Phani continued, "Look here, Sir, the workshop did not spontaneously sprout up like a tree from the earth. Heaps of money were required. The owner advanced them from his pocket."

The speaker laughed and replied, "Just as the workshop is not a spontaneous growth like the tree from the earth, money too is not the fruit of a tree. It does not drop on the ground nor has it been collected from droppings. Neither has he manufactured money at home. He accumulated it too from the earnings of an old workshop like the present one—by forcible impost on the earnings of the labour of the poor workers."

Phani continued, 'Look here, Sir, the workshop did not spontaneously sprout up like a tree .....Heaps of money were required .....!!'

It hit back his memory. Phani recalled the story of the old colliery. His master amassed his wealth from it. But still such invectives could not be heaped on him. The speaker had no idea of his strength and worth.

He exclaimed, "you are talking all this! You are inciting the labourers. It's true they drive the machine but what would happen to you if you are all fired tomorrow?"

The speaker laughed and said, "Then too, the workshop would come to a standstill. The wheel of profit will not revolve."

Phani too laughed, "New men will be indented and you will be driven out. What then?"

"The newcomers too are labourers. What you will say to-day will be repeated by them to-morrow. If the workers of the world are united—then? Then what will the owners do? It is the proposition—let all the workers be united. If with the dismissal of one, the entire strength goes away and none from anywhere replaces it — then? What then?"

Phani was confounded. The labourers in the meeting raised a tumultuous roar. "Well said! Correctly said!"

The speaker insisted, "our wages should be increased."

"Of course."

"Our work-time should be curtailed."

"Urgently."

"—otherwise we would go on strike."

"Certainly, certainly."

In that meeting that youngster Dulu Singh

(Continued On Page 215)

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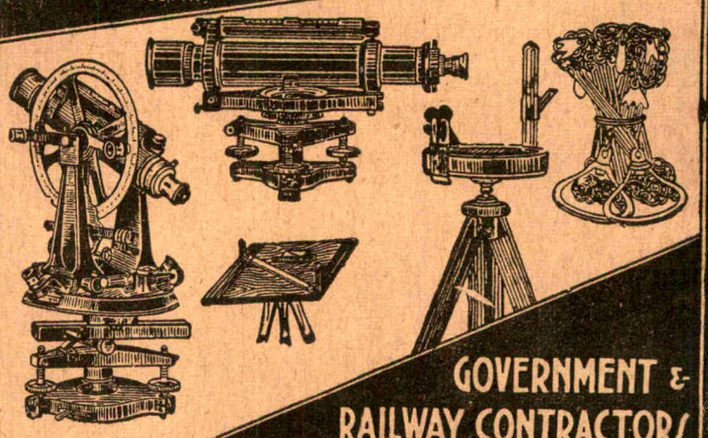

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Sri SURYYA KUMAR BASU, Managing Director, Managing Agents.

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whom Phani taught with his own hand twitted Phani as an effete, out-of-date, remittance man. He proceeded on, "when a tiger's cub is caught, man endearingly dopes it daily with opium. All through his life the tiger forgets that he is the lord of the forest. He simply dozes under its influence and thinks that the supplier of opium is his God and licks his palm. Our Mistri Shaheb is under similar influence."

The crowd burst into a loud guffaw. Phani drooped down his head. Had it been inside the workshop, Phani would have answered it with an iron rod right on the head of that Dulu Singh.

But that youngster Dulu was clever and he knew Phani. Phani saw through the game. Dulu yelled out with the laughter. "Be warned! Don't laugh. It is not a matter for laughter. Our Mistri Shaheb is really a tiger. You don't know his strength and worth. That tiger should be disentangled from the sway of the dope. Then we shall put him in front of us and wage our war. Brothers, let us shout—"Phani Mistri ki————"

The crowd thundered "—Jai".

The workshop went on strike.

* * * *

The old proprietor was dead. The old Manager was dismissed by telegraphic message. The new owner arrived with a new Manager. He was young in age; a pucca Shaheb in temperament and could speak English in perfect style. With their arrival, the leaders of the labourers' organisation were called in. That youngster Dulu Singh was their brain. Phani was not called in—much to his relief. The matter was settled with the labourers by the proprietor and the Manager.

After sun-set, Phani repaired to the Dak Bungalow for interview.

He bowed down and stood with folded hands. "What do you want?"—the new master queried.

"I am, Sir, Phani Mistri.

"I know it. But what's your business?"

Phani stood on silently.

The Manager said "you are the President of the Workers' Union ?"

With folded hands Phani replied, "Yes, Sir.

"The matter has been finalised with your deputationists. Have you heard it?"

"No, Sir."

"—You will hear it from them. The work must be commenced from to-morrow. Go."

Phani became elated at the mention of the commencement of work.

"Yes Sir, certainly, I am just going."

On coming out, he stood by the side of the workshop. What was previously a well lit house was now enveloped in darkness. He knew every inch of its land. The shed was his own making. He installed every machine in its place. In that encircling gloom, even he felt afraid to step forward. What a conglomeration of sounds was there in that workshop. The hiss-hiss of the steam in the boiler, the rhythmic croak of the engine, the beating swish of the whirling beltings, the roar of the mobile shafts, the din of the grinding machine and the vibratory jingle of the tin-shed under the impact of that grand clamorous medley — all, all were silenced. Silenced too were now those trills and tunes intoned by the labourers modulating them with the hissing sound of the boiler steam or the metallic twang of the rotating shafts or with the ringing musical note in the resonant hum of the tin-shed, emerging out of that odd cacophony. There was dreariness all around in the workshop as is perceived in the *Chandimandap* with the cessation of the Puja festivity. Everything here was his own handiwork. The silence in the workshop pained him on the first day of the strike. He attempted to enter into it, anxious-minded as he was. But that youngster Dulu stopped him. As he stepped into the gateway, he was pulled back —"who pulling?"

Dulu said, "It is I, will you leave us ? The fate of so many bread-earners is at stake."

The faces of the poor working people loomed up in his mind. He could not persuade himself to enter the shed.

On the next day, early morning, Phani came into the workshop ahead of all the workers. When the fire-man arrived, he cautioned him — "why so late? Go and throw coke. Generate steam quickly.

Eagerly he fixed his gaze at the steam-metre. Its needle was trembling like the hand of the clock. Blood coursed restlessly in Phani's body. The workshop was his handiwork. He pushed back the driver of the engine and took his seat in his place like the guide of the elephant.

The steam was pushing. Inside the cylinder, its power was expanding like the bulging nimbus cloud of the rainy day sky. The iron rod attached to the big iron wheel moved upward under the impact of the pushed piston and the wheels were moving. The working of the machine would soon be in full swing.

Singhee joined and said with a smile, "Here, in the early dawn?" Phani did not return a reply.

He again said "It's the doping influence of opium !" So saying just to taunt him he yawned and snapped his finger-tips.

Phani would have leaped on his shoulder to break his neck. But just at that moment, the new manager entered the shed. Dulu stalked past and did not bow down his head. He made a curt bow to the manager by lifting his hand. Phani said within himself "you are overreaching yourself. Don't show such airs. You will have to bend before the storm."

Phani himself stood up and respectfully bowed down.

The manager asked, "Are you not the fitter?"

"No, sir. I am Phani mistri."

"Where is the engine-driver?"

"There he is."

"Why are you here? Something wrong with the engine ?"

"No, sir. It is as fit as a virile horse."

"Then?"

Phani replied "I attend to everything." The manager said, "No. Everyone to his assigned post. The company don't expect extra work from you."

Phani perceived that his respect and influence were all gone and had vanished like the magic ball. He was no longer required in the office for consultation. None—be he a labourer or an office Babu—approached him and asked "mistri, save me." Phani who loved uproar so much now grew into a quiet man. But he had one consolation—somewhere in the workshop he was daily sent for. Without him, the workshop was immobile. The manager would anxiously ask Phani, "If the defect is not removed to-day, we shall be put to great loss."

He would instantly shift his coat and with his bare strong hands grip the tools and sit down for work—"Let me see."

The sounding hammer went on striking. Clenching his teeth he would be at grips with

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bolts and nuts with the wrench, perspiring all the while. Sometimes he would look with fixed gaze at the machine and be in a pensive mood. The labourers would anxiously look at his face and ask him occasionally with fearful delicacy—"mistri!"

The mistri would reply in an assuring tone "stop—stop. Very near to completion."

On returning to his quarters, he would turn over the matter in his mind and would chuckle. Glass after glass was being filled with wine and quaffed. "Who is to shove him — the workshop is his handiwork ?"

* * * *

Just at that time, the war market set in. The business of the workshop stepped up by leaps and bounds. Phani sweated like a demon. Within a space of few days, he completed an entire shed. The strength of labourers multiplied four-fold and there was all-out labour throughout day and night. In the evening, high powered stove lamps would be pulled up by ropes through the pullies fixed at the tops of large sal posts that were planted. He himself would climb up to the roof-frame and tighten up bolts and nuts through the borings made by himself in the iron tees and angles over there.

The shed was to be fitted with electric installation. The new electrical engineer covered up all the walls of the entire workshop with fine electrical wirings and deftly joined them with the electrical contrivances. Rows of bulbs were hung from the roof to the various extremities. Poles were posted on the road-side and they too were brought under the bulb arrangement. Then one day he pushed the top of a machine no bigger than the top of a nail. The entire workshop was illumined like day-time. The illumination was confined not merely to the inside of the shed but it extended to the surrounding spaces of the workshop compound, the Bungalow, the mess even to the quarters of Phani.

"Am I to apologise ?"
"—Otherwise I will suspend you"

Phani leaped up with overflowing joy. He had seen the electric light, heard about its magical illusion but personally he did not know how to instal it in such a way. Nor had he seen such an installation. He resolved within himself that he would be a disciple of that young electrical engineer. The aged experienced mechanic was amazed at the skilful performance of that young man. Brimful of praise for him, he patted the back of that engineer and cooed "Bravo! wish you god-speed!"

The engineer stepped back and exclaimed—"what's that?"

Phani felt abashed—"No—No—No". He could not utter anything more. But the matter did not end there. It went up to the manager. Phani was sent for and he was told by the manager that he should apologise.

"Am I to apologise?"

"——otherwise I will suspend you for 15 days."

Phani could not prepare himself for an apology. He could not comprehend in any way that he committed a wrong. Said he "Then please suspend me, sir." He muttered within himself—"I shall also see. Let me see how you run the workshop after suspending Phani. Rot has already set in in the engine. Daily Phani is to hammer out that part at fault and that lad of an engineer won't be able to guess where and how packings with iron bits will be necessary."

On the third day, the workshop was closed.

Phani laughed within his sleeve. The labourers, on the other hand, were in commotion. They wanted dearness allowance, they wanted their necessaries of life at cheaper rates. Phani resolved that he would join with them this time and give himself up in the movement. Let the workshop be closed. He would not join his job even if sent for—never—never. He knew that the inert engine would not work without him. Let the bulbs alone illuminate. Let the still, silent machineries lie like the ponderous immobile hill. He knew the magical secrecy. The hill would not move till his word. Let the workshop remain closed. Let the labourers shout for want of wages. Let the manager become helpless after day-in-and-day-out-labour. Let the manager come first. Then Phani would go. He would touch it with his magic wand and the workshop would come to life at once The immobile hill would revolve and start working, the engine would be moving, the beltings would spin in wheels and shafts would rotate. Rows of buckets filled with earth would go up and come down, emptied of contents, the grinding machine would be whirling.

Suddenly Phani was startled to hear a sound. The grinding machine was moving! The workshop was in full swing! It was going on inspite of him! His handiwork was galvanised to life without his touch! He ran fast and entered into the workshop.

He found the workshop solitary — only the manager and the electrical engineer were standing in the electric shed. He solved the riddle. He heard that the workshop could be worked with electric power. It was being worked on that day. He was dumb-founded. There was no more any necessity for him. His handiwork, the workshop, was in full operation without his command. No more his command would be necessary. None would look up to him. He would not be required by the office. No labourer would approach him and say "Save me, mistri." The ring of youngsters like Singhee would jeer him by yawning. And that workshop too his own handiwork—was going on without his permission. It would no longer depend

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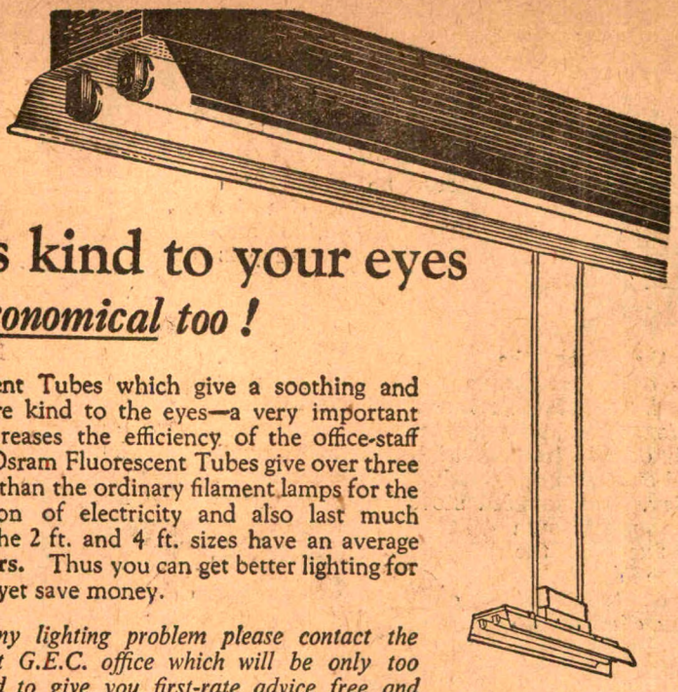

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Once upon a night..

By MANOJE BASU

THE wall-clock gave out one monosyllabic ring.... It was nine-thirty — still two hours and a half to go. Only then the light would be off in father's room and Niladri would let the Penal Code alone for the night. In the pitch dark he would be walking on tip-toe past the closed doors of his father's room.....But no, he could not think of doing so at the moment, by no means until midnight,—— even if the world was near its end.

Out in the street there was moonlight, a pale moonlight peeping through the mist. Niladri came out and paced about in the street walking right up to the corner and back. The street was empty. He looked up and then he could not believe his own eyes. Could he ever think of it coming off so early ? There was no light up there in father's room. How was that, — he thought. In the silence of the night he could now distinctly hear the sound of singing and drumming flowing out from Uncle Ashok's house. The soiree of devotional songs was still going on in full swing. Mother was already there as usual and was not expected until midnight. But the oldest of the family who should have shown the keenest devotion to such things, was seemingly the least inclined to budge an inch from his room. Songs drove him to distraction, be they devotional or mundane. He always preferred to stay in and go through his briefs if he had nothing else to do. But what could have happened on a day like this ? Did Uncle Ashok whisk him out of the house when he had come to see him in the evening ? One could never tell, really. Odd things do happen in life.

And so Niladri made up his mind. He quietly went up the stairs. Father's room was dark, the doors were closed.....Suppose the doors opened and a solid six-footer appeared before him !

Niley ! ——he would roar.

Yes, father ?

Where do you think you are going ?

He would mutter his destination.

What for ?

To look for a book.

I thought as much. Books grow wings I suppose. All the time they seem to be flying up here to roost. When does your examination start, my dear ? I'm sure you don't remember the date. Last time it was you who had sprouted wings for I could never find you in your hostel. Now that I have brought you back home your books are on the wing, flying upstairs and everywhere. Very interesting, I must say ! .....

* * * *

The moonbeams crept through the interlaced branches of the trees and spread across the terrace in a latticed pattern of shadows and light. Did people ever bother about law text-books or the Penal Code on such a moonlit night as this ? Niladri heaved a deep sigh and tiptoed into his bedroom, only to find more disappointment in store for him there. Just look at her, he thought. Did people ever sleep like a log on such a lovely night as this ?

It was his wife Uma. She was fast asleep. His mother usually kept her company in this room as long as Niladri kept busy with his preparations for the law finals in a room downstairs. To-night she was out, it was silent everywhere and this beauty was sleeping blissfully under a thin green quilt with

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'Grant us, O Lord,
the honour and glory
of being called
to the sternest tasks
to the pride
of sorrow unendurable.
Grant us that
we may hold
our hands high without fear,
in the infinite sky,
in the glorious light,
in the winds of freedom'.

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her eyelids shut, eyelids that resembled a pair of rose petals.

It did not look like a feigned sleep. She was asleep really. A little away from the bed a dim light was burning.

Niladri called in a whisper, "Uma! ..... Umarani!!"

Uma stirred in her sleep and turned about clinging to her pillow. Her wristlets and bangles

Niladri called in a whisper, "Uma...Umarani...!!"

jingled with the movement. Niladri removed the quilt and uncovered her face. She at once gave a start and screamed.

"Who,—who is that?"

And someone was also heard shouting from the next room.

"What's going on there?"

Good gracious! It was Baradakanta himself, Niladri's father.

"Don't you worry, dear, I'm coming..... Where the devil are my wooden slippers?"

Uma sat up. Her sleep was now gone. Niladri's face turned pale. He looked about for a convenient exit to make an escape. The only way out was to slip through the passage outside, but along that passage came the hurrying clatter of a pair of wooden slippers. Niladri was the least inclined to face his schoolmasterly father. He was certainly not to be expected to approve of his son's conduct. He could not have his son neglecting his studies while the examination was close by and trying to keep tryst with his young wife.

Niladri pleaded with Uma.

"Darling, please tell him that it was nothing but a dream. Just nothing really. Good Lord, there he comes. Quick. Tell him that it was a cat or anything. Please ask him not to bother himself."

Uma tried to speak out but her throat seemed dry. The sound of the footsteps was coming nearer and nearer. On the other side of the bed lay a small pillow. There was only a moment to spare. With surprising agility Niladri got up on the bed, crawled over the pillow and took cover under the quilt.

Barada walked in with an anxious look on his face.

"What's the matter, dear," he asked.

Uma braced herself up. She felt quite at ease with her father-in-law.

"Nothing particular," she replied. "I've had a bad dream, that's all. I thought it was a thief."

"Thief!" Barada exploded. "Thief? Of course it was thief. I thought I had heard someone moving. Where's your mother-in-law? It's all her fault. She is still out there amusing herself at the *kirtan* party and here is a tiny daughter-in-law left all by herself in the room with doors left ajar. How can you help having thieves invited in?"

Uma smiled. "It wasn't a real thief, father. Only a silly dream. I woke up only to find a cat."

But Barada would have none of it.

"How does it matter if a real thief hasn't really come. I suppose one could sneak in if one wanted to. What kind of a woman is your mother-in-law to leave you here all alone by yourself?"

"I shall close the door and sleep," replied Uma. "When mother comes back I shall open the door for her. I won't get frightened, believe me. Please go back to your room, father. Sorry to have awakened you for nothing. Must have caused you a lot of bother."

"Oh no, not at all, not at all. I don't go to bed so early. You know that."

There was a small charpoy set against the wall. Barada pulled it near and perched it.

"I was quite awake," he went on saying. "I wasn't feeling well. So I switched the lights off and lay down with my eyes closed. But my brains refused to switch off. The statements of the witnesses in the case I am appearing in went on sizzling in my head. You know, I had to appear at an ugly case in the courts this afternoon. But wait, let me get a cigar. Then I shall tell you all about it".

As he left the room Niladri sat up on the bed. He did not look particularly pleased.

"It's your fault," he said with a trace of anger in his voice.

"Mine? How so?" Uma widened her eyes.

"Of course yours. Why did you scream?"

"Huh! How could I know it was you. I was asleep, wasn't I?"

"Why did you fall asleep so early," asked Niladri impatiently. "Can't approve of it."

"I suppose one can only approve of someone entering a lady's bedroom and lifting the quilt off her face while she has been sleeping."

"I should not have done that." Niladri's voice was heavy. "Not if I had the least idea of what was going to follow."

He left the room angrily but had to return immediately. There was no other way out and Barada was about to come back. The doors of Barada's room were now wide open. There was a light inside. He sat facing the door and was putting his stockings on. He was inconveniently observant. Even a fly could not escape his eyes and pass him by.

Niladri sighed once again. His voice was sad.

"I wouldn't have caused you any trouble, dad

ing. I just came in to look you up. I'd have gone back quietly. Why did you have to call father in and land me in a soup ?"

But Uma did not look sorry in the least. It rather seemed as if she was having a nice time of it with a smile quivering on her lips. She tilted her head and said, "If a look up was all you had come in for, it would have made little difference if I was asleep or dead. Trouble ? Don't you say that. You are most conveniently warm under the quilt and here I am shivering in the cold."

"There's no quilt downstairs and so I have come in here," said Niladri.

There was no time to say any more. The door chain over there rattled, which meant Barada was closing his door from outside and was coming down here thoroughly prepared to relax over a nice chit-chat.

Niladri looked at Uma. There was the look of a lamb in his eyes. "Please make it brief," he said, "For my sake, or else I shall die of suffocation under this infernal quilt."

Barada walked in and Niladri disappeared under the quilt. The old man tried to explain the delay. "Found my cigars," he said, "but couldn't find the match-box. Was feeling somewhat chilly as well and so I thought I'd better put on a warm slipover. There's been a slight delay.....didn't you feel frightened ?"

Uma assumed a carelessness and replied "Not at all. What should I feel frightened for ? Please go back and try to have a sleep, father. I have nothing to feel frightened about."

All this did not pass through Barada's ears. He coolly sat on the charpoy. Uma sat leaning on the bed.

"Are you feeling cold, my dear ?" asked the old man.

"You, had better wrap yourself up in that quilt. What have you heaped it on the pillow for ?"

"It's very warm," said Uma.

"What ? Warm ! What do you mean. With all these warm things I am still shivering. You are feeling chilly, I'm sure. Only you are not being able to realise it."

He was about to get up but before he could do so Uma quickly got down from the bed, came and sat on the floor near his feet.

He was a busybody and he did not really know what he would do next. Maybe he was thinking of picking up the quilt himself.

"I'm not at all feeling cold," said Uma. "I had a slight and that has been giving me the shivers. Now it's all gone. If I close my eyes I still see that cat — the cat which has large fiery eyes like those of a tiger.....Well, father, let's forget it all. Please tell me about the case you appeared in today."

This trick was known even to the children of the household. If one could make him talk about some interesting case he would forget everything else.

He started.

"There is nothing much to say, my dear. Just an ordinary case of theft. I volunteered to appear for the accused. Without any fee, of course."

He got excited soon.

"It doesn't matter whatever the law says on this point. I insist that there was nothing criminal about what the accused had done. You know, there was a tray of rasgollas inside a glass-case. This man had been starving for about three days and naturally he could not help smashing the glass. As he did so and was about to toss a couple of rasgollas into his mouth they grabbed him and handed him over to the police."

"So it *was* a case of theft after all."

"May be. But when one has been starving and there is food within reach I don't suppose even an angel can help grabbing it. I straightaway told the magistrate that if it had been myself——"

"——What do you think you would have done ?"

"I'd have given him the entire lot to eat", replied Barada. "Poor fellow ! Why can't anybody let him eat his fill ? I don't really understand why these shopkeepers are so hard on the poor."

"Everyone cannot be expected to have a heart of gold like yours," said Uma with a smile.

Under the quilt Niladri was sweating. How about a man who does not mind his son dying of suffocation under a quilt !

The parley however did not progress any fur-

You, had better wrap yourself up in that quilt. What have you heaped it on the pillow for ?

ther. Niladri's mother, Saudamini, was back soon.

Barada laughed.

"So,——my dear old wife has come back at last. That enthralling music is over, is it ?"

"Why ? Did my absence put anybody to disadvantage," asked Saudamini.

"Look at this poor little thing, your daughter-in-law. She is all alone by herself. Somebody ought to keep her company, don't you think so ?"

Saudamini smiled and looked at Uma. Then she came near Barada and said, "After all our son is at home, isn't he ? I don't suppose one should expect our neighbours to come and keep her company at this hour of night."

Barada frowned. "My dear ! Why should my son neglect his studies and mount guard over this little unimportant woman. His exam is near. He has a lot to study. He isn't a worthless gossip. He is my son."

Saudamini laughed.

"Well, if the son cannot", she said, "the son's father can. That would be quite as well. However, you may go now. It is not yet time for Nilu to come up. Let's have a nap in the meantime."

As Barada left Saudamini looked at the bed. The unusually large heap under the quilt surprised her. "What a useless servant we have," she exclaimed. "It must be his doing. That pillow is too big for you. If it takes all the space on the bed where are we to sleep ?"

Uma hurriedly said, "Please don't bother yourself about that, mother. I've been sleeping here quite comfortably. I don't think I shall have any difficulty at all."

Saudamini did not pay her any heed.

"Wait, I shall get you a smaller pillow. Let me go and keep it over there."

As she approached the pillow sat up.

"You ? Nilu !"

Niladri was about to break into tears. But the welling tears immediately evaporated and he stood thunderstruck. Barada had left his cigar box behind. He was now back to reclaim it. As he saw his son his brows puckered up into a frown.

"What are you doing here ?" he asked. "Are your studies over ? What's the time now ?"

Niladri assumed a sleepy voice, yawned and said, "It's past twelve....".

"Of course not. It's just seven minutes past eleven, and not a second more. When it is study-time your clock always runs faster than a race horse. Go now, you. Get back to your study downstairs."

Saudamini stopped him.

"No. He needn't go. Lot of mosquitoes down there. I don't want him to get malaria. If he has to study let him study here."

"Mosquitoes ? I don't see any," yelled the outraged father. "Do you want to make a cheese-doll out of your son ? I have been sitting up doing a lot of work myself. Mosquitoes don't come and trouble me."

Niladri looked at his mother with grateful eyes and said, "Mosquitoes come out only at night."

"Then come to my room and study", said the unyielding old man. "It's still fifty three minutes to twelve. Have you done with the chapter on Cheating ? I don't think so. If you get stuck up anywhere I might help. You'll find that quite convenient, won't you ?"

Barada looked at his son with piercing eyes. Niladri felt helpless. He nodded and said, "Well, yes, I think so...."

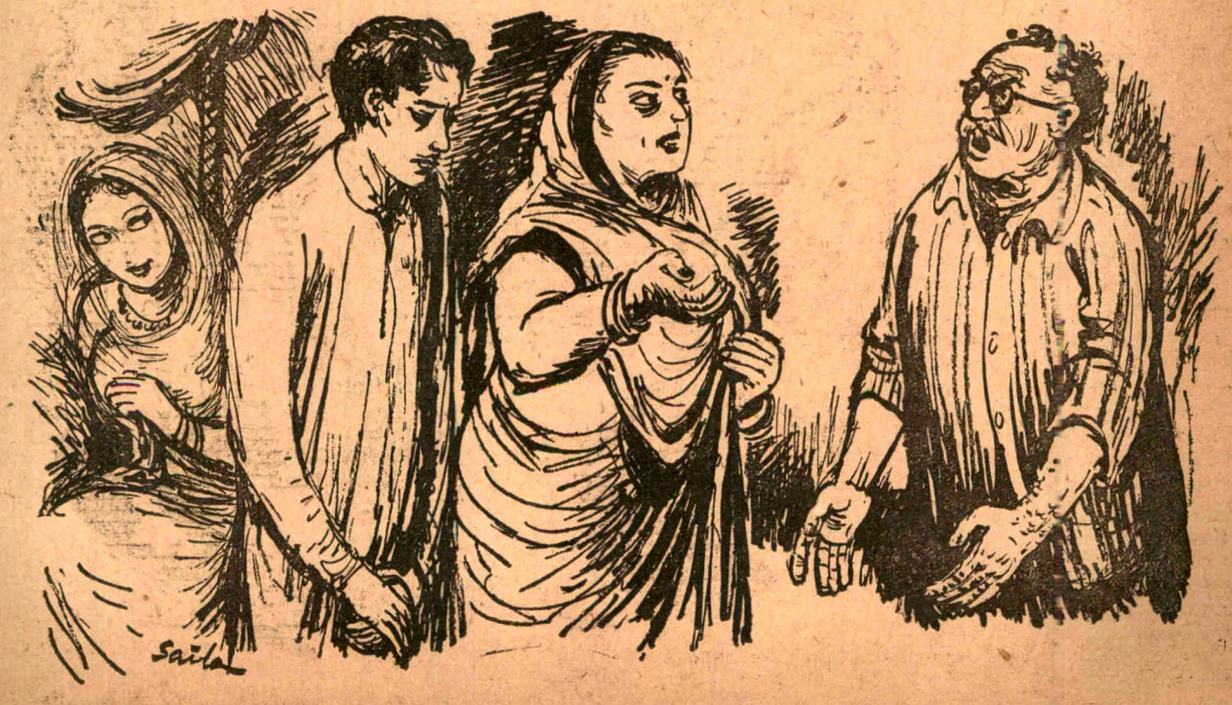
Mother came to his rescue.

"But I won't find it convenient at all," said she. "If he keeps the light on, which he must if he has to do his studies, I shall not be able to have a wink of sleep. You know I cannot sleep with lights on."

"Then you can sleep here in this room," said the old man. "When his studies are over he will come back here and you can go."

The old lady shook her head.

"Why ?" exclaimed the exasperated old man.



"Mosquitoes ? I don't see any", yelled out the out-raged father.

"My health is running down," said the old lady. "I cannot have half a sleep and then wake up and run about here and there. I don't care if your son cannot do his studies any more tonight."

Troublesome, really! Barada shook his head. What was to be done, he thought. He had another brainwave.

"All right. Let's take Uma to our room. She can stay there while Niley studies here. When it is twelve she can come back."

"That also will not do," said Saudamini. "I want to have a talk with you and it will not do to have her there."

Barada lost his patience. "Then what can we do? We cannot leave her here all along by herself."

"Ask Nilu if he is willing to———," began Saudamini.

"Certainly not. His law finals are very near." Barada felt pity for his wife. Silly woman! Does not even understand the importance of examinations, least of all the importance of the Penal Code which his son has got to learn by heart. He shook his head and said, "I cannot ask him to do that. How can he lay his books aside so early? Must have some sense."

"As if you have them," said Saudamini sarcastically. She called her son and said, "My dear, tonight you can study here in this room. I don't think Uma will disturb you. She will sleep quietly. Will that be inconvenient?"

The son seemed much gratified. He agreed that it would certainly not be inconvenient.

Barada was suspicious. "Are you sure," he asked.

"Yes," replied Niladri.

"How do you know it won't be inconvenient?"

He thought his son was too shy to protest. But he did not think it worthwhile to press the point.

He quietly left the room. At the door he turned round and said, "I should expect you to read out loud so that I may hear you from the other room. It also helps concentration, you know. I should also expect you to be thorough with the sections on Cheating. Tomorrow I might be asking you a question or two."

He went back to his room followed by his wife Saudamini. Niladri closed the door and fastened the latch. Uma was already down on the bed with her eyes closed.

"Uma!"

No answer.

"Umarani?"

"'Mm?"

Niladri came and sat beside her.

"Darling! open your eyes and look," he said. "Such a lovely night! Just open your eyes for once."

"Yes, lovely, isn't it," she said drowsily.

"What?"

"A night like this."

"But your face is turned on this side. Your eyes are closed. The open windows are on the other side. Are you really seeing anything?" asked Niladri.

Uma opened her eyes and peered into the eager face of her husband. She giggled and said, "A closed room is the loveliest at night."

"Good enough for sleeping, isn't it?"

Uma replied, "Well, you don't seem to admire sleeping beauty. Why? Is it because you are not being able to sleep yourself for you have got to learn your lessons? I suppose that's why you must grudge everyone the pleasure of a nap, mustn't you?

"It's a crime to sleep on a night like this," said Niladri.

Uma asked with an assumed innocence, "Does your Penal Code say so?"

"Yes. And do you know what's the punishment?"

Uma sat up quickly and said," Oh dear, no. Not now in any case. May be to-morrow. When your father asks you about your lessons, tell him all that."

Before Niladri could tell her something appropriate, there was someone knocking at the door.

"Niley——! Niley——!!"

It was Barada.

Niladri ran towards the table. He did not like the idea of being caught crooning into his wife's ears while he should have actually been studying.

Then he stood aghast. He had left his books downstairs. He searched about but could not find any handy book within reach. All he found was the old torn Mahabharata which belonged to his mother. He laid it open before him on the table and started reading as loudly as possible whatever he could remember of the sections he had learnt by heart from the Penal Code.

In the meantime Barada went on pounding on the door and shouting as loudly as he could.

The attentive pupil then got up and opened the door with a wistful look in his eyes.

Barada looked very pleased. He had apparently heard him reading. He walked straight in and went towards the bed where Uma was lying with her eyes closed, feigning sleep.

"Uma, are you sleeping," he asked. "I just came in to make sure."

A sleeping woman does not talk. So Uma's reply was not coming. He seemed relieved and turned towards his son.

"Why are you braying like an ass", he asked. "Hell of a lot of noise you are making. I thought may be it was disturbing Uma and she was not able to sleep. So I came in to find out if I could do anything about it."

Niladri scratched his head and replied, "I suppose it would be better if I read silently....."

"Of course not," Barada shook his head. "Everything has got to be learnt by heart and you cannot do that by reading silently. And since Uma is already asleep and the noise you are making is not disturbing anyone else, you might carry on as before. But be careful. She must not be disturbed on any account."

"Surely not," Niladri hastened to agree. "Look, she is fast asleep."

"Yes, but she may be awake any moment," said Barada. "I cannot rely on you. I shall come back a little while later and see if things are all right."

Niladri felt irritated but did not show it. He quietly replied, "It's very cold outside. Why should you take so much trouble?"

This infuriated the old man. "That's my look-out, not yours. I don't have a daughter of my own. She is like my own daughter. If I take any trouble on her account, it should not cause a pang of jealousy in your bovine heart."

"Well, I don't see how my getting up and opening the door now and again will help my concentration", he hastened to explain.

Barada noticed that all the windows of the room along the passage were closed.

Good gracious! You have changed the room into a Black Hole. That was why I could not hear

(Continued On Page 231)

Sixteen annas

By NARENDRANATH MITTRA

THE Dacca Mail was to leave the platform at 10 P.M. but Lalmohan Saha arrived at the station two hours before time. He had with him a big trunk, two suitcases, a tiffin carrier and a bedding. With the help of a coolie he put his luggage at a corner. He had bought the tickets earlier. But only tickets would not help you now-a-days to get inside Dacca Mail with your luggage so easily. You have to take permit from the land customs office. They open each and every box and search thoroughly all your belongings to see whether you are carrying any contraband articles to Pakistan or not. They are unsympathetic in nature. A fortnight back Lalmohan sustained a heavy loss. The customs officer snatched away fifteen yards of shirting and five saris. Lalmohan entreated him to spare him—he had fallen at his feet and even tried to put two rupees in his hand. But the officer wanted to hand him over to the police. Lalmohan had somehow saved himself from the prison bars. He resolved to wind up this business. But the moment he set his foot in Calcutta he broke his promise. Business means profit or loss. You have to take risks. No business magnate gives up his profession even if he has to face a loss of hundreds of thousands of rupees.

Of course Lalmohan is not a business magnate —he cannot afford to lose a hundred, what to speak of hundreds of thousands. Still he could not abstain himself from it. This business is running a swell in Pakistan. Profit by three or four times. Various types of businessmen are engaged in this.

This time also Lalmohan invested three hundred rupees in shirting, saris and dhotis. He put all these in his boxes and bedding and covered them with fruits and vegetables. He has become more cautious this time. He would not go to the male customs officer once again. He would get his luggage passed through a lady officer and for this he would find out a woman to carry his belongings as hers.

He has marked that two or three young ladies work in this department. They just open the boxes of lady passengers and let them pass. The ladies department is the best place for getting his luggage passed. He would take this chance.

He has no woman with him He left his old mother at home. But what if he was not escorting one to Calcutta—somebody else was doing it. Harabilas Sil has brought his wife for medical treatment She would have to stay in a hospital for a week.

Lalmohan had gone to see her in the hospital thrice in seven days and given her fruits. He had proposed with a smile, "We would return to our home together." Harabilas had replied, "Surely."

Lalmohan had said to Sunayani, "I will have some luggage with me. If they question you just say that I am your brother-in-law."

"Oh, surely," Sunayani had smiled "but you will have to give me a nice sari at a cheap price."

"You need not worry," Lalmohan had assured her, "just come round and you will have lots of them."

The day and time had been fixed. Harabilas with his wife would go to-day. Lalmohan would accompany them as Sunayani's brother-in-law and all the luggage would be passed under her name.

(Continued On Page 228

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OSTRICHES ON A SOUTH AFRICAN FARM: Here is a huge crowd called "Camel Birds" for the long neck, disproportionate head and curious feet.

Ostriches: 'Camel Birds' Of South Africa

By U. C. CHOPRA

THE flightless birds include not only the Kiwi of New Zealand but also the Ostriches of Africa and Western Asia, the Emu and Cassowaries of Australasia, the American Rheas, and Penguins—the aquatic birds of Southern Hemisphere, as well as several birds now extinct, such as the Moas.

The most familiar of them is the ostrich which is used to the wide-open plains and sandy deserts over which it has wandered undisturbed for centuries, and still resents contact with the world that has encroached upon its secrecy and encompassed its freedom.

The male has magnificent, glossy black plumage with pure white wings and tail feathers; while the female, a rather smaller bird, is dusky grey. The ostrich has a small and flattened head, with very large eyes, a telescopical neck, and long, stout, muscular legs, able to deliver a powerful defensive kick and to carry the bird at a very great space. Taking it all round, the beak of the ostrich, flat, broad and blunt, with nostrils in the middle, a covering of horn in separate plates, and a deep mouth reaching back under the eye, is the most primitive and muzzle-like beak carried by any modern bird.

The ostrich is known for its tremendous speed. The short wings of the bird are quite useless for flying, but they are employed as sails when the bird is running. When it is going at full speed, however, they are held close to the body, so as to offer less resistance to the air. The ostrich gains such momentum that at the top speed the bird takes strides of twenty-five feet. It can run sixty miles an hour, faster than the fastest Arabian horse or the Antelope. Races are often held between trained ostriches on ostrich farms and are said to be more exciting than horse.

At one time wild ostriches were very plentiful in many parts of Africa, but, owing to constant persecution for the sake of their plumes, their numbers were reduced to such an extent that had it not been for the fact that the birds thrive well in a domestic state the species would in all probability long since have been exterminated.

EXISTING SPECIES

African ostriches include three existing species, one in East Africa and another in South Africa, while the third and more familiar kind, the common Ostrich or 'Camel Bird' ranges north into Arabia, Syria and Masopotamia, and formerly existed in

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SIXTEEN ANNAS

(Continued From Page 225)

He had taken all sorts of precaution. He did not now care for anything on earth. He took his seat on the big trunk and smoked a bidi and looked at the entrance—Harabilas and his wife should arrive now.

Rickshaws, taxis and coaches plied in. So many passengers entered with women of various ages. But there was no trace of Harabilas. Lalmohan became impatient. He had hardly moved a few steps when a young man of twenty-three ran to him. "You are here," he panted, "and I have been searching for you at every possible place." He was Haripada, cousin to Harabilas. Harabilas was putting up at his residence at Ultadanga.

"Where are your elder brother and sister-in-law?" asked Lalmohan.

"I came to tell you that," replied Haripada, "my brother won't go to-day. Sister-in-law has become unwell again. The doctor says she should not be allowed to undertake a journey within a few weeks. My brother asks you to manage yourself." Haripada went away.

Lalmohan sat still and pondered for sometime. Yes, he must take the train to-day at any cost. He had already paid a rupee and a half to the rickshaw-walla to bring his luggage to the station and he would have to pay the same to take them back. Moreover, how long could he afford to stay in a hotel in Calcutta? Where to get money from?

Harabilas would not go with his wife to-day—but there were other passengers with their wives. Lalmohan would approach one of them.

A smartly dressed young man with a beautiful wife was advancing towards the ladies' department of the customs office. Lalmohan addressed him straightway, "Excuse me, where do you live?"

The young man was surprised. "Faridpur," he said, "but what makes you ask this?"

"I am also from Faridpur," replied Lalmohan, "we come from the same district, you see. Will you please help me?"

"What can I do for you?"

Lalmohan pointed to his belongings and said very politely, "No, you need not take much trouble. Please ask sister-in-law to kindly get my luggage passed along with hers. She would have to admit that I am related to her."

The young man looked at him and then smiled, "My wife would not perhaps object to admit relation with an interesting person like you but we would not certainly run the risk. They have become so strict these days, you know.

Lalmohan approached a few more couples but all of them said the same thing. They were very strict—who would volunteer to run such a risk!

He said to his companion Nanda Das, "Who the hell can stop me from taking the train to-day? Sit here and watch the articles. I will go to the gents' department."

Lalmohan went to see the crowd near the gents' section. He looked around himself to see if he could find out a known couple.

On the right side refugees in distress sat in groups. They had established their household near the station. Some were eating, some sleeping. There were quarrels between men and women—romance was also going on. Lalmohan moved forward.

"Babu—hear me."

A woman's voice from behind made him turn his neck. The moment he saw her he stopped moving. A girl still within her teens. She had just a small worn-out sari on her. It was so dirty that its original colour was difficult to trace out. She was rather thin yet she had something lovely in her—joined eyebrows, pointed nose, beautiful eyes and long hairs.

"What do you want? he asked after a pause.

The girl hesitated but spoke out at last, "I am starving the whole day—my invalid mother also did not get anything to eat. She would have consumed me if she could. Will you kindly give me something?" She stretched her hand.

Lalmohan noticed a blue glass bangle round her wrist. It matched nicely. The shape of her hand was quite pretty. The fingers were slim and pointed.

He replied rudely, "I have no time to pity anybody—haven't money with me." He turned his face and made a move.

"Listen, give me something," the girl implored.

Lalmohan surveyed her again. Yes, she was not bad to look at. She could be introduced as a gentleman's wife.

"I can give you something if you do what I say," said he.

The girl fixed her eyes on his. What she would have to hear was not unknown to her. She had already heard this kind of word before. She had learnt that the moment they came to know she was hungry their eyes glowed with a different type of hunger.

She advanced a few steps to him and then said very softly with a smile, "Why not ? I will do what you say. Speak out."

"How can I say it here, come with me," said Lalmohan, "what's your name?"

"Champa."

"What a beautiful name," said Lalmohan sweetly, "come darling, come."

He went to the first class waiting room. He peeped into it and found there was none. "Come in," he said.

Champa followed him.

Lalmohan closed towards her. Champa moved a few steps back and said, "Tell me first how much you will pay."

But he did not touch her. He bent upon her and whispered, "If you help me in a matter I will pay you what you want." Then he said what sort of work she was to do. It was a peculiar proposal—she had never heard anything like this.

Champa asked after a pause, "But if they catch us?"

Lalmohan smiled, "Then everything will be over. We would be sent to jail hand in hand. The place is not so bad you know, you get your meals and also can stay there."

"O. K. I agree," said Champa, "but they would detect it at once. You have such a neat and clean dress whereas I am putting on a dirty torn out sari —how can we look as a couple?"

"Right you are," Lalmohan was pleased. "You are quite intelligent Champa,—you can easily become the wife of any judge or magistrate what to speak of me. Wait a bit I will bring the necessary things."

Within a couple of minutes he returned with a small suitcase. He pulled out a cream coloured sari

and gave it to Champa. "Have it," he said, "now you will look as my wife. It cost me seventeen rupees and fourteen annas. I will sell it to the Munshi at thirty chips if not more."

"Will you sell them all? Won't you give one to your wife?" asked Champa.

"Wife?" smiled Lalmohan, "Where is my wife? You are my wife, aren't you?"

Champa blushed. She darted a furtive glance at him. He was fair, slim and quite handsome. He was not more than twenty-five or twenty-six.

"Now just go out of the room," said Champa.

"Why?" asked Lalmohan.

Champa felt amused. Surely he was not married. He did not know anything about women. She raised her brows and said, "Wouldn't I change my dress?"

He pulled out a cream coloured Sari and gave it to Champa.

Lalmohan realised his mistake. "Sorry," he said, "but one thing more. Only costly sari won't do. You are going with your husband. You must put vermilion mark on the parting of your hairs and forehead. Put on the sari. I will bring vermilion in the meantime. I will have to buy a platform ticket also."

He returned after a while. He had brought not only vermilion but two pieces of betel leaves also. He gave one to Champa and said, "Have it. It will make your lips red. A married woman does not look nice if she does not chew betels."

"I can have it," replied Champa, "but how long I can bear this vermilion mark? Am I not a maid? People will start gossiping about me."

The station clock gave a gong. At once Lalmohan jumped up, "Gosh, it is half past ni Hurry up, otherwise I won't be able to catch t train."

After a few minutes Champa said, "Let us go am ready."

Lalmohan surveyed her. The cream colour the sari matched with her complexion wonderfu She had put it on quite smartly. Now she could easily taken for a lady!

Nanda Das felt restless at Lalmohan's delay. burst out when Lalmohan came to him, "Will you today or not ? What's the idea ?" But he was su prised to see Champa with him and asked, "Who she?"

"My wife," replied Lalmohan.

"Wife !" Nanda was taken aback.

"Oh, yes," said Lalmohan, "and you are wife's brother. You have come to see us off. Her your platform ticket. And let me have the tick you have already bought."

Nanda hesitated but Lalmohan shouted at h "Why do you hesitate? Do what I say if you wa to go home."

He called a coolie to carry his luggage and p ceeded with Champa and Nanda towards the lad department of the customs office.

There was a small queue. A nice looking you girl of twenty-two was at the check post. She h specs on her eyes and her face was quite soft.

Lalmohan pushed Champa forward and sa "Go ahead and show her what you are carrying."

Champa cast a glance at him and then mo towards the officer.

The lady customs officer looked at her and th surveyed the luggage. "You have only two ticke said she, "and so many things with you. How ma boxes? These four?"

"Yes," said Champa.

"Are you carrying anything illegally?"

"Open them and see yourself," smiled Champ

The officer was not to yield so easily. "Certai I will have to see myself. Open them. Where your keys?"

Pulses of both Champa and Lalmohan beat f Who would save them if the officer searched eve thing thoroughly!

Lalmohan brought out the key from his poc gave it to Champa and said, "Open it. I objected taking such a huge trunk. Didn't I say that would have to come again? But neither your mot nor you paid any heed to my words."

Then he turned to the lady officer, "She wo not leave a single thing behind, you see, and mother-in-law also seems to be devoid of comm sense. She has heaped all sorts of sheets, clot and what not—as if no other girl has to bear chi

Not only Champa but the officer also blush There were pearls of sweat on her forehead. wiped them with her handkerchief—or just tried hide her smile — who knows !

Lalmohan asked Champa to step aside. "" need not open it—let me do it," he said, "what the use of your coming in such a state—you co easily stay with your mother. Is it possible to unc take a journey at this stage? Look how pale she already become. And think of the strenuous jour she will have to make."

"You need not open that trunk," said the l officer, "let me see other things."

She just peeped into the suitcases and pre the bedding with her soft finger. "O.K. you may she said at last.

The rush of the passengers pushed them platform No. 6. The crewman did not care examine the tickets. He permitted them to get

(Continued On Page .

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SIXTEEN ANNAS

(Continued From Page 229)

Lalmohan said to Nanda, "Gosh, what a rush. All the compartments seem to be fully packed—how to get in! Go ahead with the coolie. You may find some space in the compartment next to the engine. I will soon join you."

A goods train stood on the other side. Lalmohan moved to that and said to Champa, "Hurry up. There's no time to waste. Go on to the other side and change the sari—and bring it to me. Well, how much should I pay you?"

He was in a hurry. The departure time for the train was fast approaching. "How much do you want? Speak out," he said impatiently.

Champa looked dumbfounded. After a while she said softly, "You promised to pay according to my demand."

"Surely, how much do you want?"

"What should I want?" said Champa, "pay me what you like."

Lalmohan pondered for a while and then took some coins out of his pocket and counted them on her palm. "Look, I pay you sixteen annas—nothing less. Now don't grumble. I wonder if I would be able to take the train."

Champa did not utter a word. She changed the sari and returned it to him. He gave the platform ticket to her. "Show it to the gate-keeper. He will allow you to go out. Have you counted the coins? Got sixteen annas correctly?"

Champa looked at his face and then said with a smile, "Yes, there are sixteen annas."

Lalmohan did not wait any longer. He ran towards the engine. Probably he would get a seat in the compartment next to it. To him Nanda was a silly goat and he could not rely on him.

But he found that Nanda had actually put all the luggage inside the compartment. There were seats for both of them.

"Hurry up," cried Nanda, "get in. I have kept a seat for you. The coolie took a rupee and a half."

He cast a glance at his belongings, then heaved a sigh of relief. He took two cigarettes from the packet and offered one to Nanda, "Take it. I did not think that I would be able to catch the train to-day."

The last bell was rung.

What a wonder! The young couple took seats opposite to theirs.

"So, you are also in this compartment," Lalmohan opened the conversation.

"You have come at last," smiled the young man, "but how did you manage?"

Lalmohan smiled mysteriously, "I am here, you see. You did not help me. You left me outside."

He felt embarrassed. "How could I help you," he said, "but tell me how could you come at the last moment with so many things? With whom did you come?"

"With whom else?" smiled Lalmohan, "with my wife."

"Wife!" he was bewildered.

"What do you think," replied Lalmohan jokingly, "are you the only married person in the whole world?"

The young bride now stared at Lalmohan for the first time. Probably, she felt curious. It was a beautiful face. And, there was that beautiful circular tip of vermilion in between her eyebrows.

Lalmohan got a shock. Champa had a similar mark on her forehead. She looked as charming as the lady before him.

The young man was rather perplexed. "I don't mean that", he said apologetically. "Then your wife—"

Lalmohan did not hear what he said. He did not want to—he stared out. The train had started to move. But he could easily get down if he like. He could run to her and ask for her hand.

But whose hand would he seek? Would Champa be traced out in such a crowd? Would she be recognised? Was she still bearing the vermilion mark? Had she not wiped it off then and there due to the insult and humiliation? Or who knows whether with that mark she was helping some other person to get his luggages passed!

Coal-dusts fell in the eyes of Lalmohan.

The train was running fast.

(Translated by Juthika Shome)

ONCE UPON A NIGHT

(Continued From Page 224)

you studying from my room. Well, you don't have to open the door everytime I come. Keep the windows open. I will come and just peep in from outside".

Uma was silent on the bed. There was an innocent, sleepy look on her face. But she was not sleeping, of course. Niladri knew that very well. He could even see the flicker of an amused smile on her lips and the quivering of her eyelids. But she had to remain silent. And Niladri could not go and sit near her and talk. Barada's ears were capable of picking up the sound of a falling pin and any moment he might appear at the window and ask, "Have you finished with the chapter on Cheating?"

Niladri quietly brought the Penal Code from downstairs. Then he dragged the table near the bed and started neighing almost into Uma's eardrum. Uma turned over to the other side. The trumpeting increased in vehemence and volume. Uma's fair and small hands covered her ears. Niladri felt all the more enthusiastic and increased the pitch.

At last Saudamini appeared at the window. "What do you think you are doing, Nilu," she shouted. "Won't you let anyone in this house sleep?"

Niladri looked up and mewed, "But father asked me to——"

"What nonsense! For God's sake, please stop this infernal noise. The way you are yelling it can even arouse a dead man."

Barada was already behind her. He felt irritated. "Don't you realise that his exam is near? All right, Niley, you may read silently now. How far with the chapter on Cheating?"

"Perfectly thorough," replied Niladri.

"By the way, why have you kept the window open," asked Saudamini. "The light is disturbing my sleep."

"Father says——," Niladri began gratefully.

Barada felt somewhat pleased now. He thought he could afford to look magnanimous.

"All right," he said. "You may close the windows. She has not been keeping well lately."

Windows were hastily closed to the satisfaction of everyone concerned.

As the last window closed with a bang, Barada could not conceal his glee. He laughed, gesticulated and said to his wife, "Did you see, my dear, how interested my son is in his studies. That's because he has failed once. Now he has taken his studies very seriously. By the way, did you know, it's long past twelve. And that fellow is not even aware of it. Actually I have wound the minute hand fifty minutes behind. Believe me, this boy will surely get through his law finals this time....."

[*English rendering from the original Bengali "Ekada Nishith Kale," by BARIN DASS.*]

STRICHES: 'CAMEL BIRDS' OF SOUTH AFRICA

AIR OF POWERFUL LEGS: The Ostrich in its ng posture. These legs help the flightless s run faster than any horse, it is said.

ntinued From Page 227)

tral Asia. A full grown ostrich stands seven to t feet high and weighs between 200 to 300 nds. Only the extinct Moa bird of New Zealand taller which was twelve feet high. It is unique ng the birds in having only two toes, one long, ng toe on which the whole weight rests, and the r much smaller and almost useless. The under s of these toes are provided with elastic pads, as camels. The South American Rhea, called the erican ostrich, is different from the true ostrich frica, as it has three toes.

Safety is promoted by the social habit, for iches generally live in parties of ten or twenty he wild state. They often move about in com- y with antelopes or zebras, and depending on very keen hearing and sight, which make it to detect approaching enemies.

The ostrich is usually cautious and wary, as well speedy. Its greatest weakness is a lack of good e. The ancient belief that an ostrich hides its in the sand when frightened is only a fable. habit proverbially attributed to the ostrich of ying its head in the sand when faced with er would be less absurd than it sounds, for the ch's skull is very weak, the most vulnerable part s body.

The long periscope of the neck and head is red and stretched along the surface of the , the strange hump-backed shape of the bird mes merely a hummock, a boulder, or an ant , breaking the flat surface of the sandy plains, e atmosphere and heat help to enhance the ge and hide the sitting ostrich completely. By laying of the head on the sand, the ostrich does act disappear from view in its native habitat. n brought to bay the ostrich defends itself with beak and legs, kicking forward with great force, tearing the flesh of an intruder. It is said that it can rip open an attacking dog, almost in two witn one kick, and the kick of the angry ostrich is so powerful that it can puncture a sheet of corrugated iron. There are stories that even the powerful baboon has been torn to death by the knife-like claws of this giant bird.

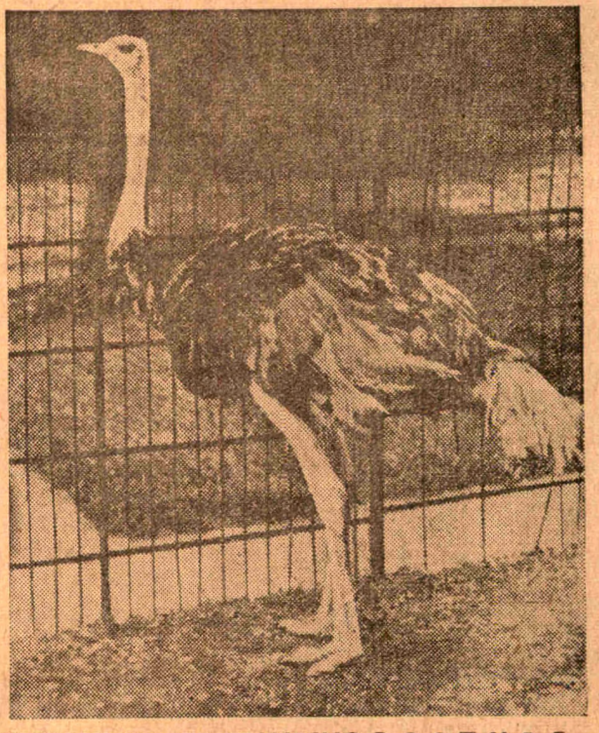
CURIOUS MENU

Wild ostriches feed on grass, leaves, seeds and fruits, as well as on birds and insects. They will, in fact, eat almost anything, 'the digestion of an ostrich' being proverbial. They need a certain amount of salt and a good deal to drink, though they can travel through the desert for long periods without water.

Ostriches in domestic state are fed mostly on alfalfa and grain. It swallows any sort of hard, gritty material it finds, and will devour stones, glass and bones.

A post-mortem examination held upon one of these birds that died at the London Zoological Gardens revealed the following curious diet: two handkerchiefs, three gloves, a Kodak film-spool, a pencil, a comb, a key, a number of nails, a rolled gold necklace, two collar studs, and five pence in coppers—a collection which has been mounted and may now be seen in the museum of the Royal College of Surgeons.

As the breeding season approaches, they break up into small parties of five or six, of which one is a cock and the rest hens. The nest is a shallow depression scooped out by the male in the sand. The females often share the communal nest where



OSTRICH IN ITS STANDING POSTURE: Although the Ostrich cannot fly, its wings are far from useless since, when alarmed, it spreads them and runs with the wind behind it, thus converting them into sails.

several hens combine and lay the dusty clutches of sometimes twenty or more large cream-coloured eggs.

The ostrich's wings, so impracticable for flight, are of great use when it comes to covering a score or so of eggs each equal in size to two dozen of the domestic fowl's. The cock bird subsides amongst his furbelows, like a seventeenth-century lady amongst her hooped skirts, and so sits each night for forty-two days. The hens take turn in sitting on the eggs and relieve one another during the day, though this is more to guard the eggs from beasts of prey than to incubate them. To change for the night duty the hens use secret call when the defending guardian is returned to the nest to take over and relieve the hatching hen.

In exceptionally hot weather the cock merely covers the eggs with sand, and, mounting guard over them, leaves the actual work of incubation to the sun like the method employed by most living reptiles, the last representatives of the fore-runners of the birds.

ACTIVE BUT DELICATE CHICKS

The newly hatched chicks are not blind and helpless like the young of many birds. They are active, open-eyed, and are able to walk within a few hours after leaving the eggs. The chicks look like balls of thatch and wool and have large appetites. For the first three months of their life the young are very delicate. In the wild state 75 per cent of them may succumb to cold wet weather or to the ravages of wild animals. They grow very rapidly,

NEWLY HATCHED OSTRICH CHICK & EGGS : The newly hatched chick looks like a ball of thatch and wool. It is active, open-eyed and is able to walk within a few hours after leaving the egg. One egg is equivalent to 25 hens' eggs.

CLOSE-UP VIEW OF THE OSTRICH HEAD It is not buried in sand when the bird scared, but outstretched along the grou

and increase in height at the rate of about a foo month from the time they emerge from the egg the time they are five or six months old. After they do not grow so quickly. The parents dis great solicitude for their young.

Both small and large birds love to dance du the courtship season, but the ritualistic prim dance of the mating ostrich courting the hen is amazing and very interesting sight to watch. Be commencing to display he expands his neck and g utterance to a loud booming noise. Livingstone calls how he once mistook the voice of a love- ostrich for the roar of a lion

The hen, grey, dusty, nondescript compared the superb black and white beauty of her m walks round and round him as he sits, majesti the sand. Shivering her drooping wings, emittir sound like the faint clatter of small castanets, circles around the cock with alluring moveme Then suddenly he rises with wings outspread, cur white plumes wave and the great bunch of feat which forms his tail stands erect. Slowly he pra up to the hen. Then, face to face, wing tip to tip, they start the ritual dance, slowly circling waltzing — their long necks curving and swa rhythmically.

Finally round and round they move until hen breaks the rhythm, suddenly squats on ground, wings outstretched, her long neck exter sweeping the ground; snakelike, from side to over the dusty surface, she weaves a pattern motion to further fascinate her mate, who, seemi bewitched, prances round her

The giant bird outstretches his fanlike w to display the curling white array of plumes, sionately stamps his dance of love amid a flurr beating wings and whirling dust. Having thus

Continued On Page

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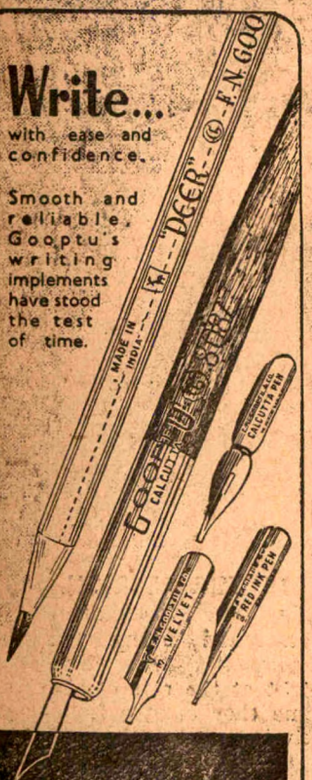

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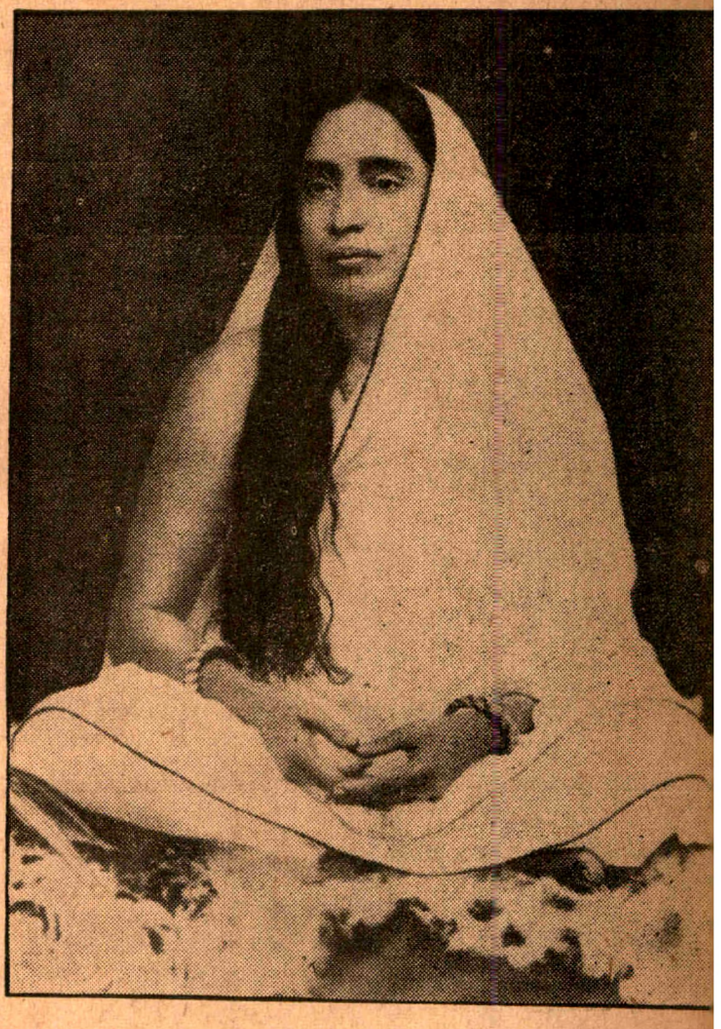

THE HOLY MOTHER

By

TUSHAR KANTI GHOSH

(Baidyabati)

WOMAN is an unfinished man, said Aristotle, "left standing on a lower step in the scale of development." In one context, Meredith also said that woman would be the last thing civilised by man. History, however, has belied all these idle indictments; history has shown that women have often climbed up to the highest rung of the ladder of perfection, and there is reason to believe that man was the last thing civilised by woman.

This is the inevitable preface to any study of the lives of Indian women, and particularly in the context of the life and teachings of the Holy Mother. With the onrush of British culture and its ominous impact on the traditional beliefs of India, the ideal of our womanhood which glowed with white radiance in our chequered past seemed to be cast into oblivion. In the beginning of the 19th century we noticed the rapid pace of Westernisation in all aspects of our traditional life. There was the necessity of the emergence of spirited souls in different aspects of life, not to put the clock back, but to put it right. In the Gita, the Lord says: "Whenever 'dharma' is humiliated and 'adharma' takes its place, I create myself" (IV, 7). And, indeed, in the sphere of religion, God created Himself in Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother.

In those holy prophets of Bengal—the "Messiahs" of India—India not only had an effective counterpoise against the evil tempo of Westernisation wh so blurred the mirror of our cultural heritage as reflect nothing except its bad effects, but also clearest version of Truth and of the Life Divine. Ramakrishna we find an amazing synthesis of t ancient or Oriental with the modern or Western, well as the spiritual enlightenment imparted by t Vedantists and the loving 'bhakti' cult. In a n shell, Ramakrishna preached to India at the time her greatest need that the highest spiritual life c be attained by the common man if he learns to l all beings and to regard everything as the manif tation of God. One can, therefore, achieve G through images, provided one can transform t image into God. In essence, it is the Vedantic phi sophy made easy in an admirably simple way for t layman with a view to restoring Indian culture a belief and dynamising them. The 'bhakti' cult joi hands with Vedantic absolutism. That is why Rom Rolland aptly said that Ramakrishna "was the c summation of two thousand years of spiritual life three hundred million people."

MORE THAN SHADOW

While Ramakrishna was explaining his messa there was also another unexpressed voice of message being practised in a magnificent way

Continued On Page 2

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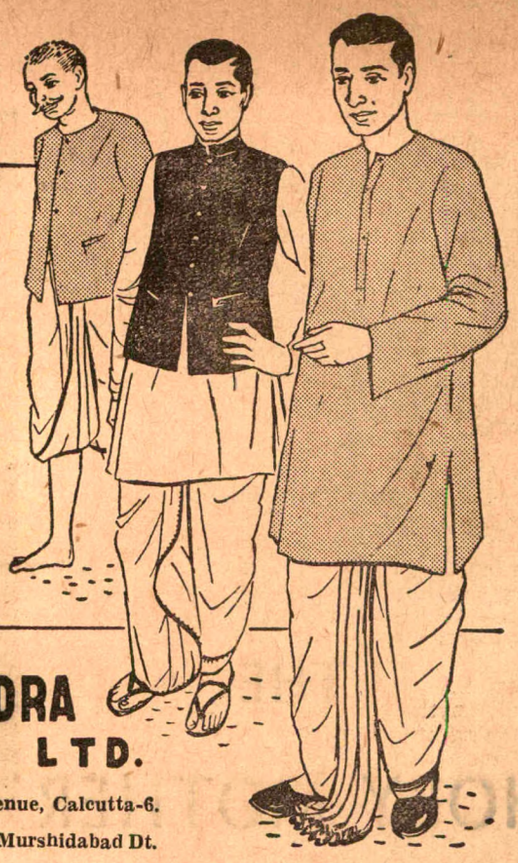

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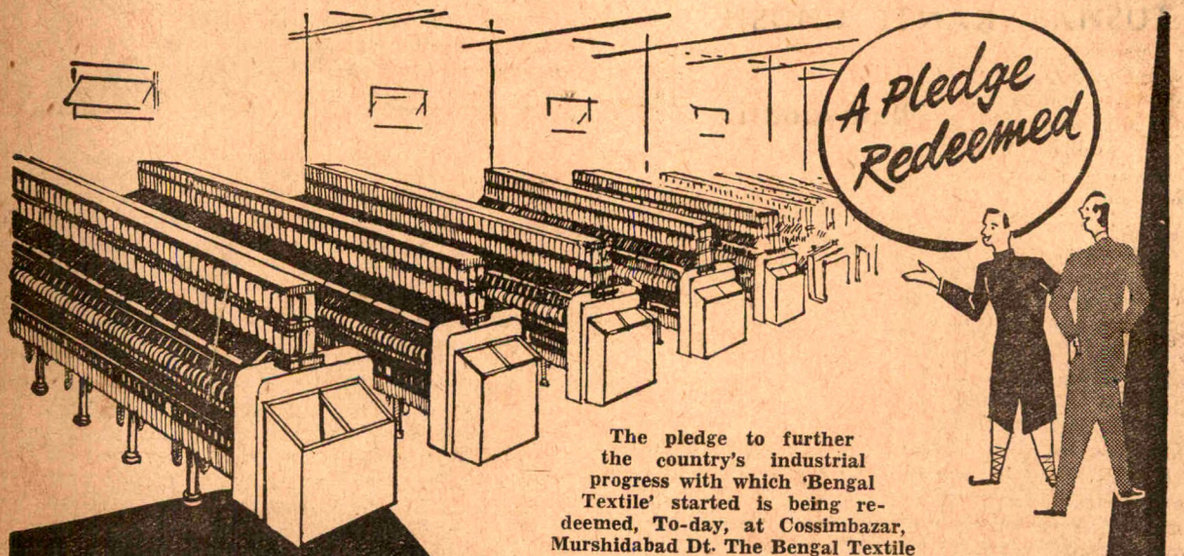

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(Continued From Page 235)

the life of one who was legally as well as in fact the co-sharer of the religious life of Ramakrishna—she was the Holy Mother, Saradamani Devi. As long as Ramakrishna was in this world, she never tried to make her presence felt, she was completely merged in Ramakrishna. Like an unseen shadow she always attended her noble husband. She was, however, more than a shadow; for she did not disappear into oblivion when Ramakrishna departed from the mortal millions. On the contrary, it was now the turn of Saradamani to become the Holy Mother. She was not, therefore, the shadow, but the supplement of Ramakrishna: she was the Example, if Ramakrishna was the Precept; and to vary the metaphor once more, if Ramakrishna was the hymn, she was the essential rhyme that adds to its sense of perfection.

This Saradamani Devi was not a seer like *Apala* or *Lopamudra* of the Vedas; she was far from being an intellectual like *Maitreyi* or *Gargi;* she was not a divine nightingale like *Mira Bai.* She was an illiterate, rustic maiden, as simple as Simplicity itself. But this little woman was to make the learned men astir—God, indeed, sends little things to confound the great!

Objectively viewed, the Holy Mother has not preached anything surpassing, in respect of value, the preaching of Ramakrishna, and to many it seems that in this regard she only continued and repeated the message of Ramakrishna. But looking in retrospect, we note that she had a significance of her own. Her life has been transcendent throughout the years to exemplify in a simple unornamented life the ways to achieve ideal womanhood, and, for the matter of that, highest religious realisation. Her life itself is her teaching and preaching.

A TRUE INDIAN

In our chequered past, we have a galaxy of great women; but so far as the attainment of ideal womanhood is concerned, none of them can surpass the Holy Mother. It is as if God created the Holy Mother by adding bit by bit the elements of perfection on her, just as God created *Tilottama.* The Holy Mother was out and out an Indian woman: and women in this part of the world have no religion apart from their husbands', provided that the husbands also are ideal ones. Saradamani had thus a two-fold function to perform : to contribute to the religious life of her husband as a devoted wife is expected to, and also to contribute to the religious life of the people of India and to serve as the finger-post to them who were, at the period, at the cross-roads.

In her capacity as a faithful 'Sahadharmini' or wife, the Holy Mother is the culmination of the two thousand years' flow of spiritual striving of Indian women, just as Ramakrishna was the consummation of two thousand years of the spiritual life of the three hundred million people. When Saradamani met her husband, she was a pretty little Bengali girl with ordinary hopes and modest wishes of a bride; but Ramakrishna uttered into her ears : "You cannot have what other women have, for I have to be a great man, father of humanity, and you must be the mother." One must be struck with wonder considering the ease and the perfect understanding with which the simple, uninitiated girl quickly adapted herself to this unexpected and extraordinary circumstances. Henceforth, she not only succeeded in her quick adjustment, she also contributed her mite to complete the process of Realisation which her venerable husband had begun. Faithfulness was added to devotion, affection to sincerity, and the supreme blessings of love to the realisation of God. Whatever Ramakrishna lacked, Saradamani carefully plucked from her own garden. The garland was thus made with the flowers plucked by both.

ACTIVE PARTNER

What was that something which Ramakrishna perhaps lacked but got from his wife ? The clue to the answer of this question can be found interwoven in the way of life of the Holy Mother. In the first place, Saradamani untiringly served her husband with his delicate food, with treatment in his ailments, and sometimes, also with advice. "Just think for a moment", said Ramakrishna, "how I would fare if I had no wife to look after this frail body. Who else would take so much care in preparing my meals and seeing particularly that the dishes agreed with my delicate stomach ?" Of course, the wider significance of this saying is that Ramakrishna must be spared for a good many number of years for the Salvation of Souls, and to that end, Saradamani made immense effort. In the second place, Saradamani not only made herself the testing ground of Ramakrishna's spiritualism, but also played the part of an active partner. The lives of great men often teach us that very often they owe to their wives a great deal for their greatness. For his wife's sake, many a man has been great, and many have been ruined, like Macbeth. The ideal wife of a great man not only relieves him of the petty niceties of family life, she also supplies new blood to him at the time of his disappointment and weakness. In the context of religious life, the influence of the wife becomes a still more deciding factor. There is reason to doubt if Ramakrishna could become the Ramakrishna but for his divine and lustless wife. Thus spoke Ramakrishna : "Had she been of a different nature and come upon me like an avalanche of passion, I don't know how far I would have drifted". (Quoted by Swami Nirvedananda in "Great Women of India", 1953, p. 482).

Thus the Holy Mother performed in her own life a duty to her husband with so much sincerity that we are led to compare it with the exemplary devotion of Sita to Rama. But the Holy Mother has not exhausted her contributions to our religious attitude only in her capacity of a wife. Her greatest contribution to our religious life has been in her capacity of the Mother.

As sister Nivedita has said, religious celibacy has long been accepted as "the towering ideal of the super-social life" by the Hindus. Next to it among women, ranks the sanctity of motherhood as the central ideal in the social life of this land. "For what thought", she asks, "is it that speaks supremely to India in the great word 'Mother' ? Is it not the vision of a love that never seeks to possess, that is content simply to be — a giving that could not wish return : a radiance that we do not even dream of grasping, but in which we are content to bask letting the eternal sunshine play around and through us ?" ('The Web of Indian Life') Saradamani attained consummation in her capacity of this Mother.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

It was Romain Rolland who said that India presented the example of more than one Immaculate Conception. The Holy Mother is a glaring example

Continued On Page 239.

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(Continued From Page 237)

To her innumerable children, the Holy Mother has always shone with the affectionate radiance of a universal mother. The life of Sita does not tell us much about Sita the mother. In this sense, the depth of the ideal womanhood of the Holy Mother surpasses that of the Ramayana. Indian mothers have always been an example of self-sacrifice for their children. So long as her husband was alive, the Holy Mother sacrificed herself on the altar of her husband's penance. But after his departure, she did not seek consummation in a secluded life for self-attainments. Many a bereaved soul came to her and had gone away satisfied. Day in and day out, she would give 'diksha' or initiation to numerous men from different parts of India. Thus we see, "whereas the Master lived as the Mother's child, she lived as the Mother Herself. And the wonder was that though her mind dwelt in the highest realms of God-consciousness, she kept her body and instincts through sheer force of will on the worldly plane. Never before the world beheld such an accumulation of spiritual force veiled in a garb so lowly". (Subhadra Haksar, 'Vedanta Kesari', July, 1954, p. 96)

Throughout the later part of her life, we have experienced the divine motherliness of the Holy Mother. To cite only one or two examples, she always showed reluctance to deprive the depressed souls of the relief they would get by touching her feet or by getting initiation from her, in spite of the intolerable sufferings she felt through these touches. Sometimes, while narrating the agony she had to suffer from an impure touch, she would hastily add, "But don't tell this to Sarat. Then he will stop people from coming." One day, during her last illness, some one was saying that they would no longer allow the Mother to give initiation any more, as she was suffering so much by taking upon herself the sins of all sorts of people. At this, the bed-ridden Holy Mother said, "Why do you say so? Do you think that Shri Ramakrishna came only to take sweets?" In another context, the Holy Mother said, "All these children come to me with great longing and take initiation, but most of them.... do not do anything at all. But since I have taken their responsibility, should I not see to their welfare? Therefore, I do 'japa' for their sake, and pray to the Master constantly, saying, 'O Lord, awaken their consciousness. Give them liberation. There is a great deal of suffering in this world. May they not be born again!'"

A LIVING EXAMPLE

The exact words of the teachings of the Holy Mother cannot reach us since she had no Boswell like M. (Mahendra Nath Gupta) who has preserved the sayings of Ramakrishna. Recently several volumes have been published which give the sayings of the Holy Mother as written from memory by devotees. But we need not search for her teachings in her recorded sayings. A word spoken is a word lost; we must find out the source of the words. Her whole life lies before us as an exemplar — an incarnation of all her sayings and teachings. It is useless to write volumes on her, we must understand the significance. The dazzling words of Swami Vivekananda point to that: "You have not understood the wonderful significance of the Mother's life. But gradually you will know. Without Shakti, there is no regeneration for the world....Mother has been to revive that wonderful Shakti in India; and making her the nucleus, once more will *Gargis* and *Maitreyis* be born into the world."

Sister Nivedita raises the question whether the Holy Mother was the last of an old order or the beginning of a new. From our discussion, it has been clear that she may or may not be either; but a more correct view would be one taken by one devotee, that, "she is just the twentieth century link of a culture and civilisation which fades back to prehistoric fog, and which is now destined to survive into limitless future". (Bhikshu Anand Isabodh 'Vedanta Kesari', July, 1954, p. 80).

LOVE AND KINDNESS

To summarise, the Holy Mother's life and teachings have affected our religious life in four essential ways. First, she has disproved the myth that married life (and for that matter, family life) is incompatible with the realisation of God and the Life Divine. This, of course, is no new example to us for, from the early Vedic days we have been taught that a division of life between the 'Grihi' and the 'Sannyasi' does not mean that the former will have no entrance into the realm of God. Closely related with this, we have the further lesson from the Holy Mother that we must enjoy this world without attachment — i.e., the literal translation of the Upanishadic teaching — "Tena tyaktena bhunjithah" Ramakrishna would say: "Stay in this world like the fish (*pankal*) which lives insice mud, but mud cannot settle on its body". In the later part of the life of the Holy Mother, especially, we get an amazing example of this idea being worked out in practice Particularly, this is visible in the entanglement in which the Holy Mother allowed herself to be led in connection with Radhu (the unmanageable, indulgent daughter of the brother of Saradamani, whom the latter adopted). A mind which always lived in the transcendental plane soaring high above this earth could still afford to dote on Radhu. Thirdly, Indian women have learnt from her that marriage, sacrosanct in itself, must not have an upper hand over the true ends of life, that it must be subjected to life, not life to it. Finally, Indian religion once more received from her life the traditional teaching that there is no religion except love and kindness — "But I tell you one thing," said the Holy Mother to a devotee some days before she breathed her last "if you want peace of mind, do not find fault with others. Rather see your own faults. Learn to make the whole world your own. No one is a stranger, my child; this entire world is your own." This is the last message of the divine messenger whom Sister Nivedita rightly calls "Ramakrishna's final word as to the ideal of Indian womanhood" — an incarnation of unalloyed Purity, unparalleled Kindness and wonderful Simplicity — all in the lowly garb of an affectionate mother.

(From the Essay which won the second prize in the Post-Graduate group of the Essay Competition held by Belur Math during the Holy Mother Birth Centenary)

'CAMEL BIRDS' OF S. AFRICA

(Continued From Page 233)

posed to his lady-love it only remains for the beloved to accept the suitor's offer of marriage.

FARMS FOR FEATHERS

The great value of ostrich feathers, combined with the growing scarcity of the birds themselves has led to the establishment of ostrich farms in Cape Colony, Egypt, Algeria, Southern U.S. and elsewhere, where the birds are penned like sheep and shorn periodically of their plumage.

Plumes are taken from the birds for the first time when they are about eight months old. They are cut off, and not pulled off, three times during the course of two years. The feathers are cut about two inches from the quick of the wing flesh leaving the small stubby ends in the skin which are carefully removed three months later after they have dried up.

Plucking an ostrich is a delicate operation, for the birds are often vicious and their kicks can prove fatal. The selected bird is lassoed, and his head quickly covered with a small cloth hood which renders him comparatively docile. He is then hustled into a wooden structure resembling parallel bars in a gymnasium where, roped and held, his wings are outstretched over the bars and thus the ostrich submits to plucking. About two pounds of feathers are taken from each bird valued today at about £5.

Before the first world war ostrich feathers were used to a great extent for the decoration of women's hats, dresses and accessories, and in 1913, these plumes became a valuable article of commerce, and the value of feathers exported from South Africa reached nearly £3 millions. Then great numbers of ostriches were shipped out to supply ostrich farms in other places. Immediately after the war ostrich feathers suddenly went out of fashion, and the industry almost disappeared.

In recent years, however, a renewed demand for plumes has revived the industry. Creators of fashion have been using ostrich feathers again, though more sparingly and new commercial uses for them have been found. South African breeders are again increasing their stocks and striving to improve the quality of the bird.

It is interesting to note that the demand for ostrich feathers is by no means a modern one, for the Pharaohs of Egypt used them to a great extent for decorative purposes.

There is an oversea demand not only of ostrich feathers but quantities of skins are shipped to the United States for the manufacture of woman's handbags, shoes, lettercases and souvenirs.

The birds live to be thirty years old on the average and they sometimes live to be eighty, according to some reliable authorities. Their great length of life makes ostrich farming very profitable these days.

MOY-DANAB

(Continued From Page 217)

on him. He would pass through the whirling machineries set up in that resounding shed. He would no longer stay there. He was not wanted even by the workshop. He would go away.

The passage that lay through the labyrinth of machineries was narrow. It was so familiar to him. The eyes of the bewildered mechanic were dimmed with tears. He was suddenly pulled from behind. He smiled. It was that Dulu Singh! He would not allow him to go!—"No—No—No—leave me off—leave me off—leave me off." The experiment of running the machine with electric power satisfied the manager. He was all smile. "That's all right" said he.

On the site of the grinding machine, teeth to teeth, large grooved wheels were spinning round and round. All of a sudden, the shaft trembled after a jerk or two. But for the big body of the machine, it was not perceptible.

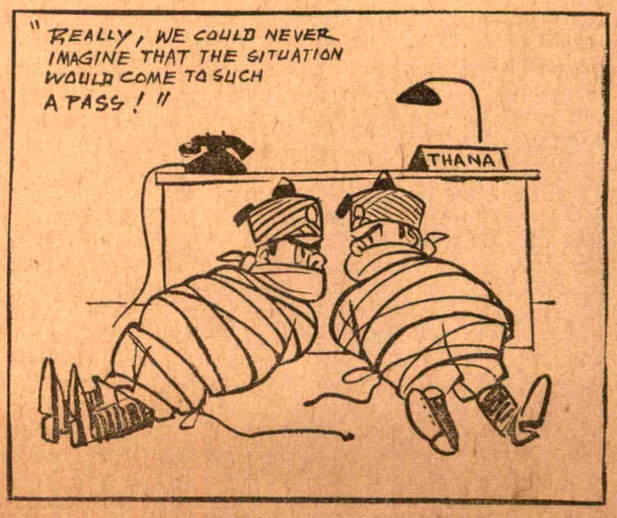
Phani was caught between the teeth of the wheel in his impatient, unwary mood. The workshop did not let him go. It swallowed him up. Blood was running down the two sides of the teethed machine and pieces of flesh were glued to it. On the nearby floor small bits of his bone lay scattered mixed and jumbled up in the dusty heap of the fire clay. It was as if by the removal of all traces that the demon of machine appropriated him.

The machine went on and on. Blood was dried up. Flesh-bits were carried forward from wheel to wheel and they disappeared. His fat only made the machine work smoothly and freely from one end to the other in that machine-shed. Freely it kept on going. With the ear turned to its sound, one could perhaps hear Phani mistri sing with his flat voice.

The manager observed the way of its untrammelled operation worked with electric power and called out—

"Switch off, please."

(Translated by Satyendra Mohan Mookerjee)



Chotanagpur Adibasis' Ornaments

By P. C. ROY CHOUDHURY, M.A., B.L.

THE Adibasis of Chotanagpur have a great attachment to personal decoration. Living in the lap of Nature the original Adibasis have had to raise a continuous warfare against Nature to get bare sustenance. They were afraid of the elements of Nature, the carnivora in the forests and other warring tribes. The innate fear-complex that they had was the origin of their personal decorations. The tiger causes depredations and the tiger has to be bearded in its den. The tiger is powerful. The cause of tiger's strength must be in its liver, claws and teeth. So when a tiger is killed the claws and the teeth are worn and the liver is eaten. The deer is a good sprinter and it is difficult to catch a deer or to kill it with bow and arrow. The swiftness of the deer must be due to its hoof and so the hoof of the deer has to be preserved and worn as a sort of medicine to produce swiftness of movement.

Then comes another stage when there has been a little progress and a somewhat static life for the Adibasis. Then comes the stage of their elemental craze for colour, for the green and red leaves and flowers for their personal decoration. They would go to the hats and bazars with flowers and leaves tucke into their deep black hair unmindful of the glanc of the non-Adibasis. Then at the next stage the turn to the cheap glass beads, *cowries*, various kinc of seeds for the girls and pieces of horn or tooth c bigger glass beads for the males. The earliest met that came in use for ornaments for the Adibasis i brass. Nickel and silver came much later. Gold fc ornaments has come into use only after the secon Great War when the Adibasi males made a lot c money as labour employed by the Military or as re cruits to the Sappers and Miners. The Adibas women also earned a lot in the airfields and othe military constructions and naturally some of then could turn to gold for their ornaments.

Colour appeals most to the Adibasis and fo this reason cheap glass beads of various colours pu in strings or chain are prized most by the Adibasis men and women. Necklace made of beads bough from the Hatias and markets are purchased by dozens by the younger elements of both sexes.

The Adibasis of Chotanagpur do not prize fea thers for personal decoration. Among the flowers

(Continued on Page 243)

Here are some massive ornaments including gold brassiers. There is a pair of armlets in the shape of a fis

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The Choice of all

(Continued from Page 241)

and leaves usually rich coloured ones are chosen. Hibiscus flowers (Jaba), Euphorbia leaves, attractive *Palas* flowers, marigold (Genda) flowers are very much in demand. Shells, stones, seeds and wooden cubes are also used.

PERSONAL ORNAMENTS

Coming to individual ornaments for an Adibasi woman for the head, combs are one of the main items. Unfortunately, the old rough combs of bamboos and wood are gone to be replaced by coloured plastic combs. Decorated combs with figures are not uncommon. Various kinds of ear-rings have now come into vogue. But about 20 years back the earlobes of the Adibasi women used to have a small piece of rolled up strawmat as a personal decoration and these pieces used to be usually of red colour. For the neck various types of necklaces of *cowries* or beads mentioned above are used. The cowri (Cyprae monenta) and beads are commonly used for the necklaces. Cowries are also supposed to keep off the evil eye. For the hand various types of bangles, usually heavy brass bangles, are used.

The brass bangles commonly used by the Adibasi girls are the same as what are still used in the interior of Orissa. At times the Adibasi girls overcrowd their arms with these heavy bangles. It is also a sort of protection if suddenly attacked. Iron bangles or any other kind of ornaments are rarely used. They are usually meant to keep off the evil eye or as a cure for some disease. Brass hair pins are not in use but the beautiful make-up of the hair is done with the help of some reeds occasionally. Silver ear-rings or necklaces have come into use quite recently. Ornate silver ear-rings imported from Cuttack (filigree work) are also in much demand now by the sophisticated Adibasi girls in touch with the urban areas. Common reeds of particular kinds are also used for twining round the arms and the n

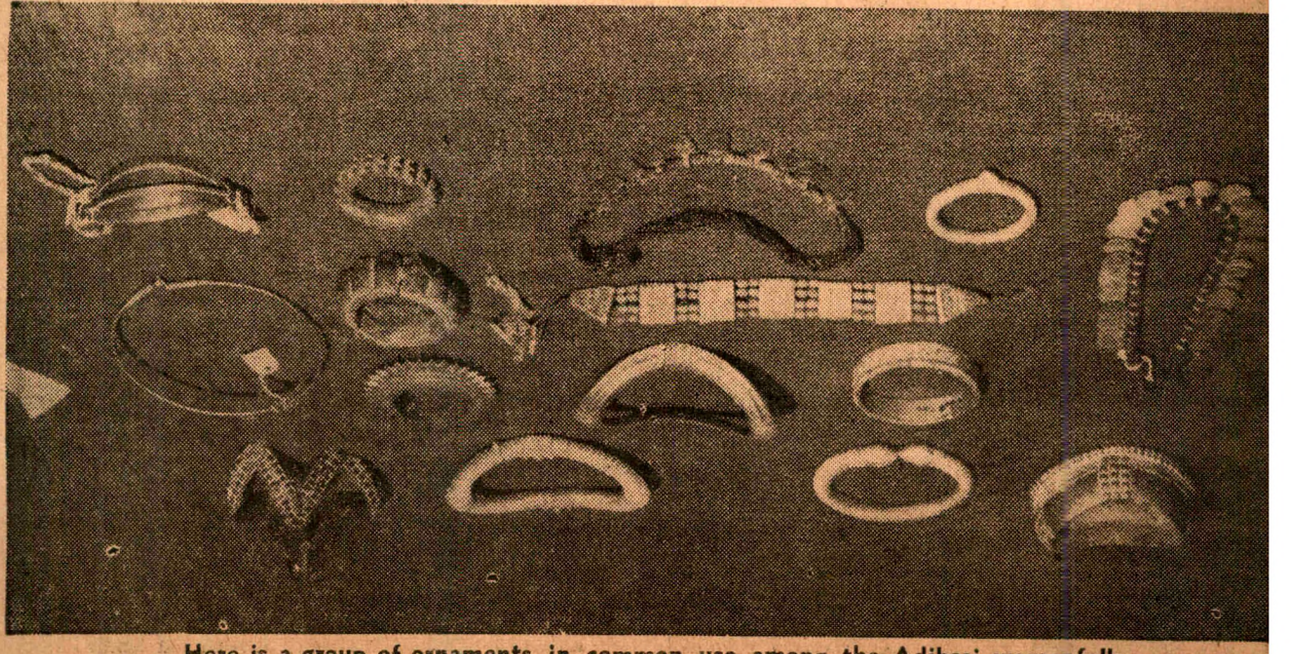
Adibasis of Chotanagpur use *cowri* mainly personal decorations in the shape of necklaces bracelets. They do not use *cowri*-decorated bags *cowri*-decorated combs like the Marias or Bas area. Headdress for men made of shells like w Marias wear are uncommon.

For the waist Adibasi women have now ta to the use of silver chain taking the cue from t Hindu neighbours. Feet ornaments are not comn and if used at all they are of brass.

The male Adibasi, as has been mentioned, very few ornaments and they are usually for neck or the arm.

The Kharias are one of the very few Adiba that are still uncontaminated by urban touch present-day civilisation. The ornaments of the Kha women are still usually made of brass. Their jew lery consist of glass beads, brass necklace, ear-rin finger-rings and toe-rings. The Kharia boys use br Bera or armlet on both the hands.

N.B. The photographs in this article illustrate some the ornaments that are commonly used by the Adib women for their neck and arms. The photos taken from the exhibits in Patna Museum throu the courtesy of the Curator and the kindness of Inspector General of Police, Bihar. The bead ne laces and the massive armlets do not require explanation. But there are a few pieces of g ornaments which were recovered from Adibasi hon just at the point of being sold in the market beca of their value in gold. One of them is the pair armlets in the shape of a fish. The other gro represents a few gold brassieres which were also p chased by the Museum authorities just when th were being sold. The use of gold and the type these two kinds of ornaments show that they are ve modern and most probably they were made in t course of the last Great War when Chotanagpur w full of the Military. They indicate a rather pathe evolution in the use of ornaments and show that t Adibasi women have travelled far from their days wood cubes, bright leaves, flowers, "cowries" than to the contact with the present day civilisatio



Here is a group of ornaments in common use among the Adibasi womenfolk.

FEARS PROVED FALSE

(Continued From Page 15)

under cereals during the year was higher than the target at the end of the Plan period by about 12 million acres.

The "highest ever" production of rice was obtained in 1953-54 when the total yield touched 27.6 million tons. Although, owing to floods in the northern and drought in the southern districts of Bihar and West Bengal, production during the current year has gone down by nearly 2.2 million tons, it is still much higher than in the base year of the First-Five-Year Plan.

Talking of foodgrains, i.e. cereals plus pulses, we can now compliment ourselves on our total production of 65.6 million tons which even exceed the target for the end of first Plan period.

NO FEAR OF SCARCITY

The increased production has not been achieved without occasional setbacks. The output of cereals in 1950-51 had suddenly dropped by nearly five million tons causing an alarming gap between our requirements and supply. Prices soared high. Procurement and rationing systems came almost to the brink of collapse. Depending on large imports from abroad and living, as it were, from ship to mouth for months together, the country just managed to avert a major tragedy almost by the skin of the teeth.

The year following, however, gave indications that the sustained efforts of the Government and the people to grow more food had started yielding dividends. The tempo of improvement was not only maintained but also accelerated in successive seasons. Marking a turning point, past the goal of self-sufficiency, progressive trends in India's agricultural economy at last gave room, on the food front, for optimism without complacency. In fact, set against the background of several lean years immediately after the partition, the picture that emerges today, is that we are freer from the fear of scarcity than ever before.

What does all this mean to the common man ?

Succinctly put, the bumper crops have offered relief to the common man in his cost of living, given the rupee greater purchasing power and toned up the country's economy by reducing dependence on foreign imports which during the period from 1947 to 1952 averaged more than three million tons per year.

Numerous controls, which had been the most irksome feature of distribution of foodgrains in India from the latter period of the second World War, have been virtually abolished to give the trade a greater measure of freedom. More noteworthy had been the complete withdrawal of statutory rationing which put an end to queues in front of grain shops, scrapped restrictions on consumption, and removed the ceilings on host's hospitality and housewife's larder. It appears almost incredible that only eight years ago, the Administration had to carry more than 150 million people on their rationing scroll.

With a total production of 55.3 million tons and estimated population of 378 millions, the per-capita availability of cereals in India in 1954-55 works out to 14.4 ounces which is 0.4 ounces higher than the balanced diet laid down by the Nutrition Advisory Committee. It also exceeds the target set for the end of the First Five-Year Plan, i.e. 13.71 ounces per head for 1955-56.

Armed with an enough-and-to-spare reserve of nearly 16 lakh tons, as has recently been revealed in the course of interpellations in the Parliament, the Food Administration can now face with confidence any emergency.

The movement of foodgrains has now been put on the reverse gear by the revival of export trade in rice to the countries which had, prior to war, developed a taste for Indian varieties. Already more than 70,000 tons have been despatched. Gifts of nearly 15,000 tons of rice have been made to relieve scarcity conditions in friendly countries like Nepal and Indo-China.

TIDE TURNS

Yes, the tide has turned. And what is more, times have changed and with them our agricultural practices too. Not so long ago, Indian farming was a simple routine and had a narrow boundary—a hit and miss affair largely. The farmer relied entirely on out-dated implements. He ploughed the land, sowed the seed and applied what manure was available to him. The rest was guess work, hope and prayer—the last mostly. It had existed for a long long time in a state of backwardness and misery behind the thin veneer of a complacent faith that the pencil of fate—Kismet—has no eraser.

But times, as I have said, changed tangibly. Farming in India is gradually ceasing to be a haphazard venture. Knowledge and experience, coming washed up on the stream of Government research spread over the years, but beyond the reach of the farmers of yester generation, is now available in good measure for their successors.

With the objective of a rapid and planned development, favourable conditions are being created all-round by the Central and State Governments for the Indian cultivators to enable them to exploit the bountiful resources from the good earth. During the past few years, major and minor irrigation projects have been undertaken in different parts of the country. Some of them have already been completed. Vast tracts of waste, fallow and jungle infested land have been reclaimed. Modern implements to turn the soil well, improved seeds to ensure the healthy seedlings and liberal supplies of phosphates and sulphates to make the yield larger are being brought within the agriculturists' reach. Organisation of credit facilities, warehousing, marketing and processing of agricultural products on co-operative basis is also well on its way. Measures to combat soil erosion and eradicate plant-pests are being pursued with patience and skill. The hierarchy of intermediaries between the actual tiller and the landlord and the insecure tenancy conditions are being progressively done away with by suitable legislation. A new spirit, a fresh outlook and a high hope have begun to enrich, slowly but steadily, the life of the Indian farmer.

This, I consider, is the most encouraging and outstanding achievement to the credit of the Government and the people of India during the eight years of Independence we have just completed. For, the fact of the matter is that about one out of every four in India derives employment from agriculture. And agriculture contributes nearly 50 per cent of India's national income.

Well may we take comfort in the thought that if hopes were dupes, fears have been liars.

STORY OF THE MAYA CIVILISATION

By SAKHA NATH BASU

THOUGH dead in the vast heaps of ruins, the ancient Maya civilisation of the New World is no longer in obscurity. The fallen lime-stones are now in limelight, and the discerning eyes of the scholars read in them the saga of an autochthonous civilisation of pagan pageant. Palmy, not pompous—proud, not loud with pampered pride, the Maya civilisation in flower covered a period of twelve centuries. Historians have clothed its bare bones with the flesh of historical events and have worked up a sketch of the culture pattern of the brilliant civilisation built up by the genius of the local people without outside aid and alien influence. Geographical isolation helped this civilisation to develop in its characteristic way like a sylvan flower blooming in the wilds of nature.

Maya civilisation flowered in the fourth century and faded in the sixteenth century of Christian era. The old Yucatan peninsula, which now covers Yucatan of Mexico, Peten of Guatemala and the whole of British Honduras, was its nursery as well as grave. It was built up by an aboriginal people speaking a language of the Mayoid group of the original Maya speaking linguistic stock. Gann is of opinion that this Maya speaking group owes its origin to a primitive people that inhabited the elevated plateau between Mexico and Peru. But modern study tells a different story. It is now believed that the Maya people are an off-shoot of the north-east Asiatic human race. Morley observes: "Three other physical characteristics of the Maya strongly suggest the original north-eastern Asiatic origin of the Maya race, as indeed that of all American Indians: (1) The epicanthic eyeball, (2) the Mongolian spot and (3) the line patterns in the palms of hands."

NOMADIC HUNTERS

In the dim past we find the Mayas a nomadic non-agricultural people living by fishing and hunting and upon the wild products of forests. In the third millennium B.C. we find them a settled, sedentary agricultural people. Since then down to the close of the third century A.D. nothing definitely is known about the Mayas. But the fourth century finds them with a civilisation in flower with the budding period, as is conjectured by some, passed over probably in the second or third century B.C.

The Maya civilisation has two distinct periods—the Old Empire period from the fourth century to the tenth century A.D.—and the New Empire period from the eleventh to the sixteenth century. The old empire period was the golden age of Maya civilisation marked by cultural and territorial gains. Creative genius of the people was in full play. The dynamic spirit of the Mayas knew no rest. City after city sprang up, temples were built and pyramids were raised. All round there were cultural intensification and aesthetic florescence. Maya waxed into prosperity and power. From the beginning of the tenth century disintegration had been at work behind the imposing facade of the Maya old empire. Finally, towards the close of the tenth century the old empire collapsed—not to any foreign inroad, but to internal exhaustion wrought by economic failure. The superstructure of the Maya stood on a very weak and inelastic economic foundation. The old primitive method of agriculture failed to cope with the pressing demand of the increasing population. Acute shortage of food forced the people to migrate. Cities and villages were deserted. Administration failed, disorder followed, and thus came the end of the old empire with a glorious history of six centuries. The sun went down and the full moon arose in the cultural firmament of the Maya.

RENAISSANCE AND FALL

The new empire sprang up in north Yucatan, a province of the old empire. The new empire era was an age of Maya cultural renaissance built up by Maya-Mexico co-operation. Art and architecture flourished anew. With the new leadership came new ideas, new customs and new life. Leadership was in the hands of groups of foreigners who came down from Mexico under Kukulcan, Cocom and Xiu. These new-comers founded the new city states of Mayapan and Uxmal and formed a confederacy known as the League of Mayapan, and controlled the destiny of the Maya people for about five centuries. But things did not run smoothly. Soon the city states began to vie with one another for political leadership. Long standing political and economic jealousies brewed inter-state feuds. They fell foul of one another, and the League of Mayapan was broken. Mayapan emerged out as a prominent city state. It stood head and shoulders above the rest and became the centre of activity of the new empire. Soon the Cocom rulers of Mayapan grew despots. Maya chieftains rose in revolt and sacked the city, and with the fall of Mayapan came the end of the ancient civilisation of the New World. Decimated by a devastating outbreak of pox and exhausted by internecine feuds that followed in the wake of the collapse of Mayapan, the new empire fell a victim to Spanish swords in the sixteenth century.

EMPIRE WITHOUT EMPEROR

Territorially the Maya empire was a poor contrast to the vast empires of the old world. Maya was an empire without any emperor. There was no central authority holding the reins of administration—no mighty ruler ruling like an autocrat over the empire. On the contrary, the whole empire was divided into a number of politically independent city-states—like those of ancient Greece—bound together by the tie of cultural homogeneity of common language and common religion. In the old empire these city states pulled together well, but in the new empire

their mutual rivalry and internecine feuds dissolved this homogeneity and paved the way for its final extinction.

Each city state had its supreme ruler with wide powers. The position was hereditary. Rulers ruled with the advice of chiefs and priests. They were the highest executive, ecclesiastical and judicial authorities in their respective city states. In the village or in the city the highest executive and judicial officer was the village or the town chief. He was assisted by a council of elders. The lowest officer was the village or the city constable.

In the Maya social ladder the priests and the nobility sat on the top, the common people occupied the middle and the lowest step was relegated to the slaves. The nobility were a comfort-cosy, leisure-laden happy lot living on the hard labour of the slaves and the common people. No less enviable was the position of the priests who were considered keymen of learning and religious guidance. With manifold duties—ritual, divination, astronomical observations and calculation and worship—they were an influential class worshipped with bouquets of honour. Priesthood was hereditary. Priests were carried in litters. Their knowledge of astronomy and medicine, ability to explain away celestial facts and to predict eclipses made them highly venerated. Common people who toiled from dawn to dusk were no better than "hewers of wood and drawers of water." They were an exploited class with a hard lot. They were the overworked weavers of the entire fabric of Maya cvilisation. They fed the nobility, clothed the aristocracy—themselves ill-fed, ill-clothed. They worked in the forests, in the fields and built up the massive pyramids, temples and palaces for kings and nobles. Like bees they procured honey for the honey comb and the nobility and the priests drank to their fill. They made houses for their lords at their own expense, sowed their fields, harvested for their food and lived on the outskirts of towns and villages to make room for their comfortable dwellings.

HUMAN SACRIFICE

Maya religion lacks spiritual depth. It is characterised by animism. In the beginning awe and wonder led them to placate the natural phenomena with humble offerings. As they settled down as an agricultural people, religion grew a bit ritualistic; for with the agricultural Mayas religion and food problem got mixed up. Sowing and harvesting depended on the vagaries of climate. For successful agriculture and to avert crisis they invoked the sun god and the rain god with offerings and prayers. With the passage of time religion became highly complicated as a result of a fusion of the primitive cult with an esoteric, sophisticated pseudo-philosophy of the priests. In the old and the new empires we find so many gods in the Maya pantheon. Big temples were built in the cities and villages. God Itzamna occupied the most glorious position. He was the Lord of the Heavens. In important festivals and ceremonies He was specially invoked. Next to Him were rain god Chac and the death god Ah Puch. There were cruel gods and benign gods. Mayas worshipped gods for prosperity and good harvest. Worship began with a process of purification through fasting, sexual continence, abstinence from meat-diet and ended with feasting and general drunkenness. Food, both cooked and uncooked, fruits, animals, birds and human blood were offered to gods. Human sacrifice at the altar of gods was an important feature of religion in the new empire. Slaves, orphans and kidnapped children were killed to propitiate the gods.

Except in the field of astronomy the Maya intellectual harvest was miserably poor. Achievement in astronomy as far back as third century B.C. was spectacular. Maya Year consisted of nineteen months of 365 days—the first eighteen months of twenty days and the last one of 5 days. They calculated with accuracy the length of a single lunation. They could predict solar and lunar eclipses and for the study of heavenly bodies built up high observatories. Another notable feature of their astronomy was the invention of Zero. Hindus of India are accredited with glory of inventing this epoch-making invention in the ancient intellectual field of abstract thought, but the Maya astronomers invented the conception of Zero quite independently uninfluenced by Hindu thought. In the field of literature, philosophy and other intellectual approaches to the problems of life Maya civilisation was barren.

"MILPA" AGRICULTURE

The economic structure of the Maya was buttressed by agriculture. Maya people observed "Milpa" agriculture—"a simple process of felling the forests, of burning the dried trees and bush, of planting, and of changing the location of the cornfields every few years." In the wooded, rocky, and shallow-soiled Yucatan peninsula "Milpa" agriculture was the only method of food growing. Maize and cotton were the principal products. Stone axe and planting stick were the only tools for agriculture. Sowing took place in May-June when the rains used to set in and harvesting was done in January and February. Weaving, matting, pottery and masonry were other economic occupation of the people. Trade with neighbouring countries was not unknown.

Maya people were great builders. They were expert in stone masonry. During the old and the new empire cities sprang up throughout the length and breadth of the Yucatan peninsula. In every city imposing temples were built, massive pyramids raised and beautiful palaces made. Inside walls were decorated with fresco painting and outer walls and facades were embellished with sculpture of figurines. Limestone, wood, stucco and clay were used for sculpture. Paintings on culinary pots, vases and plates, fine craftsmanship on gold necklace, bracelets, rings and on copper cups and plates bear ample testimony to the fact that the empire period of Maya civilisation was the hey-day of Maya art and architecture.

THE REAL SCOPE OF SPIRITUALISM

By K. C. CHATTERJEE

M.Sc., B.L., Rai Bahadur, Retired District Magistrate

BOTH in religion and in spiritualism, the common background is that death is not the end and that the soul is indestructible. When soul exists after death and when there can be revelations, is it possible for the departed one to have communication with the living? Spiritualists do say that communication is possible. In our country, spiritual practices are coming from very old times — we have examples of such practices in the Mahabharata. In the West, 1848 is taken as the date from which such practices are known.

Spiritual practices vary very widely — from simple rappings to spookish orgy and from witchcraft to saintly revelations. In general (although *not* always) there is a medium or a go-between (i.e. middleman) and he is the connecting link between the spirit world on one side and the living on the other. Some of the media have piled wonder on wonder, while a few were denounced as impostors and this latter fact was taken advantage of by the sceptics for attacking spiritualism as a whole, which is most unfair. Can we denounce the entire body of saints merely because a few so-called saints were found to be impostors ? Impostors are rather always tempted to come in where the cause is genuine or the movement is popular.

MODE OF COMMUNICATION

The second ground of attack is that spirit communications are often vague and do not rise much above the background of the media. But instances are not rare where the communications are not only clear and definite but are far-reaching and astounding. Further, in some mode of communication there is no medium at all. In any case, there is no denying the fact that things do happen in ways which are impossible for the worst critic to explain away: and what they do is like the "Science of Life" by H. G. Wells and the two Huxleys in which it has been sought to explain that the experiments were not done under the scientific rigidity. But they forget that there is a fundamental difference between a scientific experiment and a spiritual practice. In a scientific experiment, the scientist holds the control, while in spiritual practices, the spirit holds the control. A scientist, for example, heats water whenever he likes to the required temperature for boiling. In spiritual practices, the living being cannot go very far, it is the spirit that is responsible for the show. In general, it has been found that better result is obtained if the following conditions are fulfilled:—

(i) The 'sitting' is conducted in a spirit of goodwill, sympathy and trust. Conversely, spirits do resent idle curiosity, mistrust and scepticism. This is natural when we remember that scriptures are not disclosed to the heretics.

(ii) Cleanliness — physical, mental and spiritual. In this connection, I may just mention in passing that there is a difference between the higher (or noble) souls and the evil spirits (or ghosts or *pishaches*). Sometimes the presence of a very noble soul is manifested by sweet fragrance, while the presence of an evil spirit by bad smell. Noble souls may not like to come in unclean places, and bad or evil spirit may not come at clean religious place. Flowers, general religious atmosphere and burning of incense are liked by good souls.

(iii) The natural love and affection do not, in general, cease on death of one when the affinity is mutual. Hence the affinity and sympathy between the invoker and the invoked soul also counts. An unknown soul may not like to respond as the soul of a near and dear one.

(iv) The method of communication should be such as would preclude an evil spirit to come and misrepresent the required soul. (Planchette method is discouraged as an evil spirit may take control and falsely personify the required soul).

NECESSARY CONDITIONS

The next question is who can communicate. Can every soul communicate? The first necessary condition is that the soul is available. A soul may be in heaven or in hell or is sleeping till eternity or it may be elsewhere too busy to come. A Hindu believes in the transmigration of soul and so a soul, if reborn, cannot be available for spiritual communication. The next necessary condition is that it has power to come or it can be attracted. Further unless a soul be willing to come, we cannot force him to come. If we try to invoke the soul of Gandhi, we may not at all be successful as Gandhi may not be willing to come to waste his time for our idle curiosity. It may be noted that noble souls work for the uplift of the world even in heaven.

There are also general media and there are also media for a particular soul. An African Yogi came to India for spiritual experiments and he died leaving

his disciple (a Bengali gentleman) as his only medium. This Bengali disciple is commonly called "medium" or medium-Babu. The soul of the Yogi, whom we call GURUDEB, works wonders and is now so well-known that he always remains busy with the result and he does not find time to do the work of the majority of the people who come to him. He had sittings for Governors, Ministers, Supreme Court Judges, Rajas, Maharajahs etc. That African Yogi (Gurudeb) brings other souls for sitting — as all souls are not able to come without such help. In my 'sitting' with GURUDEB for my departed son, who was a commissioned officer of the Royal Indian Navy, I not only got the picture and handwriting of my son, but in the communication there was a prescription for a medicine for asthma with which I was then suffering for twenty years. I was not only cured of my asthma in fifteen days but I am now (with the permission of my son) giving the medicine to other asthma sufferers. I got an amulet dropped from the atmosphere when I was reading his communication that the amulet would cure a daughter of mine from gastric ulcer—the amulet permanently cured her of gastric ulcer. Whatever the narrow minded or bigoted people say, is any further scientific experiment required to show that souls do communicate from the other side ?

To me the spiritual practices are practical demonstration of our religious teachings. My dead son's soul communicated me a lot of informations. He said that when he was dying his grandfather's soul came to take him so that he might not feel any difficulty in the new evironment. He hovered over his dead body and could not leave the place so long as the dead body was not disposed of, in spite of his grandfather's request to go up with him. (Probably this is why we say that funeral rites should be quickly done). He felt mental pain at seeing his near ones lamenting and he says he did not like his body to be burnt on the pyre as he had still then an attraction to his body. After his body was disposed of, he could go with his grandfather. He says that when he was alive he used to joke with his grandmother about *sradh* and did not believe that *pindas* benefit the dead. But he says that after his death, he was benefited by the *sradh* performed by his brother. He described how the souls live in the other world (before taking rebirth), how they pass their days etc. Every morning they perform *pujas* and on my wife asking him if he uses flowers with his *pujas* he replied in the affirmative and said that whatever they desire in their mind they get the same and so it was easy for them to get flowers.

FRIENDLY SPIRIT

In the next sitting with GURUDEB, he not only gave his picture but on the four corners of the picture there were four beautiful deep red rose petals, which he said he attache[illegible] to show that it was easy to get flowers. In other mode of communication he used to have a friendly soul to guard him so that he may not tell a secret which souls are enjoined not to speak. Whenever inadvertently he would try to overstep the limit, the pencil would break (or the guiding spirit would break the pencil) and he would be warned. Nothing is allowed to be told if it creates a commotion in the world. No political forecast is allowed to be told. Whether a missing political leader is dead or alive is not allowed to be disclosed and so on. Further a good or noble soul won't disclose the name of criminals, because if they disclose the criminals would suffer for the disclosure for which they would be responsible. The meaning of religious sayings or *slokas* would be very readily told by the souls. They would help in all possible ways for religious uplift, for illness and diseases and in some cases for mundane affairs although in general they are reluctant to discuss mundane affairs. When a member of my family was very dangerously ill, the soul of my son told me that there was no fear of death and the patient would be all right after 45 days—and this exactly happened. In another case his soul told me that he and other great souls were doing their best to cure the patient and they would see that the patient come round.

I have a friend who was an I.C.S., District Magistrate and who resigned and became a *'sanyashi'*. When one of my grandsons had typhoid with diphtheria and the case was serious, I told him for spiritual help (my son's medium was not available then). To his prayer, a very well-known saint (an *avatar*), whom the entire world knows told him, "I have heard your prayer and have intervened. Tell his grandfather that the boy would be saved." This I.C.S. gentleman is a very well read man and he has read the religious books of probably all the religions. He says that all religions are good and noble. Whenever he could not understand a passage from Gita or some such book, he would invoke spiritual aid and a very great soul (sometimes an *avatar*) would appear and gave him an inspiration by which the meaning would be clear in a trice.

One day, I asked my son's soul as to how long he would remain in the other world. He quoted Gita, Chapter IX sloka 21, and said that so long his merit would last he would enjoy heaven. He however told me that instead of transmigration (by doing pious act one goes to heaven and then after the expiry of the time he is reborn) one should try to be with the Supreme Being as contemplated in Gita Chapter XV verse 6 and Chapter IV verse 9, and Chapter VIII verses 15, 16 and 21.

From the above it would be evident that spiritual practices are not for satisfying an idle curiosity. It has a very far-reaching significance. In any case, it is a practical demonstration of our religious teaching and if properly done, one will have no fear of death because to him, death is no longer a leap in the dark.

DANCES *Of* THE LUSHAIS

By

PROJESH BANERJI

A Lushai Devil Dancer. Note the hideous makeup.

THE Lushais inhabiting the borderlands between Assam and Burma and the north-east frontier tracts, have their "dance de divertissements," which they perform during their religious festivals, marriages and funerals. The devil dances are enacted mainly when there is a death in the tribe and especially when a chief or a member of the royal family passes away. They are also done to drive away epidemics or to please their gods during earthquakes, bad harvest and floods.

As regards ceremonies on death, a considerable difference exists in different tribes. Some burn their dead and others dispose of the dead by burial. The grave is dug to a depth of four or five feet, and at the bottom on one side, in such a way that the body lies at right-angles to the main grave, is dug a hole sufficiently long to hold a coffin. In this niche the corpse, fastened down in the coffin (a rough box made of planks and sometimes of bamboos tied together) is placed and the grave filled in with stones and earth. The head of the corpse faces west and the feet east. Over the grave poles are erected, and to them are fastened the heads of animals slaughtered for the funeral feast. All spirits whether they have committed good or bad actions in this world, are received in the "village of the dead", but this proviso is made : should a person during lifetime have injured anyone or committed murder, his or her victim will meet the spirit on the road, and stop the path; a fight will then ensue, by which the spirit is purified, and then permitted to pass. The person injured by the deceased may, of course, be still living, in which case a spirit is appointed by the gods as a substitute. It is owing to this that dead persons are buried with their weapons of war, to be ready for the fray.

There are certain ways by which a spirit can avoid having to fight persons he has injured in this life, one being by peace-offerings of pigs, goats, birds etc. For this reason it is customary to place the heads of animals over graves. On meeting the injured spirit, one of the goats or pigs, as the case may be, accompanying the deceased in a ghostly form, is offered, and if accepted, the fight does not take place.

PYTHON FOR DINNER

After the burial of the dead there is a feast of the village people. The food consists of drink, meat and rice. On these occasions large quantities of liquor are consumed. The common drink is distilled from rice, and when new, is very intoxicating, gradually becoming less and less powerful the longer it is kept. In colour it somewhat resembles dark brandy.

It is interesting to say a few words about their food here. As regards food, tigers and leopards are not eaten by any of the tribes, and dogs by the Betes (a sub-tribe of the Lushais) only. Monkeys are considered a great delicacy by all the aboriginal

Lushai tribes except two sub-tribes, the Tadois and the Rangkhols. With the exception of a Rangkhol any aboriginal Lushai will rejoice greatly at the capture of a python and a cheerful and animated appearance extends itself gradually over his face, as he measures off his captive and calculates the number of his friends he can comfortably entertain on the flesh.

The Rangkhol, owing to a certain fastidiousness, is again out of it when a fat bamboo rat is the object of search. Though either a Bete, Jansen, or Tadoi will show unwonted energy at the mere sight of the animal, and will scramble hurriedly down the steepest of steep places in order to effect a capture, he will gaze unmoved at the hunt, and even when the prey is brought up and ocular demonstration (by sundry punches in the rat's ribs) given that it is fat, will still remain unconcerned. Let, however, a porcupine, or ant-eater cross his path, and with one war-whoop he puts himself on the track, and the stoical reserve hitherto maintained is abandoned. Even the body of a deer or pig found in the jungles, alive with maggots, is not despised, maggots being considered rather a delicacy than otherwise by all the tribes.

As might be expected, where the Lushais have been brought into close relations with more civilised people, they have abandoned many of their former articles of food. Many a semi-plains Lushai will scorn a monkey.

DEVIL DANCE

After the feast in connection with a funeral ceremony is over the Lushais will indulge themselves in the devil dances. They wear hideous masks made of coloured bamboo pieces and leaves. The white colour is generally made of pounded rice. Now-a-days the mask is made of burnt clay as well, and sometimes of papier mache by the Anglicised Lushai. The German hues are applied these days. On the forehead of the main mask there are small skulls made. The sockets of the eyes of the main mask are generally left hollow but sometimes glass pieces are fixed. The ears and neck are covered with napkins, but now the dancers use thin papers for the ears and give them a fan like shape. They are also of variegated colours. The body is covered with pieces of colourful rags with bold white paints suggesting the arms and ribs of that of a skeleton.

The dancers dance with wild jumps and occasional yells. Music is supplied by a species of reed instrument, and time kept to the striking of bamboos on the ground. Generally males only take part in these dances.

There are other kinds of rituals on death when such dances are performed, and it is interesting to note a few of them. On the death of a man his spirit is believed to remain one full moon in the house he occupied when living, at the lapse of that time departing to a village termed "the village of the dead", where it stays until returned to earth (at the lapse of an uncertain number of years) in the body of a new-born child. Good and bad men go to the same village, but people carried off by tigers or killed by accident or in war, though still going there, live apart from the others. The gods do not inhabit the "village of the dead". All "mithun" (wild bulls), fowls, goats and birds, killed on the death of a man, accompany him on a future state.

On the death of a Lushai all the relatives and friends assemble. The day after the death a large pile of crossed pieces of wood is raised in the jungle outside the village, and on this the body is placed and more wood added. The nearest male bachelor relative of the deceased then stands on one side of the pyre, and lights it. As it burns he throws across small pieces of bamboo stems filled with water, calling out at the same time in the following terms—"Be as jungle; return to jungle." At the conclusion of the cremation, any bones left are collected, and, with the cooking utensils of the deceased, are placed in a miniature hut built on the spot. The friends and the relatives then return to the village, hold a feast and then dance. The morning following an offering is made to the gods.

A STRANGE CUSTOM

The Lushais dance the devil dance during the funeral ceremony of the chieftain, a strange custom which used to exist among a few sub-tribes, the Jansens and their co-tribe, and the Tadois. Immediately on their death becoming known, the whole community, and any relatives and friends living in other villages, are assembled, and wild bulls, goats, fowls, pigs and other birds are slaughtered for a feast. Each funeral guest, if not a relative, is expected to give one cloth for the use of the corpse; if a relative, two, three, or more.

In these cloths the dead body is carefully wrapped, and at the end of a few days, sometimes at the lapse of a day, it is carried out and placed on a raised platform at a distance of 30 or 40 yards from the house. Here it is decomposed. At the end of every three days the female relatives are obliged to visit the platform, or "machan", and so fasten up the cloths (as decomposition sets in and is progressing) that none of the putrid matter falls to the ground. During the whole of this period general feasting and dancing is kept up at the expense of the deceased chief, and only ceases when the supply of liquor runs short, or the corpse has thoroughly decomposed, and nothing is left but the skeleton. The bones and cloths are then carefully gathered, and buried in front of the house, but the skull is reserved for further ceremonies. It is first bleached in the sun, any loose teeth being reset and then, being thoroughly cleaned, it is placed in a woven cane basket. Another feast and dance is now held, at the conclusion of which this basket is carefully hidden away by the relatives.

During the earlier days when the decomposition has fairly set in, the stench in a village is fearful and unbearable; but this is blunted somewhat to the anything but sensitive nostrils of the inhabitants by large fires kept burning day and night. It was formerly customary on the death of a chieftain to kill a certain number of persons, slaves or prisoners of war, and place their heads on the platform with the body.

CROSSED BAMBOO DANCE

There are other types of dances prevalent among the Lushais which are not grotesque and hideous in nature. They are not mask dances and are generally performed by males during marriage ceremonies and religious festivals. They are amusing and entertaining.

In the crossed bamboo dance two men, holding the ends of bamboos in each hand, sit facing one another. Two others then place themselves, so that the bamboos which they hold in the same way cross at right-angles those held by the others. The two sets of men then alternately bring their bamboos sharply together, and as quickly back again to their original position on either side of their body. By this means a number of squares are formed and re-formed. A youth then advances, and is expected to spring in and out of the squares, without being struck by the bamboos, keeping time to the music, which gradually grows faster and faster. The bam-

boos are brought backwards and forwards to the same tune, and the dancer has to be very quick indeed to avoid being caught in one or other of the squares, to say nothing of the unpleasantness of being struck with the bamboos on the shin.

A few words about the Lushai marriage rites during which the crossed bamboo dance is performed will not be out of place. A suitor having presented himself, his courage and perseverance are tested in the following manner. A leg of pork is hung up inside a house, and all the female inhabitants of the village are assembled, each armed with a strip of cloth, to the end of which is fastened a bag of stones. These women, of all ages, from the girl of seven to the venerable old woman of eighty summers, then place themselves round about the house in such a way that anyone attempting to approach must pass by them.

A HARD WOOING!

The would-be wooer is now told to try and take away the piece of meat hanging inside. On a given signal he makes a rush, which the women endeavour to frustrate by striking him with the slings in their hands. Should he succeed in his object, he is again mercilessly treated on re-appearing from the house, and is chased through the village out into the jungle. If the piece of meat is dropped the beating ceases and the man is loudly laughed at, and told that he is not good enough for the girl, and had better return from where he came. Should he succeed in getting clear of the village, his companions, whom he has brought for the purpose, quietly take possession of the girl, and remove her unmolested.

The tiger dance, which is a popular one, is generally performed during religious festivals and 'pujas', when the entrances to all the Lushai villages are closed, and no outsider is allowed to enter. On ordinary festivals the village is open to all.

The Lushais believe in three principal gods—Lambra, Golarai and Dudukal. Lambra is the head god or creator, and without his consent, nothing can be done by the others. Golarai is the god of death. Dudukal causes sickness occasionally, but more often works for the good of mankind. When this latter god has to cause death, he carries out the decree through his wife Fapite.

Devil dance is performed to propitiate Golarai and Dudukal and Tiger dance for Lambra god. In this enactment a cloth done up to represent a pig or a goat is placed on the ground, and one of the youths of the village proceeds to imitate a tiger stalking it. The attitudes assumed are most amusing, and it is wonderful how some of the men, while on all fours, spring over the imaginary goat and alight on the other side.

"Come, Fill The Pitcher."

— Photo by Ram Kinkar Sinha.

INDUSTRY IN THE SECOND PLAN

(Continued From Page 16)

Europe had to pass, but we have to telescope centuries into years if we have to face the world by providing a reasonable standard of life to our population and opportunities for employment to share in the production and consumption of wealth.

STEEL : THE FIRST PRIORITY

A casual look anywhere in the country will show that we have to look up to other countries for the most elementary tools needed in everyday life, even in agriculture. Steel is necessary for the point on a ploughshare and for making the sickle or dao or katari. In remote sections of the country even now people have to use sharpened points of wood because they cannot get iron or steel. Our production of iron and steel is far below our requirements even though the steel mill industry was started more than 30 years back. Every carpenter has to buy from foreign sources his chisel and other tools made of hard steel which we do not produce at all in our country. All the factories, big and small, in our country have to import their machines from abroad. In other words, we are dependent upon other countries for the tools of production — be it a simple hand tool or a complicated machine — which is after all a more complex tool driven by power. Though we have a hundred-million-rupee-worth textile industry in our country, it is entirely fitted up with machines imported from abroad. God forbid, if a catastrophe were to happen, as it happened during the last war in Japan, and our textile factories were destroyed, we cannot replace them quickly and cheaply, just because we do not manufacture those machines. (In recent years two or three establishments have started manufacturing certain textile machines, but it is yet not possible to fit out a complete textile manufacturing factory out of machines manufactured in the country). We have the largest resources in raw materials for iron and steel and yet we have to depend upon imports for our requirements. Therefore, the second Five Year Plan proposes to treble our steel production from 1.5 million tons of present production to 4.5 million tons by 1961. Steel has got to be converted into machines and tools which in turn will be used for the manufacture of both producer and consumer goods. Therefore, the largest chunk of our proposed investment of Rs. 1,400 crores, i.e. Rs. 425 crores or 30 per cent. of the total investment is ear-marked for iron and steel. Rest of the investment is proposed for manufacture of heavy machinery, heavy electrical equipment, cement, chemicals and drugs, fertilizers, aluminium, synthetic petrol, minerals and prospecting etc. and also includes an investment of 300 crores for production of consumer goods—100 crores in factory and 200 crores in small-scale and village industries.

We are starting where others began in the 17th century and we have to make a rapid progress if we have to catch up, and break even, with others in the world. The world has not remained static and we will not remain static also. It has passed through the age of steam, oil and electricity and is on the verge of the atomic age. We have to plan for the future, though we have to work for the present. Therefore, we cannot be content in copying the products of other countries and their manufacturing processes, but we have to invent our own.

COTTAGE INDUSTRIES

It is significant that a large bulk of consumer goods is proposed to be produced not in factories but in cottages by craftsmen and in small establishments. It is inevitable that with the pumping in of a large amount of money as investment in the economy of the country there will be an increase in the purchasing power of the population. Adding the fact that there is constant increase in the total population, the demand for consumer goods, particularly necessities, will increase. One of the reasons why the self-employed craftsman or the small producer did not find full employment was that there was not enough demand for the goods produced by him. That particular factor will be eliminated to a great extent, but the problem of production of adequate quantity of goods at comparable prices will be a challenge to our capacity for organization. It is taken for granted that the application of methods of mass production in factories, with its necessary complement of organization for securing raw materials and disposal in the end of products in bulk, results in economies which enable the consumer to get a particular product at a particular price which is much lower than that of goods produced by any other methods. But it has been demonstrated, that with intelligent organization and improvement in tools and technique of production, goods of equal or even better quality can be offered at a price comparable with goods produced by the method of mass production. This has been so in the case of manufacture of bicycle parts, sewing machine parts, etc. Whether the same results can be expected on a much wider scale and on all varieties of products has got to be proved, and I believe, it can be proved. In any case, we have no other choice. We have a huge and growing population endowed with intelligence and (developed) skill, but lack the resources in capital goods and capital in other forms. Therefore, we have to base our economy on methods which will be less capital intensive and yet provide us with necessary competitive strength. Therefore, the second Plan has deliberately concentrated upon the production of basic industries, for production of metals, fuels and chemicals etc. Once the base is firmly built, our capacity for invention may enable us to develop a method of production which will be different from that which is conventional now. But till that firm base is built, we have deliberately to reconcile ourselves to a period of voluntary deprivation of our impulses for unrestrained consumption of goods and services. We do it every moment of our life. We save for the future. We deprive ourselves of necessaries even so that we can give a better chance to our children. That is exactly what we have to do on a nation-wide scale.

Muslim Politics In The 19th Century

By REZAUL KARIM, M.A., B.L.

THE expression "Nationalist Muslim" is generally used for those Muslims who believe in the solidarity of the Indian nation and as such are attached, in one way or other, to the only national organisation, the Congress. They are a group of Muslims who always fight against all sorts of communalism and sectarian principles and in spite of allurement and preferment from the Government and other sources do not hesitate to undergo any kind of trial and tribulation for the cause of the nation and the country. They love freedom as they love Islam. In their eyes freedom and Islam are synonymous words. As they believe in the principle of nationalism, so are they staunch supporters of Hindu-Muslim unity. For the cause of that unity they are ready to go to any length, because they believe that to be in friendly terms with their neighbours is a fundamental teaching of Islam. Today, there are millions of Muslims throughout India who subscribe to the view just mentioned above. But several decades ago the number of the nationalist Muslims were few and far between, and those handful of Muslims who believed in nationalism were not earmarked as "Nationalist Muslims". In those days the conception of national ideal was vague and unshaped. So the very man who held national ideal in one thing held anti-national or even communal ideal in another thing. The Hindu leaders were no exception to this rule. But the sum total of their teachings bore salutary results. By and by, the principles of nationalism grew into a definite shape out of which emerged the Indian National Congress.

It is a commonplace saying that the Indian Muslims have become nationalists only recently. But that is a wrong idea. Even before the Partition of Bengal, there were many Muslims who held nationalistic views and thought of the country and the nation. In this article I shall mention the name of some of the Muslim leaders of the 19th century who held nationalistic views in many matters touching the vital interest of the country.

HINDUS WENT AHEAD & WHY?

Manifold were the reasons why the Hindus started the national movement. They had got several advantages over the Muslims. They received English education early, which threw open before them the treasure land of European culture and literature. Then arose among them some reformers and philanthropists who changed the outlook and mentality of the people. From a narrow and parochial way of life they led the people into a broader and wider sphere of life where nationalism was bound to flourish. Once the floodgates of Western ideas were thrown open, there appeared a galaxy of men who rid the people of the medieval prejudices and superstitions that obtained in the land. These new ideas gave birth to that political discontent which is the cause of nationalism in all subject countries. But the Muslims followed a different course. They rejected English education and all ap proaches to Western culture were closed by th fanatical Mollahs who held sway over the com munity. They remained aloof from almost a the political activities that were organised b the nationalist Hindus. Thus when the Hindu started a movement to compel the Goverr ment to grant political rights and liberties, th Muslims were silent spectators of the mighty up heavals that swept the land. Then came Lor Curzon's Partition of Bengal. It held out befor the Muslims the prospect of a separate provinc where they would be masters of their destiny. Th temptation was irresistible. So only a few Muslim could be found on the forefront of the nationa struggle. It is only those who had fore-knowledg and instinctively understood the motive behind th partition, had taken active part in the anti-partitio agitation.

But in the pre-partition days the Hindu-Muslir problem was not so acute and complicated as it i today. There were many Muslims of outstandin merit who are little known today. But the Muslir leaders of the pre-partition days deserve more tha a passing reference because they were among th earliest builders of Indian nationalism. Like man other earliest nation-builders they had many short comings too. But as obliging grandsons we shou forget the defects of our grandfathers and try t find out their merits only.

GREAT MUSLIM LEADERS

In the history of Indian nationalism, no one ca forget the services of Sir Syed Ahmed who put new life into the heart of the Indian Muslims. I is true that he discouraged the Muslims from joinin the Congress. But his opposition to the Congres was not on the ground that he hated the Hindus Nor did he ever think of fostering the Muslim caus at the cost of the Hindus, whom he regarded as or of the eyes of Mother India, the other eye being th Muslims. His idea was that because the Muslim were uneducated and were unwilling to receive Eng lish education, greater attention should be paid b them to education. He believed that without Eng lish education the Muslims would be nowhere. So instead of prohibiting Western education he wante the Muslims to absorb the best elements of Europea culture. He was the first Muslim to rouse the Mus lims to the importance of absorbing Western cultur and to organise them politically. Hence the lat Moulana Mohammed Ali had called him the "arch enemy of British Imperialism". It was with a view to spreading Western culture among the Muslim that he founded the famous Aligarh College in 1872 The part that the Aligarh College played in educatin the Muslims and thereby imparting political trainin to them is too wellknown to need any repetition. I is one of the earliest corner-stones of Indian nation alism. But Sir Syed Ahmed had not to cry in th

derness for long. Other notable men came in wake of the new movement started by him. Two minent disciples of Sir Syed Ahmed were the t Hali and the historian Moulana Shibli. Hali by poetry and Shibli by his essays and criticism athed a new spirit in the mind of the Muslims.

Mirza Gholam Ahmed Qadiani, though he was a direct disciple of Sir Syed Ahmed, was yet ebted to him in many respects. Specially in his icism of the Christian missionaries, he followed principle of Syed Ahmed. The Muslims of the hodox school may not regard him as a great gious leader, yet it is undeniable that he con-uted a great deal to the awakening of the Mus-s in their multifarious activities. Like Raja Ram han Roy, who saved Hinduism from the clutches the Christians, he has saved Islam from the pticism of the West.

LITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

In the field of politics we cannot ignore the vices of Nawab Amir Ali Khan, a scion of Barch ily of Patna. By organising various associations roused political consciousness among the Muslims. near about 1885, he founded the National Maho-dan Association in Calcutta. His object in found-the Association was to unite all the classes of lims so that they might work together for the mon good. A few years later i.e. in 1886, wab Abdul Latif founded the Mohammedan Lite-y Society. Its object was to break down pre-ces and exclusiveness and to interest its mem-s in present-day politics and modern thought and ning. Five years later, he read a paper on Mus-education in Bengal. In this address he boldly pcated the spread of Western education among Muslims. Here are a few lines from his writing ch will give us an insight into his mind :

"Mohammedan Education can never cease to have a strongly marked feature of political interest, which will force itself on the notice of all who desire to make the enlightenment of Indian races the handmaid of loyalty and devotion to the British Power".

Few Muslims took part in such associations as Landholders Society, British Indian Society and British Indian Association. But the Muslim ers of those days were not apathetic to any ons of the Government that were prejudicial to interest of the country as a whole. We may tion one instance where "in a deputation of the sh Indian Association to Lord Lytton to protest nst the repeal of duties on imported cotton goods, names of Nawab Amir Ali Khan Bahadur, Nawab ed Ali and Nawab Mir Mohammed Ali also ared." ("History of Political Thought in Bengal" Dr. Biman Behari Mozumder; p. 396).

In this connection another Muslim luminary s large before our eyes. He is Mohammed Yusuf ihar. Perhaps he is the first Muslim to claim separate representation for the Muslims. But he did not support separate electorate, he only claimed for some reserved seats for the Muslims for the time being as a necessary evil. In his memorable speech delivered in the Bengal Legislative Council in 1883 in reply to an Indian Member's opposition to the Local Self-Government Bill, he supported the granting of local self-government. The introduction of Local Self-Government was opposed by men like Kristodas Pal, Jatindra Mohan Tagore and Digambar Mitra. But he supported it in the most emphatic language. At another time in the Indian Legislature he advocated the granting of franchise even to women, a phenomenon that was unthinkable in those days.

MUSLIMS & CONGRESS

When the Congress was started in 1885 many Muslims became its active members. The Congressite Muslims were not outcastes of the society, but were in the highest estimation of the country. Most of the present-day Muslim leaders were in some way or other connected with the Congress. It was only when the Congress threw away the begging bowl from their hands and took up a fighting programme that some of them broke away from the Congress and took shelter under the banner of communal organisation. The summer soldiers and the sunshine patriots cannot go to any other place. But still there are millions of Muslims with whom the Congress ideals are articles of faith.

The traces of political consciousness that we find in the early Muslim leaders are vague and indistinct. Compared with the thoughts of the present generation they are insignificant. But, it is curious to note that a class of Muslim leaders are still in the mediaeval age. While the early Muslim leaders made conscious attempt to drive away mediaevalism, the present-day Muslim leaders are bent upon introducing mediaeval spirit in every walk of our life. Instead of evolving, our politics has manifestly degenerated. Separate electorates and other special advantages were considered to be a necessary evil and they were never meant to be permanent. But in this age our leaders consider them as essential and an integral part of Islam and Muslim interests. This is the direct effect of slavery. While men like Rahmatullah Sayani, Badruddin Tayabjee and Nawab Syed Mahammed came to the forefront of the National movement, the present-day leaders are denouncing all principles of nationalism. A united and free India was their goal, and Pakistan is our present-day leaders' goal. Hindu-Muslim unity was their war-cry. India first and India always was their battle song. And our leaders like weary, war-worn and runaway soldiers are flocking to the rank of our enemies. It seems that political awakening among us has received a setback. We believe that this stagnation will not last. It will melt away into nothing at the first touch of the new movement that is coming in the near future.

Meaning Of Yoga In The Philosophy Of Bhagavad Gita

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THE word Yoga in the Gita does not seem to stand for the "Astanga Yoga" of *Patanjali* where it has been used in the special sense of cessation of mental states. This technical sense of the word does not seem to have been adopted by the author of the Gita in the exposition of his own doctrine and ideal. The distinction in meaning of the word "Yoga" in the Gita and the Yoga Sutra is so clear and definite that not a single interpreter of the Bhagvad Gita has ever adhered to the technical sense of *Patanjali*.

In the Bhagvad Gita the word Yoga has been used in different senses in different contexts. When used with Samkhya and Bhakti, the word seems to mean association or union. Sankhya in the Gita means pursuit of true knowledge or wisdom. It has been stated that the Samkhyas (wisemen) attain liberation by following the path of unwavering and steady devotion. Both Sankara and Sridharasvami have taken the word "Samkhyanan" in the sense of wise people. These wise people are born, as it were, with a thorough and clear knowledge of *atman* and their earnest devotion to knowledge helps them to renounce worldly pleasures for the sake of the highest truth. Such is also the goal reached by the devoted persons or *"Bhakti-Jukta Purusas"*.

ASSOCIATION WITH KARMA

The word Yoga has also been used in association with Karma. For example, *Karma yogena Yoginam, Karmayogamasakta, Sannyasa Karma Yogasca. Karmayogena Capare etc.* Here the word does not seem to have been used in the former sense of union in any one of these contexts. In *"Karma-yogena Yoginam"*, the suggestion apparently is not that man can attain liberation by performing actions or by becoming *Karma-Yukta* : because in that case all persons should be able to achieve liberation and then there would have been no need of a special doctrine of Karma Yoga, as expounded by Srikrishna. *"Karmayogamasakta"* refers to one who is incapable of practising Karma-Yoga. In *" Sannyasa Karma-yogasca" Karma-Yoga* seems to refer to a special method of performing actions for attaining the highest goal. In *"Karmayogena Capare"* too, Yoga seems to have a similar reference. The meaning of Yoga used in all these contexts will become clearer to us if we take into consideration the meaning of the sentence *"Yogah Karmasu kausalam"* i.e. Yoga means some special skill for performing actions in worldly life : this speciality consisting in — renunciation of the fruits of action. This skill is needed for the attainment of the stability or balance of mind without which a man will not be able to fr himself from the shackles of Karma and bondag Ordinary people of the world are passionate, amb tious, easily affected by joys and sorrows, gains loss. They generally perform actions, driven b desire and attachment. The desires and attachme disturb the equality of mind and so desire-prompte actions strengthen the bond of man and preven him from attaining liberation.

GITA & KARMA YOGA

Every action in ordinary course springs fro desire and results in impressions which become th seeds of future activities and desires. In othe words, we can say that every action is followed b corresponding reaction and this law of action an reaction is called the law of Karma or the law cause and effect. So long as a man remains boun to this law of Karma he performs various activitie and thus goes on weaving his own cobweb of birt and death. So the question naturally arises : I there no way out of this whirlpool of birth, deat and new birth ? The followers of the path of re nunciation suggest that giving up of all actions i the only means for destroying the bonds of Karma Since one Karma leads to another and thereby sow the seeds of a new life, it is best to become com pletely inactive. But giving up of all actions on mass scale is not at all advisable and practicabl from the worldly point of view. Social life an social stability will be at stake if everybody refrain from doing action. Absolute inactivity means death For preserving body and mind, activity is needed Again for propagation of species activity is needed In fact, life sustains on activity So the author o the Gita refrains from speaking in favour of complete inactivity. On the other hand, he opens a new avenue brings new messages of hope and light for humar being by expounding his theory of Yoga in Karma It is not the external action as such that really binds a man to worldly life; it is the desire — the menta stage of human action — that pollutes his spiritua being and dislocates him from his real status. At-tachment, anger and greed are the three gates of hell that veil wisdom as smoke covers fire. Karma-Yoga, therefore, with its emphasis on the disinterest-ed performance of worldly duties provides humar beings with a new path of emancipation and freedom No human being can live without performing some kind of action and the Gita seeks to show how, by means of Karma Yoga, this constant output of

MEANING OF YOGA IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF BHAGAVAD GITA

rgy may be utilised by human beings to attain perfection and realise from transmigration. The cial art of performing one's duties is the art of ping oneself absolutely disinterested in and non-ached to worldly pleasures and pains. When the nd runs in madness after the objects of senses, intellectual background is disturbed and so the nd fails to proceed in its course, fixed for the ainment of knowledge and freedom. By controll- senses, however, one can secure the equability mind which is needed for achieving wisdom and fection. Attachment to worldly objects are form- by continued association with sense-objects and achment leads to desire. The person who indulges sense gratifications moves in the cycle of birth d death. Giving up of attachment and controlling e senses, therefore, constitute the indispensable e-condition for communion with God and the ful- nent of this pre-condition in action is Karma-Yoga. re physical inactivity without a corresponding ntrol of senses and cessation from nursing passions d desires in mind, is a bad and vicious path. The thor of the Gita has repeatedly remarked that the per way of doing actions is to dissociate one's nd from desires and attachment. The effects of y action can bind the doer only when in doing that ion he has a selfish motive to realise. But if he es not seek anything for himself and performs the ion disinterestedly, his work will not affect him any way. A man should, therefore, give up all desires for selfish motives and dedicate all his ions to God and still go on performing all the linary duties of life. This is Yoga in action as pounded in the philosophy of the Bhagavad Gita. be unselfish, non-attached and disinterested in rldly gains and losses is the supreme duty of hu- n beings. Disinterested performance of action l produce a change in the personality and out- k of man. *Detachment from self and attachment God is what the word Yoga actually refers to in e Bhagavad Gita.* Desire as such is not always l. It is the nature of the object that determines e moral quality of desire. If the object is self's n pleasure and enjoyment, the desire is to be carded; if God, then the man has the purest sire that will bring about his union with the preme Reality. Such a person perceives God in things and all things in God. Men and animals, and high, are the same in his eyes. Caste and ed lose all meaning and significance for him. He s then a broader and a higher vision of man and e universe. The universe for him is a vast sea Divinity and there is no distinction between man d man. Through his deeper vision, he perceives e Divine Spark in his own self as well as in all ner beings and things of the universe. Having lised oneness, he becomes united with God and s union with God is the real Yoga brought about the performance of the normal duties of life in purely disinterested and non-attached manner.

NCLUSION

In fine, it can be stated that by using the word oga" in a special sense, the Gita has sought to ng about a harmony between the ordinary life duties and responsibilities and the supra-ordinary e of divinity and freedom. To feel oneness with e life divine, to practise complete self-surrender God and consequently to dissociate oneself from o-centric desires, constitute the full connotation of the word *Yoga*. Dissociation from ego-centric desires is achieved by the performances of disinterested actions. When the shell of one's individuality is thus broken, he realises his identity with the Great Soul and this is the stage of God-Consciousness or Divine Love. This realisation of oneness of spirit is the highest ideal of life and the Gita seeks to show that this ideal or supra-ordinary stage can be achieved by a person even in his normal worldly life by the practice of Yoga (attachment to God and detachment from self.)

PLACE-NAMES OF UTTAR PRADESH

(Continued From Page 18)

or mud bank occurs in the name of Pilibhit. KOT is equivalent to GARH, and is found in such names as CHITRAKOT or SHERKOT. LAR is a suffix added to the name of trees, as in SISOLAR (row of Shisham trees). GHAT stands for a landing or watering place and is found in names like Rajghat, Lohaghat, and Doharighat. Certain terminations connote water or water-supply — natural or artificial e.g. SOT, i.e. water-channel (as in Amsot), KUND or KUNDI, i.e., pool (as in Surajkund or Markundi), POKHRI, i.e., pond (as in Ranipokhri), PHIL or JHIR, i.e., extensive sheet of water (as in Nohjhil or Lakhanjhir), TAL, i.e., lake (as in Nainital), KUAN, i.e., well (as in Lalkuan Markuan, etc.). Names compounded with suffixes like THAR i.e., dry-land (as in Asothar), THANA, i.e., station (as in Bharthana), KHET i.e., field (as in Ranikhet), BAGH i.e., orchard (as in Ranibagh), BARI, i.e., grove (as in Ambari), or SAR, i.e., enclosure (as in Jaunsar) are indicative of village land conditions. In short, the PASTORAL names are stamped with the character of Indian rural economy, and are therefore well worth a detailed study.

DENOMINATIONAL NAMES

The Denominational Group comprises names coupled with terminations indicating worship of some particular deity, or relating to some place of pilgrimage. The usual suffixes are BAN, PRAYAG, MATH, ESAR, DWAR, NATH, and DHAM. BAN suggests a sacred forest (as in Brindaban or Mahaban), PRAYAG stands for a junction of two sacred rivers, which is an auspicious place for worship and sacrifice (as in Karanprayag or Rudraprayag). MATH is a monastery (as in Joshimath). DWAR means a door or temple (as in Hardwar, Kotdwara etc.). ESAR means lord and is an epithet of God (as in Batesar, Garhmuktesar, etc.). NATH carries the same implication (as in Badrinath, Sarnath, etc.). DHAM means abode, but it is dropped in popular usage (as in Kashidham or Varanasidham, i.e., Banaras). It may be pointed out here that *puri* is similarly dropped in popular parlance in the case of Mathura which in reality is Mathurapuri.

ENGLISH INFLUENCE

English influence has also played some part in the growth of place-names in the Uttar Pradesh. It illustrates the catholicity of outlook and the sense of realism which led the people of a locality to adopt English names in modern times. The notable instances of this class are Shorepur, Kydganj, Robertsganj, Captainganj, Colonelganj, and so on.

Thus, the etymology of the various place-names, if properly studied, yields an amount of information which would surprise a student of History and Sociology.

Plastic Surgery—India's Original

By M. MUKHERJEE

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PLASTIC Surgery has become a talk of the day. Plastic toys, utensils, table cloths and screens have become so commonplace that everyone tries to associate Plastic Surgery with the material called Plastic. A section of people is still under impression that in Plastic Surgery, lost parts of the body are made of plastic material and are implanted into the body. But plastic surgery has not much in common with the plastic material except the meaning of the word "PLASTIC'. The word plastic means any substance which can be moulded into different shapes and sizes. So the branch of surgery which deals with reconstruction of lost parts of the body and gives newer shapes to them is called plastic surgery.

Plastic Surgery was first practised in India by the Hindu Surgeons, 3,000 B.C. These Surgeons constructed noses from the skin of the forehead and so this particular method which is still the best and most practised is called Indian method of Rhinoplasty (Rhinoplasty-Construction of nose) all over the world. This art spread from India to Middle East and Egypt. The Italian Surgeons learnt the subject from Egypt. Then it spread through Europe to United Kingdom and America.

Even so late as 1744 A.D., the British Surgeons of East India Company learnt the art of Rhinoplasty from a Marathi Surgeon near Poona. But the whole art was neglected in India after the 18th Century and this is the period when the Western countries improved in all surgical fields including plastic surgery. But the modern concept of plastic surgery as a special branch in surgery was given birth to by Sir Harold Gillies. During the first world war he started this old art in a renewed fashion and placed the whole subject on a sound and scientific basis. The second world war has brought renaissance of plastic surgery.

REHABILITATION OF CRIPPLES

Now it has been recognised as a special branch of surgery and as such many separate units have been opened for the same. The West Bengal Government has appreciated the importance and the need of this speciality and has started a plastic unit in S. S. K. M Hospital (old P. G. Hospital). This is the pioneer unit in the Civil Hospitals of India. Next sore point in plastic surgery was, that for a long time this branch of surgery was associated with the idea of cosmetic surgery alone. Even now many people think that plastic surgery is meant only for a few fortunate people of wealth who have their beauty enhanced by shaping the nose or removing the old age creases of the face or shaping the pendulous breasts No doubt that cosmetic surgery is a part and parcel and the cosmetic surgery can deliver immense psychological improvement but the bigger problems in plastic surgery is rehabilitation work. In every country a number of victims of injury and burns become incapacitated for work due to loss of function of fingers or hands or legs They look aweful too but their loss of working capacity not only makes their life miserable but creates a national loss. In a poor country, like ours, these crippling ailments are more prevalent and their poverty prevents them from having proper treatment at the right moment. As such the number of cripples are much more and they are in dire need of plastic surgery for their rehabilitation. The injuries of hand

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Angioma of face operated & cured.

PLAN-FRAME FOR EMPLOYMENT

(Continued From Page 24)

retail traders in carrying out their daily business with different customers that these are considered to be the core of their success in their occupation. While the number of these traders is likely to rise to 8 million within 1961, the number of persons engaged in hotels and restaurants will be about 1.2 million and the number of these supported on professions and liberal arts will come up to 8.5 million. However single-handed the work of these people may be, they have to cultivate their sense of social responsibilities and to develop a communion of feelings with all they come in contact with. Otherwise, they cannot derive the much-coveted mental satisfaction which is the last word in all their toiling for wealth.

Along with our exertions to raise the level of our economic status, we have to foster a spirit of self-discipline and self-sacrifice. Without being inspired by the nobler object of our accepting an employment, we cannot make the employment yield us the best of dividends. What is the good of asking for fuller employment if the existing employment capacities even cannot be explored to the fullest extent ? We have to lay our hands on the nation-building projects, we are to participate in the planning for a better and brighter future of our country, and if we are really aware of the significance of these our assignments, it will be a sheer sin for us when we fall short of applying our best of attention and efforts to our task.

NATIONAL CAUSE

It is in the special genius and strange tradition of India that the rich and the poor here are fraternally united and are ever capable of moving hand in hand for a national cause even when there is a thundering clash between labour and capital on all sides. Be there any amount of external provocation to the contrary, we cannot forget that our capital is not entirely locked up in the iron-chest of our capitalists but it is lying bare in immeasurable quantity in our mines and ores and natural resources, which has to be found out by searches and researches and for which both manual labour and mental labour are extremely necessary. If we look to the countries making rapid strides in planning and progress, we shall see everywhere that the deficiency of capital finance is being fully covered up by the efficiency and sufficiency of human services. In days of vicissitudes and national crises, even the people of capitalist States like America stand united and keep up their national prestige in fields of commerce and industry. Poor people of a poor country as we are, we are all the more required to make a common pool of whatever little wealth or strength we have and invest the whole in the interests of planning. After an inhuman subordination of 200 years, the painful memory of whose shackles is still there, it is not very easy to attain the free spirit of a free man all at once, and it will be only by steady resolve and regular practice that one can drive away the habit of fear and evasiveness unfortunately developed in one's mental structure. This is where the question of educating the mind comes in. To appreciate and achieve the targets of national planning, a thorough recasting of the mental frame of the people is required before everything and we are sure the makers of the new Plan-frame will take up this issue in due course. In the meantime, let us strive and pray for a greater unity and co-operation between all employers and employees and pave the way to ever-increasing employment for greater progress and prosperity of our nation.

UNITY OF INDIAN LITERATURE

(Continued from Page 32)

introduction to the literature of Bengal. I hope this will not be the last and believe it will be the first of series of such literary pieces. If you could write biographical sketches, with personal touches of the leading writers of Bengal you would be rendering a service to the cause to which *Hans* is dedicated — homogeneity of all the Indian literatures. We look forward to the day when a Kerala or a Sindhi will be familiar with all the masterpieces of Bengali literature, the difference of language being no bar.

Yours faithfully,
PREMCHAND.

II

28-1-1936.

Dear Priya Ranjan Babu,

So glad to receive your letter of 21st inst. Please do write the sketch you are trying to write. Our Madho Babu used to say "try and you will succeed."

For February issue we have got translated the reminiscences of Jaladhar Sen, a most readable thing indeed. You must have read it in (the) original. Let me know what you think of the Hindi version.

Our Bengali friends have not taken kindly to our venture. The only consolation is that Bengali literature is no longer provincial. It has long ago passed that stage. But we are not quite conversant with its present-day developments. As Hindi literature grows, it gets a bit self-conscious and Hindi editions of Bengali books don't come so frequently. Bankim, Romesh, D. L. Roy, Sarat and Gurudeva are already all India figures, some of them world figures. But our interest in each other must not be allowed to slacken. Great writers are by no means the monopoly of my province or country. When we are a nation, we should be as proud of Bankim as of Sarshar or Eqbal or Joshi.

With best wishes

Yours,
PREMCHAND.

POST-INDEPENDENCE POSITION

Since the attainment of Independence the idea of the unity of Indian literature is coming more and more to the front, and the Viswa Bharati has published in Bengali accounts of the Assamese and Oriya literatures and it may be hoped that accounts of other literatures will follow. A sketch has also appeared in Bengali on Bharatiya Sahitya, giving in brief compass accounts of all the branches of Indian literature. The Hindi Sahitya Sammelan had been working on the same field, but its attempts belong more specifically to a previous period, before the attainment of Independence. When will the task be complete and a patriotic publisher bring out in Hindi, Bengali (in which some work, as pointed out before, has already been done) and English a series of historical outlines, grammars and readers of the different languages of India ?

I cannot conclude without referring to a beautiful observation made by Vinobaji. It was at Balarampur, where he met Bengali litterateurs that he said :

"It is for scholars to know the different languages and literatures. this was the path of knowledge — Jnana-Yoga; but for him and his like, it was also to know the different languages and literatures of India, for it was the path of love — Prema-yoga The love of India, our mother, should indeed prompt us to study the languages and literatures of India with a loving heart, the expression of idea which has taught our countrymen and the generations through previous centuries."

PLASTIC SURGERY—INDIA'S ORIGINAL

(Continued from Page 257)

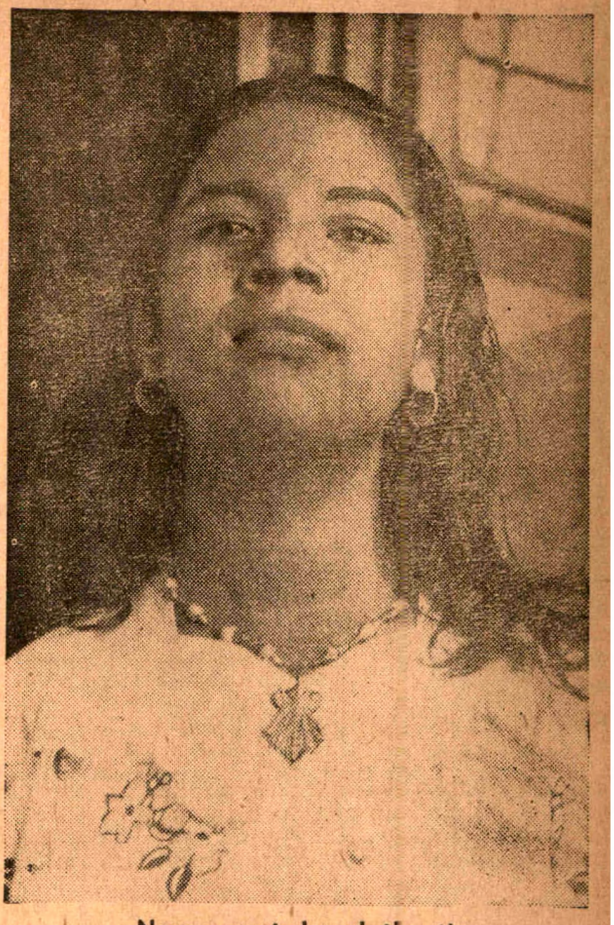
will increase as the nation is getting more and more industrialised. Proper treatment of such injuries cannot be possible without the aid of plastic surgery. In fact quite a number of such hand injuries are treated in the plastic units by the specialist.

Burns alone can claim 50 p.c. of the crippling disfigurements of hands, neck, face and legs in our country. Burns are a very severe damaging accident besides being fatal in quite many cases. Specialized treatment in separate units with advantages of different types of skin grafting can save quite a few and can prevent a lot of the deformities. The treatment of burns is almost entirely under the domain of plastic surgeons and in Western countries there are separate burns units for proper treatment of such victims.

CANCRUMORIS

A crippling disease in this country is cancrumoris. Kala-azar had its days. Then slouching of mouth, lips and jaws were fairly frequent. Even now quite a number of such infections of the mouth are seen in malnutrition patients having typhoid, measles or kala-azar. Their life is really miserable. Most of them cannot open their mouth. They are dripping saliva all the time. They cannot talk distinctly. They cannot eat their food with satisfaction. It is with the aid of plastic surgery that these miserable lives can

Congenital deformity of the nose with broadening of tip.



Nose operated and the tip of the nose shaped normal.

be made worth-living and at the same time the horrible appearances can be made agreeable. The following are a few examples of such cases :—

Elephantiasis of Legs: The victims of such a horrible disease can be relieved a lot. A huge leg is always a handicap for work. A number of these patients belonging to labour class take to begging. But plastic surgery can certainly relieve the weight and make them fit for work. The full cure depends on the systemic cure of filariasis but no such drug is as yet available.

Claw Hand: Burns, injuries or paralysis of nerves may give rise to different types of crippled hands. Leprosy alone causes claw hands unfit for work in a good number of patierts. These victims again can be made useful to the society by specialized operation.

CONGENITAL DEFORMITIES

Harelip And Cleft Palate: Everybody knows that babies may be born with defects from the mothers' womb. The lip may be split and the palate may have a gap or both the lip and palate may be widely separated giving rise to a horrible appearance to the child and severe disadvantage for feeding the same. Most of the babies suffer from proper nutrition as they cannot suck the breasts. They have to be fed with spoons. They may have to have feeding more often than normal babies. The feeding should be carefully done and a weight record kept. As soon as this baby

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INDO-CHINA PAST & PRESENT

(Continued From Page 31)

fied by a treaty (forced as usual) signed at Hue (February 1886). Near this capital city the French built a fine Museum in Touranne where they housed valuable samples of Hindu-Buddhistic inscriptions, art and iconography coming from the ancient Hindu colony of *Champa* elaborately described by Dr. R. C. Majumdar and other scholars.

King Bao Dai who succeeded to the Annamite throne in 1926 fled from the Japanese but was allowed by the French to resume his 'protected' authority (in 1949) which again is seriously threatened.

The products of export are rice, sugar, cotton, silk tissues, tea, pepper, and cinnamon; among minerals we find coal, iron ores, copper, zinc and gold. The gold mine at Bong Mien was worked by a French company.

The Phang-rang river still conserves the deformed Hindu name *Panduranga*, a divinity worshipped even to-day in trans-Vindhyan India. From this river valley I entered Nhat-rang where the ruins of the Hindu temples fascinated me with their styles of Bengal architecture and with the images of Siva-Parvati, Ganesh, Kartikeya and other Brahmanical deities attended by dancing *devatas*.

Coming from the Centre to South Viet Nam or Cochin China, I visited the gay French city-port of Saigon with a huge population of nearly two millions. In area the State is 2,647,639 miles with a total population of about six millions. Over 4 lacs of Chinese are doing business and many rich Indian merchants from South India have built Hindu temples, guest-houses etc. The Annamite King was obliged to cede this area in 1862 to the French and it remained a French colony (with expensive French hotels, dancing halls etc.) till June 1946 when so-called autonomous republic (under France of course) was created as a part of Indo-Chinese Federation. In June 1949 it was attached to Viet-Nam (south) as a member State of the French Union. Principal products are rice, rubber, tobacco, betel-nuts, sugar-cane, beans, copra, dried and salted fish etc. In big towns, like Saigon and Cholon, we find several factories of rubber tyres, tobacco, food preserves etc., mostly managed by Europeans and Chinese. The native Annamites are small traders.

NORTH VIET - NAM

From the Centre and the South one could reach North Viet-Nam or Tonking (rich in coal and tin mines) by ship or by air. It has an area of 115,700 sq. miles with a population of about 10 millions. They were brought under French Protectorate in 1884 when the French Government began spending big sums to give publicity to the wonderful art treasures surveyed by French savants like Loti, Lojanqier and others. The French built up a splendid library of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Tibetan, Sanskrit and Pali books etc., in their Research School at Hanoi, now (after French departure) taken over by the Government of Ho Chi Minh effectively supported by the People's Republic of China and also by the Soviet leaders in Moscow.

President Ho Chi Minh constantly complained of covert American interference in Viet-Nam which, like Korea, has been partitioned temporarily to stop bloodshed as urged successfully by peace-loving India. India was invited by U. N. to serve as the Chairman of the International Armistice Commission and also of the board to supervise the general election in 1956 with a view to reunite, if possible, the North and the South. This was endorsed in Geneva last year, by France, but the present Saigon Government led by Premier Ngo Dinh Diem (fighting a civil war) was not a party to the Armistice! So Premier Nehru naturally commented critically that the fate of Asian nations should no longer be settled by the Western Powers alone! Mr. Krishna Menon tried to smooth the difficulties and he was helped by Mr. MacDonald, the then Commissioner General of U. K. in South-East Asia. So U.. K., U. S. A., and France are now jointly pressing Premier Diem to stabilize things by opening talks with North Viet-Nam on the nation-wide election due in 1956. But much trouble was created by Ngo Dinh Diem and his party.

LAOS AND CAMBODIA

Adjoining Viet-Nam are two States of Laos and Cambodia where Hindu and Buddhistic cultures predominate. Between 1879 and 1895 a French explorer Auguste Paire traversed this 'land of the million elephants' and made a gift (as if his personal property) of Laos to France which began ruling since 1893. Its area is 91.405 sq. miles and population 1.5 millions only, mainly Buddhist by religion and culture. After the second World War North and South Laos were amalgamated under the Luang Prabang dynasty (August 1946), and in July 1949, Laos became theoretically a sovereign State within the French Union sending French advisers etc.

Their neighbours the Siamese annexed in 1941 the territories of Bassac, Paklay and Saya-Buri (like Lop-buri or Lava-puri of Siam); but these were restored to Laos in 1946 although Siam backed by U. S. A. may thus try to expand its power eastward. North Laos is reacting against American and French influences, by forming a semi-Communist party, Pathet Laos, and the party would now be strengthened by the Communist capital Hanoi which can fly aid by air to Vien-tien, the capital of Laos and headquarters of King Sisavang Vong, a pious Buddhist. Old Laotian literature relates not only to Buddhism but the Brahmanical Sanskrit Culture.

Last, though not the least, stands Cambodia under King Norodom (Narottama) Sihanouk who began his rule in 1946 and gave his people a Constitution in 1947. France in 1949 recognised Cambodian Independence within the French Union and French is still the official language of the realm.

PAST LINK WITH INDIA

Cambodia is 181,000 sq. miles in area with a population of about four millions, largely Hinayana Buddhists ruled by Buddhist Abbots who were modern enough to eat and travel with me as far as Japan! There is a Buddhist Pali Institute in Pnom Penn which opens the gate to the world-famous Hindu-Buddhistic temples of Angkor Vat and Baphuon (Vaishva), Bayon and Iswarapura (Saiva-Buddhist) which fascinated me by their colossal yet harmonious architecture, and also by their gem-like carvings and their superb statuaries of gods and goddesses. These art treasures remind us of the historic and cultural relations between India and Camboj-Champa for 1500 years (2nd B.C. to 13th Century A.D.). I had the privilege of reminding of these long cultural connections the Cambodian Prince visiting recently the Maha Bodhi Society. A Cambodian Abbot, Rev Veeravara, has built a Buddhist Centre near Kutab Minar in Delhi, with the help of the so-called *Kamboj* folks of Punjab! From Pnom Penh and Battembang one can enter Siam

"SAKTI - WORSHIP"

(Continued from Page 12)

Aided by Mahakali Lord Visnu killed the twin demons Madhu and Kaitabha while they were about to kill Brahma—the creator.

There was another disturbance of equilibrium in the nature of Mahalakshmi. The element of sattya having predominated, Mahasarasvati emanated from the person of Mahalakshmi. The exploits of this second incarnation are detailed in the third section of Saptasati, which deals with the story of the overthrow of the twin demon brothers, Sumbha and Nisumbha.

After the two successive emanations of Mahakali and Mahasarasvati, the two elements of tamas and sattya were eliminated from the nature of Mahalakshmi one after the other. Only the element of rajas remained as the essential constitutive factor of the nature of Mahalakshmi. Mahalakshmi in this limited aspect of rajas is to be clearly distinguished from the Great Mahalakshmi, the Universal Cause. This lower Mahalakshmi is the presiding deity of the second section of Saptasati which records an account of the destruction of the demon Mahisa by the Divine Mother.

It is said that Chandika though eternal in essence chooses to incarnate herself in various forms in order to fulfil different missions on different occasions.

DURGA PUJA IN BENGAL

In Bengal during the Durgapuja festival the worship of the earthen image of the goddess is usually celebrated. In this image the goddess is almost universally represented as killing the buffalo-demon (Mahisasura-mardini).

The earliest reference to the worship of the clay image is found in Saptasati itself. There is, however, no definite historical record of the origin of the worship of the clay image in Bengal. It may only be said that the practice is current for not less than a thousand years.

The goddess Durga as worshipped as an image in M.P., U.P., Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Assam is a goddess with ten hands (Dasa Bhuja). In her retinue we find several figures of gods and goddesses —namely, Kartika, Ganesa, Saraswati and Lakshmi together with Mahisasura,—the demon born of the buffalo into whose body he entered for fear of being killed by the goddess. It appears that in worshipping the Mother of the Universe or in celebrating the day of Dusserah the aforesaid parts of India follow the tradition of the Ramayana while the others follow the tradition of the age of the Mahabharata.

Of the several figures in the group around her, Kartika, the commander of the godly force, represents the power which is the first requisite for the physical suppression of evil and also for the maintenance of the supremacy of the moral and spiritual order. Power for its perfection requires the cultivation of the arts and the sciences: the culture of the mind and the soul must be the invariable counterpart of the culture of the body. This explains the presence in that group of Saraswati, the goddess of learning, music and other arts.

All-round culture alone can find itself manifested in the birth of an all-round personality like Ganesa, the Lord of beings or Ganapati, the leader of the people. Ganapati, the elephant-headed who must be first appeased in all worship is pedestal of all idealism and divinity in mankind

It is when a people rises thus to the full height of manhood that brings Lakshmi, the godd of fortune and prosperity. She is the other daugh of Sakti, the Divine Power and brings abund fruition over the face of the smiling earth, in pe and plenty—the fruition of the elimination of by the exercise, by the Divine Mother, when p perly invoked, of her beneficent power.

MEANING OF TEN HANDS

The power of the Mother extends to the directions and is multiple and manifold in manifestations: this is represented by her ten han The evil force that she subdues exists not only the outer world but also, and chiefly, in our o natures—they are our own evil passions and p pensities, dark and menacing and often in disgu like the asura, which only the shining weapons the Divine Goddess, when appropriately invoked, subdue and conquer. We often forget that there tremendous power behind the goddess, that right backed by divine might when that might is invol by self-control, self-discipline and self-sacrif Divine power does not work for our private ben or for the satisfaction of our private desires, a the prosperity that gives hope for the indulge of our sensual impulses and passions.

It makes for ordered existence in the full sense, based on self-control and discipline. This the great lesson of the Puja, the worship of Mother of the Universe—the mastery of the bo by the soul, the triumph of spirit over matter.

On this day of Dusserah therefore, let us pray to the Divine Mother that at this auspici moment of our lives—on this blessed day—she m shower upon us her choicest blessings. May we be worthy to be the true children of the Moth May Her Power, the Divine Power, the Power the Right, the Good and the True, prevail over powers of darkness and evil and wrong everywh in the world.

INDO-CHINA PAST AND PRESE

through *Aranya Pradesha*. I took the sea-route, Saigon, direct to Bangkok. The Siam Navigat Company plies ships from the Cambodian harbo to Kep and Ream to the Siamese ports. Mid-Cambo boasts of the great lakes, drawing the overflow of Mekong river, running parallel to the Menam Thailand.

Cambodia exports rice, cotton, tobacco, pa sugar, resin, timber, hides, fish, oil etc. Preci stones and phosphate are their chief minerals, a great possibilities lie hidden in 25 million acres forest-lands of undetected resources. The soil damp and fertile; but Cambodia suffers fr lethargy and acute shortage of manpower and lab which she may have to import from India or Chir

Thus we see that the racial and economic p terns of Indo-China offer—as by its name—fields natural collaboration of the natives with India the one side and China on the other. Both neighbours (in spite of different ideologies) genuinely eager to help their friends of Indo-Ch exploited for nearly a century by Western colon or interlopers. India and China must soon incre their friendly support to the Indo-Chinese people

PLASTIC SURGERY—INDIA'S ORIGINAL

ontinued from Page 259)

growing well and attains a fairly big size the hare- should be operated. Best time for the operation of relip is between 3-6 months. Then the palate is erated before the child learns to speak i.e., within |2 to 2 years of its life. Failure to have these oper- ons done in right time causes almost insurmount- e difficulties in the production of a good speech. is almost accepted now that 100 p.c. good speech impossible if the operation is done when the child grown up and has already learnt all the speech.

Hypospadius: Some children do not develop the nary passage complete. They pass urine from e under surface of the penis and not the tip. e penis is also curved. These victims can be ed by plastic surgery and the best time for their eration is between 2 and 5 years of age.

Webbed Fingers: The fingers are joined together th skin flaps. These should be operated between 5 years i.e. before the age the child learns to use his fingers separately and purposefully.

Besides the above there are varieties of congenital ects which can be relieved or cured by plastic gery.

FECTS OF FACE

ll injuries and defects of the face including the ctures of the jaws come under the domain of plas- surgery. In short it can be said that 50 p.c. of ients undergoing plastic surgery has something to with face. And all such surgery on the face are cosmetic surgery. A big loss in the cheek or lip middle of the nose by accident or disease is not ed for beauty alone but to make him fit for the ety to earn his bread. On the other hand a girl ing a short, stout nose may require raising and owing of the same for cosmesis. Here again the blem of the marriage comes to the topmost. So a kind of work is not cosmetic alone but rehabi- ing too.

A person lost one eye but the socket got contract- and he could not fit an artificial eye. The socket be enlarged and made to fit an artificial eye.

A child got small-pox and ulceration of the nose causing closure of the nostrils. The child could not breathe through the nose for years. The nostrils can be reconstructed and the normal breathing can be established.

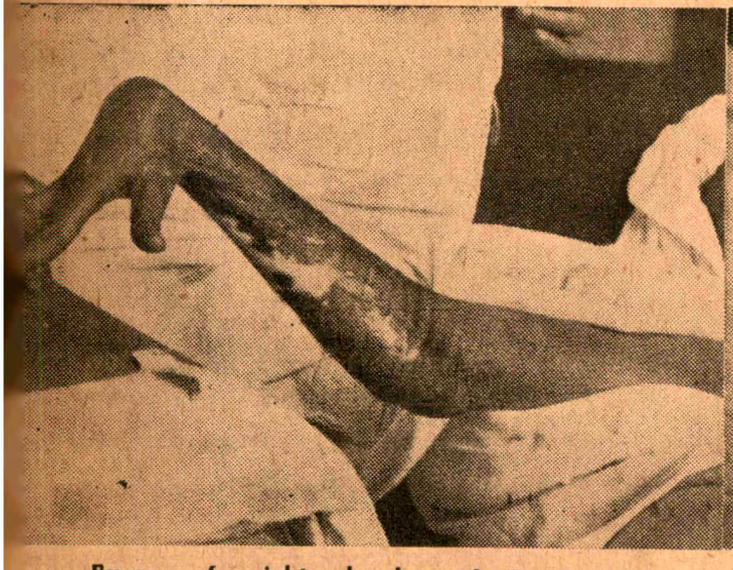
The black birth marks of the face can be excised and the appearance changed to normalcy.

PURELY COSMETIC

There are a few problems which may be called purely cosmetic. An elderly person wanting to remove his old age creases from the face or a grown up lady liking to have her breasts made smaller and raised like that of a young one is avoided by most plastic surgeons these days. This is more so in our country where need for the more important function of this specialized art is so acute.

Scars of the face can be excised and made to look better. The pittings of the small-pox can be improved although it is very difficult to cure them. It is undoubtedly a cosmetic surgery and this should be given the second place unless in case of marriage problems.

The most important point for the patients to know is that a number of ordinary deformities can be corrected with the aid of plastic surgery and they should try to ameliorate their condition with the help of different special branches of surgery at their proper age. But at the same time the specialist surgeons should appreciate their difficulties and try to help the victims in their order of importance particularly from the point of view of working capacity and usefulness in the society. People sometimes make propaganda that plastic surgeons can delete the scars. Here one would like to raise a strong objection. No man on this earth can delete a scar line. He may be able to make the scar narrower and less visible but a line scar will always be there. Every human art has its limitation and so also the plastic surgery. The science is new and is developing everyday and many more problems which seem impossible now may be solved later.



Burns of right hand and forearm with contracture of fingers and wrist. Patient could not use the hand at all.

The same patient was operated by skin grafting and bone fixation. The hand is useful as shown.

RAW MATERIALS FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

(Continued From Page 26)

bauxite, but domestic production in 1953-54 was only 3800 tons. Imports in 1954-55 amounted to 12,380 tons valued at Rs. 3.60 crores. The Second Five Year Plan has fixed the target for aluminium at 40,000 tons per annum.

Copper which is perhaps the oldest metal known to man finds extensive use in the electrical industries, ship-building, in the manufacture of utensils and of alloys like brass, bronze, bell metal, etc. Our resources of copper ore are limited and the production of the metal falls far short of requirements estimated at 40,000 tons per annum. Output of copper in 1954 amounted to 7171 tons while imports during 1954-55 at 26,977 tons cost Rs. 8.75 crores of foreign exchange. Apart from the inadequacy of indigenous production, the superior grade of electrolytic copper is not manufactured because there is no refinery in India. In view of the shortage of copper and the high cost of electrolytic copper, it is worthwhile to substitute aluminium for copper in the manufacture of electric conductors. Steel reinforced aluminium conductors are now extensively used for transmission lines. These are now manufactured in India and production is rapidly increasing. The grades of steel and aluminium used for the purpose were hitherto imported. Last year a unit in South India set up an aluminium rod rolling mill for manufacturing the main raw material, namely, electrolytic aluminium rods, and proposes to use Indian metal in cable manufacture to the extent it is available.

It will also be advantageous to reduce the utilisation of copper and copper alloys in the form of domestic utensils. This point is of some importance as the increase in the standard of living of masses expected under the five year plan will create additional demand for metallic utensils which in total may amount to a substantial quantity of copper. It will be advisable to take steps to divert the demand to articles which can be made without use of scarce metals. Already, in some parts of the country, stainless steel vessels, made from imported metal are coming into favour. This trend may be encouraged along with provision of facilities for the manufacture of the special type of steel required for the purpose. The replacement of copper or brass bronze utensils will not only reduce consumption of copper but also of metals like tin and zinc for which India is entirely dependent on imports. The change in popular preferences that is envisaged will, however, affect the livelihood of thousands of skilled craftsmen engaged in traditional metal trades, who are already hard put to meet the competition of machine turned metalware. A constructive approach to the problem will reveal ways of utilising the traditional skill of the metal workers in the new metal trades and in light engineering industry. This is preferable to keeping them tied to uneconomic occupations, which are costly both from the individual and national point of view, in the name of support to handicrafts and cottage industries.

Zinc and Tin : As indicated above, for zinc and tin we are entirely dependent on imports. A small quantity of zinc ore is mined in India, but the output, about 300 tons per day, is insufficient for the establishment of a smelter. A committee set up by the Government of India which recently went into the question of establishing a zinc factory has recommended that a smelter could be established only when the daily output of ore reached 1000 tons. Meanwhile, annual imports of zinc are of the order of 40,000 tons. Zinc imports in 1954-55 amounted to 44,486 tons valued at over Rs. 5.28 crores. Imports of tin during the same period amounted to 3935 t of the value of 3.83 crores. Zinc is used for sn castings, copper alloys and in galvanising. finds important use in manufacture of tinplate containers, copper alloys and for tinning copper brass vessels.

The considerations of economy which sho govern the use of copper also apply to these met It should be worthwhile to examine the econom of progressive replacement of corrugated galvani sheets used for roofing and other purposes by asb tos cement sheets. The quantity of asbestos she now made in India is of the order of 75,000 to 80,(tons per annum. Imports of raw asbestos in 19 55 amounted to 9,016 tons of the value of Rs. 1 crores. Raw asbestos deposits are found in In but not on a significant scale.

Lead : Against annual requirements of 8,(tons, production of lead in India is of the order 1700 tons per year. Lead is used in printing, t manufacture of water and gas pipes, as armour electric conductors, for construction of sulphu acid chambers, for manufacture of the alloys, sold and pewter etc. The discovery of a one-mile long le belt 600 feet wide and 1200 ft. deep in Almora distr was recently announced by the Geological Survey India. Another deposit of lead ore has been found Bellary district.

Some other metals used in the steel electric industries e.g. nickel, molybdenum, tungsten, cob are almost entirely imported. Small deposits of the ores are known to exist in India. The possibilities exploitation of these deposits and prospecting shou be vigorously pursued.

TEXTILE FIBRES

Textile fibres include cotton, jute, wool and s silk. A few decades back, raw cotton and jute we the principal items of India's exports. At prese cotton and jute make the largest contribution to i dustrial production and their manufacture provid employment to the largest number of factory worke

Cotton figures in the country's foreign trade bo as an article of import and export After the Partitio India had to import large quantities of long stap cotton used by the textile industry. On the other ha part of the production of lower grade cotton is e ported. Recently the export quota has been increas to include staple lengths up to 25/32". The output cotton during 1954 is estimated at 3,935,000 bale Exports during the year 1954-55 amounted to 29,8 tons (170,783 bales) valued at Rs. 10.18 crores. In ports for the same period amounted to 120,853 to valued at Rs. 58.45 crores. In view of the heavy in ports of long staple cotton, the obvious line of develo ment is to step up the production of long staple cotto in the country. The main difficulty in this respect climatic . The bulk of India's output of cotton consis of short staple variety grown in the rain fed areas the cotton belt. The climatic conditions in thes regions do not make it possible to change over t long staple varieties which require regular and plenti ful supply of water and thrive best on irrigated lan Long staple cotton thus competes with foodgrain for land use and this fact sets a limit to the possi bility of expansion even taking into account the in crease in area of irrigated land under the variou irrigation projects which are nearing completion The most promising way of reducing imports of raw cotton appears to be through the development o manufacture of finer grades of textiles from ar silk or mixed fibres. A change in the sartorial habit and preferences of the public must come about be

ore this becomes possible on any considerable scale. ut I feel that, with skilful propaganda, it should be ossible for the public to get over the costly fasci- ation for superfine semi-transparent cotton tissues ade out of foreign cotton.

OLDEN FIBRE

Jute : After the Partition, the Golden Fibre has st its pre-eminent position in the national economy. xchange difficulties following the devaluation of the upee in 1950 brought about a crisis of supplies which rovided the incentive for the inauguration of a pro- ramme to step up the domestic production. The pro- ramme was, however, halted midway when it appear- d within reach of success. As against 4.7 and 4.6 illion bales in 1951 and 1952 output of jute in 1954 ad dropped to 3.15 million bales. The whole of it is onsumed by the Indian jute industry. In addition. ndia imported 1,218, 381 bales valued at Rs. 12.97 rores from Pakistan in 1954-55.

Art Silk : A passing reference to the need for ncreased production has been made in connection ith cotton. Present production of art silk yarn is far hort of the demand and of the installed capacity of he art silk weaving mills in the country. The require- ents of the 38,000 power looms and 78,000 hand- oms engaged in the art silk industry is estimated ; 50 to 55 million pounds of yarn per annum. De- and for art silk products, on account of their low rice and utility, is fast increasing. Production of art lk (viscose) yarn rose from 5.6 million lbs. in 1952 11 million lbs. in 1954. The production during the rst half of the current year was 6.1 million lbs. Pro- uction of acetate yarn was started last year and the tput during the current year is estimated at 2 mil- n lbs. The total production of the three existing nits is estimated at 14 million lbs. In addition, a tton mill in Bombay has begun erection of a large ant with an annual capacity of 28 million lbs. here remains vast scope for the expansion of the dustry and for the establishment of new units in e major consuming centres. India is every year porting increasing quantities of art silk yarn in- uding varieties not manufactured in India like lon and grillon. Imports during 1954-55 amounted nearly 41 million lbs. valued at Rs. 13 crores.

Wool : India makes only a minor contribution the world output of wool. As with cotton, the infe- r grades, used in making carpets, are exported d the finer grades required for woollen manufac- re are imported. With better grading it should be ssible to make increasing use of indigenous sup- es for manufacture. The coarse wools are used in king belting. In this respect India has enough raw terial and could be self-sufficient as regards belt- g for machinery. Imports of raw wool in 1954-55 amounted to 2.8 million lbs. valued at Rs. 1 crore, woollen tops to 11.5 million lbs., and Rs. 7.16 crores and yarn to 3.7 million lbs and Rs. 1.35 crores. Piece-goods costing Rs. 66 lakhs (13,22,038 lbs.) were also imported during the year. Exports of raw wool during the year amounted to 30.8 million lbs. valued at Rs. 8.61 crores. The quantity of woollen manufactures in India during 1954 was of the order of 18 million lbs.

CHEMICALS

Sulphuric acid, soda ash and caustic soda are the major chemicals of industry. Just as steel is the basic metal of heavy industry, sulphuric acid is the basic material of chemical industry. It is also used in various other industrial processes in the manufacture of steel, fertiliser, rayon etc. 1,48,817 tons of acid were produced in India in 1954. Imports are negligible and confined to special qualities. Consumption is expected to rise to 500,000 tons by 1960-61.

Sulphur: India is entirely dependent on imports to meet requirements of sulphur which is used in the manufacture of sulphuric acid. The shortage of sulphur underlines the importance of developing manufacture of nitrogenous fertilisers other than ammonium sulphate, like urea and ammonium nitrate. Manufacture of urea utilising coke oven gas has been recently started at Sindri. The new fertiliser plant to be set up at Bhakra will manufacture ammonium nitrate.

Soda Ash is used in glass, textile, paper and dyestuff industries. Nearly half the total supply is used by dhobies for washing purposes. Internal production last year was 48,293 tons and imports were of the order of 94,405 tons. It has been estimated that internal demand will rise to 300,000 tons by 1960-61.

Caustic Soda is one of the important materials used in the manufacture of art silk. Besides it is used in the soap, paper and cotton textile industries. Total production in 1954 amounted to 49,307 tons and imports to 49,257 tons valued at Rs. 3.04 crores. Annual demand is estimated at 150,000 tons by 1960-61. The basic material used in the manufacture of both soda ash and caustic soda is common salt. The expansion of these industries will call for an increase in salt production.

RUBBER

Rubber is an important raw material which is required for the manufacture of a large range of producer and consumer goods. Indian rubber plantations cover an area of 1,74,000 acres and annual yield of raw rubber is of the order of 20,000 tons. Imports in 1954-55 amounted to 4,689 tons of the value of Rs. 1,03,49,015. Demand for rubber is bound to grow with the growth of industries and road transport. There is scope for increasing the area under rubber in the forests of Travancore-Cochin which should be exploited to the fullest

extent. Development of rubber plantations in South India will also facilitate the rehabilitation of the Indian plantation workers who are being pushed out of Ceylon. Over the last year the price of natural rubber has nearly doubled. World demand for both natural and synthetic rubber is increasing at a very rapid rate. It may become necessary to supplement our resources of natural rubber by manufacture of the synthetic product.

Mica : Almost the whole of the mica produced in India is now being exported. During 1954-55 India exported 17,825 tons of mica valued at Rs. 6.59 crores. Similar is the case with lac. Exports during 1954-55 amounted to 26,800 tons of the value of Rs. 10.61 crores. With the growth of the electrical industries, it is possible to expect increasing use of these products within the country.

Oils and Oilseeds : Until very recently oilseeds figured prominently in India's export trade. It is a matter for gratification that exports of seed have now been replaced to a large extent by export of oil. Similar is the case with hides and skins; exports now are mostly of the tanned material.

FUEL

One of the most reliable indicators of the level of industrial development of a country is the energy output which is determined by the resources of fuel and hydro-electric power. Coal and petroleum products are the main fuels of industry. These are also used for household purposes. Shortage of the total supply would indicate the need for economising their use in the household.

Petroleum : India produces a small quantity of petroleum which possibly meets about five per cent of the total consumption. The bulk of the demand is met by imports which in 1954-55 totalled 936 million gallons of the value of Rs. 82.86 crores. In view of the heavy volume of imports, the proposal for setting up a synthetic oil plant included in the Second Five Year Plan at a capital cost of Rs. 80 crores is not so fantastic as alleged in some interested quarters. The shortage of indigenous oil production also shows up the need for augmenting the production and use of power alcohol, side by side with the expansion of the sugar industry. Production of power alcohol at present is of the order of 8 million gallons per year. Petroleum products are used in the form of fuel for industry and transport, illuminant and lubricants. The extension of electricity may be expected to reduce the consumption of kerosene. During the last war it was found possible to replace mineral lubricating oils by vegetable oils. The cost differential is the main obstacle standing in the way of use of vegetable oils for lubrication during normal times. But it will be worthwhile to carry on research in the field so that, if imports are cut off for any reason, industry and transport will not be brought to a standstill on account of shortage of lubricants. Before the advent of kerosene, various inedible vegetable oils were used locally in different parts of the country as illuminant. With the almost universal use of kerosene, the production of these oils has completely disappeared and the trees yielding the oil seeds have been cut down and bur as fuel. It will be useful, as a precautionary measu to resuscitate the production of these oils and to i vestigate the possibility of their use as lubricants a as fuel for oil engines.

COAL

Coal production in India is now of the order 35 million tons per annum. Industrial expansion, a especially the new steel plants, will call for large ad tional supplies. The target for coal in the Seco Five Year Plan has been fixed at 60 million tons be attained in 1960-61. This will mean about 20 p cent increase in total energy consumption. At t present rate of consumption our known coal reserv are expected to last a few centuries, though reserv of high grade metallurgical coal will be exhausted much shorter time. According to Dr. Bhabha, if In attained the same standard of consumption energy as the U.S.A., namely, output of nine tons coal per head per year, that will mean burning 3000 million tons of coal per year which will exha our resources in about a decade. This leads to t conclusion that the needs of a fully industriali India cannot be met except by utilisation of ato energy or other sources still untapped like so energy, the internal heat of the earth and the ene of winds and tides. Dr. Bhabha estimates that, even present, atomic energy might be competitive in c tain parts of India which are far away from coal producing regions. The position of reserves fissile material is also hopeful. The reserves of t rium and uranium according to Dr. Bhabha's e mate will be equivalent to 600,000 million tons of c or more than fifteen times the known coal reserv

In the same address Dr. Bhabha has also dra attention to a very significant feature of our curr energy output which is not as widely known as ought to be. "In 1951," said Dr. Bhabha, "some million tons (dry weight) of cowdung were used fuel. The total hydro-electric potential of India wh fully harnessed could deliver an amount of ene totalling about a seventh of that obtained from c dung." A proper appreciation of the significance this fact on the part of the Government and Planning Commission should lead to a really sci tific approach to the vexed question of cattle slau ter which is now, unfortunately, confused by the c troversy between religious obscurantists on the hand and dogmatic secularists on the other.

INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION

Even a brief survey of the raw material reso ces of our country will show the extent to which are dependent on imports for the indispensable ma rials of industry. Industrial development will agg vate the dependence unless special attention is voted in the plan to the discovery and developm

IN THE BLACK MAN'S COUNTRY

(Continued From Page 28)

ittle about them during my three days' stay there. was surprised to find these servants were not local old Coast people. The local people of Accra were argely different from Akans — their language was an — and the Akans were different linguistically, hough not culturally, from Gans. But the house ervants were from very far away Nigeria. A car as placed at my disposal and the driver of it was black African, a very pleasant-looking person, and Christian rejoicing in the name of Edmund Quist this is a well-known name in Gold Coast, being at of a famous politician and man of affairs). He as something of a silent chap. The head House-boy ave his name as Markson Sambo. He and the other oys' or servants were Igbos from Nigeria. The gbos like their cousins Yorubas of Nigeria, are a ery pushful people, clever, alert and eager to know, d adventurous. Some of the them have acquired nglish learning very deeply, like Yorubas, the Gans d the Akans. They number about five millions and e Yorubas also have a similar number. The Igbos e employed in Gold Coast in all sorts of capacities, d many of them have settled down in Gold Coast. e Akan people of Gold Coast are in a very flourish- g condition, with dollar crops like cocoa and palm l and ground-nut in abundance. The Akans can ford to pay for the services of other people in eir own country. All these house-boys were Chris- ns, but had retained a great deal of their old pre- ristian mentality. After these house-boys found, at though I was a foreigner and from India, and a est of the Government, I was nevertheless a like- le chap, and wanted to make friends with them, d they appreciated it very much, as the Black rican is essentially a democrat, they too were eased like myself to have occasional chats with me.

I have been referring to the people of West rica as "Black Africans". The word Negro is not ed by African peoples with sense of self-respect, this word sounds so very like the term of con- npt, Nigger. But all describe themselves with de as Africans, and they are equally proud to call emselves "Black Men and Black Africans.

MAND FOR "MAGIC RINGS"

The house-boys, individually and severally, ask- me to procure for them from India these things— ain Pills' and 'Magic Rings'. Even in far away st Africa the common European superstitution, ich is also found in America that the Indians are people with great magic powers which they have uired through Yoga and other mystic or esoteric ctices which are far beyond the ken of Western nce, has penetrated into West Africa also. They ieve that the Indians are adepts in palmistry, and y can use magical charms and formulas which are re potent than anything found anywhere else in world. They want these 'Brain Pills' in order to elop power to pass even the stiffest examina- ns (to pass an examination to qualify for a 'white lar' job is the ambition of most African youths, much as of youths in India). "Magic Rings" are very much in demand and they are to ensure success in life; and they even believe that a genuine ring coming direct from India can make the wearer invisible. Sambo wanted a Magic Ring against witchcraft. I argued with him that as he was a Christian, he need not have any fear from witches. But he laughed at the idea, and said that witches and magic did not discriminate between Christians, Muslims and Pagans. When I told him and his fellows that all they have heard about "Brain Pills" and "Magic Rings" was bunkum, and no sensible man anywhere should believe in such hocus-pocus, I felt a prick in my conscience that even after eight years of independence we too had many such simple people in India too who believed in various kinds of religious magic. I told them, however, that as citizens of African countries which were progressing and were looking forward to obtain their independence, they should get rid of these silly notions. They listened to me with respect, but I could see that they were distinctly disappointed. The same kind of child-like and childish faith I found in some highly intelligent Africans also — an M.P. or M.L.A. in Gold Coast and a Kumasi Police Officer. They also were keen on getting these Rings and Pills from India. Later I found out that some unscrupulous charlatans from India had started this business through newspaper advertisements, and generally they succeeded in cheating innocent Africans of their money. This should be put a stop to, in the interest of India's good name among Africans and other foreign peoples.

Raw Materials For Industrial Development

of indigenous sources as well as to the development of substitutes. We have only to visualise the situation that is likely to develop, if for some reason India is cut off from the sources of supply abroad which are under the control of the Anglo-American group, to recognise the precarious basis of industrial planning in our country. Even apart from any sudden stoppage of supplies, sharp fluctuations in the cost of the imported materials can throw plan estimates out of balance. Industrial expansion in Western Europe has led to shortages and firming up of prices of most metals. This tendency has been aggravated by strategic purchases of the U.S.A. in regard to non-ferrous metals—copper, aluminium, nickel etc.—for which India is largely dependent on imports. Copper prices for instance have risen by nearly 70 per cent during the last one year. Prices of other metals, lead, zinc, tin etc. have also risen though to a smaller extent.

If the planned industrial development of the country is to proceed without sharp interruptions caused by shortage of materials, there is need for setting up a body at policy making level, which will keep a close watch on requirements, availability and prices of raw materials and ensure a steady flow of supplies. It will be the responsibility of this body to anticipate the demand that is likely to arise in future, and take steps to maintain supplies at adequate level, by organising prospecting of new indigenous sources, indicating the need for substitutes and by building up stockpiles of strategic materials. In Russia there is a "Ministry of Material Reserves" which performs these functions. In India it will be necessary to set up a Raw Materials Commission to function as an adjunct of the Planning Commission. Or, the Ministry of Scientific Research and Natural Resources must perform these essential functions.

LORD CURZON—A RETROSPECT

(Continued from Page 14)

the whole passage on this subject, he would not probably come to the conclusion that it was the intention of Lord Curzon to say that the Indians were habitually liars or have no regard for truth—an interpretation which is usually made of his speech. In view of the great prominence given to this, I take the liberty of quoting a few passages, because most of the people who readily accept the accusation against Lord Curzon, probably have never actually read the text of his speech.

> *"I hope I am making no false or arrogant claim when I say that the highest ideal of truth is to a large extent a Western Conception, I do not thereby mean to claim that Europeans are universally or even generally truthful, still less do I mean that Asiatics deliberately or habitually deviate from the truth. The one proposition would be absurd, and the other insulting. But undoubtedly truth took a high place in the moral Codes of the West before it had been similarly honoured in the East, where craftiness and diplomatic will have always been held in much repute. We may prove it by the common innuendo that lurks in the words "oriental diplomacy" by which is meant something rather tortuous and hypersubtle. In your epics truth will often be extolled as a virtue; but quite as often it is attended with some qualification and very often praise is given to successful deception practised with honest aim. I remember reading in an Indian newspaper the following paragraph :—'There is not a question but that lying is looked upon with much more disfavour by Europeans than by Native Society. The English opinions on this subject are strong, distinct, and uncompromising in the abstract. Hindu and Muhammadan opinions are fluctuating, vague, and to a great extent dependent upon times, places and persons'."*

MORALITY IN EAST AND WEST

It seems to be that what Lord Curzon intended to say really coincides with the opinion which he quoted from an Indian newspaper. Whether this was an exact quotation from the *Indian Mirror* as is held by the apologists of Lord Curzon, I cannot say. But it may be conceded that it reflects a bare truth. Can anybody deny that English opinion on the subject of truthfulness is somewhat different from that in India? This is not tantamount to saying that the English are superior in point of morality to Indians. Each nation has a scale of values for different virtues and in some respects one is superior and the other is inferior. For example, a moral lapse in sexual matters would not be regarded with such repugnance in English society as in India. Again, in English society, common rules of hospitality such as are observed in the East are conspicuous by their absence. An Englishman, for example, would not think of asking a friend who visits him, say at a late hour in the evening, to spend the night in his house as his guest. This would be quite repulsive to the Indian feeling. In this way, instances may be multiplied about the differences in the value of moral principles and social practices of different nationalities, and I think we should admit that speaking falsehood is not regarded so seriously in India as in England, and probably that is what Lord Curzon really meant. He himself elaborated in the later part of his speech the particular forms of untruth against which his remarks were directed. The most important of these he calls exaggeration and he explains it as a most extravagant account of ordinary occurrence or most fanciful motive attribute a person. Undue praise of a man, which may called flattery, or undue slander and vilification rival or enemy are also indicated by him as the fo of untruth which he had in view. Here, again might pause and think whether he was not substantially correct both in his motive (he was addres the students) and in his statements.

PARTITION OF BENGAL

Now, we come to the Partition. It is a fact some two years after his departure from India, L Curzon wrote to the "Times" that it was a "wic falsehood to say that by the Partition he intended carve out a Mahommedan State, to drive a we between the Mahommedans and Hindus, or to arc racial feuds. It may be literally true, but we h now got positive evidence to indicate that s motives were not altogether absent, at least in minds of the high officials including the Vicer Secretaries. For example, Sir Herbert Risley w in a letter that the creation of the Eastern Provi would serve Mahommedan interests and that it intended to be a state where Mahommedan inter would be strongly represented, if not predomin Although, therefore, it is a fact that the idea Partition was already in the air before Lord Cur assumed his office, the ultimate form in which it adopted, and which was the creation of Lord Cur alone, was not altogether dissociated from the i of creating some sort of rift between the Hin and Muslims. But then it has to be remembe that the *Divide and Rule* was a time-honoured po of the British, and Lord Curzon alone could not held to blame for giving a very direct and vis expression to it. But a still more important point bear in mind in this connection is that in view what has happened in recent times, can we reg the division of Bengal under Lord Curzon's scheme altogether an artificial one? Does it not show t there were deep-seated differences between Muslim population of East Bengal and the Hindus Bengal, and it was obviously to take advantage these that Lord Curzon brought in his measure. is true that at first the Muslims, generally speaki were against the measure. But it is equally true t it was not long before the Muslim opinion soli ranged itself behind the Partition of Bengal, and t was true not only of the Muslims of Bengal but g of Muslims of India as a whole. The first Partit of Bengal was an arbitrary act of Lord Curzon, the second Partition in 1947, which was really result of a democratic procedure, followed, more less, exactly on the same lines as were adopted Lord Curzon. It may not be wrong, therefore, infer that Lord Curzon possessed an instinct wh enabled him to find out the real cleavage that dormant between the Hindus and the Muslims a he tried to bring it out to the advantage of British. Since this policy of *Divide and Rule*

n openly advocated by the British authorities from time of Lord Ellenborough down to that of fferin, Lord Curzon need not be hauled over the ls for an administrative measure which would ctively achieve the result desired by the British horities. The Partition of Bengal certainly was hly distasteful to the Hindus, but it cannot be ied that it became popular with the Muslims who med the bulk of population in Eastern Bengal, l in judging Lord Curzon, we must remember both s fact and the policy of *Divide and Rule* which s accepted by the British Government from almost very beginning of their rule in India.

EDIT THAT'S HIS DUE

While we have so far referred only to those acts which Lord Curzon stands justly accused before bar of public opinion, we must also mention ething to his credit which is not always remem- ed with gratitude that is due to him. First of all es the creation of the Department of Archaeo- y which has preserved ancient monuments of ia and has proved a great source of national piration and glory. The creation of this Depart- nt on a suitable basis, which was long overdue, l always redound to the credit of the great roy.

Next to this, we should remember the stern tude which he adopted towards the brutal acts of soldiers in respect of Indians.

An offence of a peculiarly revolting character been perpetrated by British soldiers against a ve woman in Burma. Not only was no punish- t meted out to the guilty, but both the civil and tary authorities tried to hush it up. A prosecu- was ordered, but it failed on a technical ground. l Curzon took strong disciplinary measures and this he was condemned in very strong language he entire Anglo-Indian press. Somewhat later, two pers belonging to the 9th Lancers had beaten a ve cook so severely that he had to be taken to a ital and died nine days later. Nothing was done iscover or punish the culprit. But as soon as the s reached the Viceroy, he ordered an immediate iry and as the wrong-doers could not be ed on account of the refusal of the soldiers to evidence against the culprits he punished the e regiment. Here again, the English newspapers loud in their denunciation of Lord Curzon, but ething more important than this followed. During time of the Delhi Durbar, in 1903, when this ment was passing in parade before the Viceroy the assembled guests, it received a hearty ova- from all the European spectators. It was impos- to mistake the significance of this and, as Lord on's biographer tells us, the Viceroy naturally deeply hurt at this demonstration of his trymen. It may be added that this spontaneous approval of the crime of the regiment by the Europeans was followed by counter-demonstration on the part of Indians showing a deep appreciation of Lord Curzon's actions.

Lord Curzon poured out his heart, in wrath, to the Secretary of State, and strongly denounced this mentality of his own countrymen. For he held that Imperialism in India should be based upon justice and welfare of the masses. This supplies the key to Lord Curzon's policy and career. He was an Imperialist of the true type, and subject to the perpetual domination of the British over India, he sincerely tried his best to do good to India in the light of his own judgment. He was strong and straightforward and an imperialist to the core, with all its virtues and vices. But even this cannot be said to be true of a large number of Viceroys in India.

Development Of Village Industries

(Continued From Page 20)

industries scattered over a large area and they themselves mainly do the work of finally assembling the parts. This has been feasible in Japan because of the political and social conditions prevailing there. The mill owners there have both social and political influence over the villagers and there is no such thing as labour movement. Here in India conditions are so different that no big industry dare depend upon regular supply of manufactured parts from the villages in time and according to specification. It is idle to expect smooth working of the Japanese method in India for the very nature of social and political conditions. In Japan industrialisation has descended from the top downwards to the village, as for example, without iron ore, Japan has huge steel plants. That is the main reason why Japan has failed in the long run. In India industry should grow from the village upwards. That is what is envisaged in the scheme above.

In order that India may develop industrial economy through village industries, which is admittedly the only practical way, two points have to be borne in mind. One is that the production and the consumption of goods should be in the same area or zone as far as possible. No marketing organization will be able to organize village production in one place and consumption at a distant place. The second is that the production should be linked up with agriculture at the village level; implements and tools should be manufactured regionwise, while the basic industries should produce the manufacturing plants. In this way alone can agricultural economy be converted into industrial economy and the new India of our dreams will emerge.

AN EARLY
French Theatre At Chandernagore

By AMAL MITRA

THE first English theatre to be established in Calcutta was started in the middle of the eighteenth century. A number of other English theatres made their appearance in the city towards the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. Play-houses also spread to the environs of Calcutta such as Dum Dum and Barrackpore early in the nineteenth century. These were unassuming but neat and well-designed buildings.

The theatre established at Dum Dum to provide entertainment for the troops stationed there set up a proud record and bears a place of honour in the annals of the English stage in India in the nineteenth century. This was largely due to the outstanding histrionic abilities of a simple bombardier named Charles Frankling who was universally admitted to be one of the best English actors ever to perform on the stage in India. Moreover, the Dum Dum Theatre possesses another claim to distinction that will ensure that its memory will never fade. Mrs. Leach, the pre-eminent actress of the English stage in nineteenth century India, made her first appearance on its stage. The Barrackpore Theatre too acquired an enviable reputation. Many excellent plays were ably presented there, reports of which were constantly to be found in the newspapers of that period. The Governor-General would occasionally visit this theatre.

The suburban theatre I propose to deal with in this article, however, is the one that was set up at Chandernagore. A newspaper of that period relates that it was the Barrackpore Theatre that set the fashion for playhouses in the environs of Calcutta. It says: "The amusements of the Theatre, which commenced at Barrackpore have been rapidly diffused over many stations." W. H. Carey, the author of 'The Good Old Days Of Honorable John Company' says of the Chandernagore Theatre "Chandernagore also boasted of a theatre where many of the Calcutta residents used to resort. We have not been able to ascertain when it was built." To-day, however, we are no longer in any doubt as to when this theatre was established. The papers of the time specifically state that it was opened on the 15th of March, 1808. This theatre was set up by French prisoners of war to relieve the tedium of their detention and to entertain friends. There was a unique feature in regard to this theatre in that no admission prices were charged of the audiences attending performances there.

"EXCELLENT ENTERTAINMENT"

The two plays with which the theatre opened on the 15th of March were 'Menechmes' and the celebrated French dramatist Moliere's 'The Cheats of Scapin'. For the benefit of those interested in the stage the 'Calcutta Gazette' of the 24th March carried a lengthy account of the founding of this theatre along with a review of the performances on the opening night. They added: ".....We are happy in embracing this opportunity of intimating to the lovers of the Drama, this new extension of the histrionic field." In regard to the performances they highly praised the standard of acting which, they stated, was of as high a quality as were the stage sets, backdrops etc. They make special mention of an outstanding dance performance by a boy of twelve. They also mention that among the 300 people who attended the opening performance were "....the Superintendent, and some Gentlemen of rank and fashion from Calcutta."

Thereafter, week after week at this short-lived Chandernagore Theatre were played tragedies and comedies of famous French dramatists. For example, the 'Calcutta Gazette' of the 7th April reported that the plays 'Le Barbier de Seville' and 'L' Avocat Pateline' had been staged at this theatre on the 4th of April. The report starts with the information that these performances were played "....to a numerous and overflowing audience." In regard to the plays presented the paper says: "....It would be difficult perhaps, beyond the precincts of Paris, to witness a familiar exhibition better conducted in all its parts: and the actors received and merited, during the whole evening, the most lively testimonies of universal applause." It becomes abundantly clear from this paper report how skil-

fully the talented French actors must have brought the characters alive and how fortunate the large audience attending the show must have considered itself in being provided with such excellent entertainment so far from home. The paper stated with considerable emphasis "....the abilities of many of the actors are said to be little inferior to that of the best performers in Europe."

NO ADMISSION FEES

There was another important announcement regarding the Chandernagore Theatre which appeared in that issue of the 'Calcutta Gazette.' Apparently the 'India Gazette,' another paper of that period, had reported in its issue of the 4th April that in future tickets for admission to the Chandernagore Theatre would be priced at one Gold Mohur each. This report was completely erroneous and unfounded. Accordingly the 'Calcutta Gazette' wrote in this connection as follows: "A paragraph appeared in the 'India Gazette' of the 4th instant, stating, (upon what authority we cannot tell) that tickets of admission to the theatre of Chandernagur were to be purchased at the rate of a Gold Mohur for each ticket.

"The theatre of Chandernagore has been fitted up at the expense of a few individuals, for the liberal purpose of opening, for themselves and their friends, a new and certainly an attractive source of rational entertainment. No ticket of admission was ever sold for that theatre, nor did it enter into the conception of the parties concerned, that their laudable endeavours to promote the enjoyments of all around them would be converted into a scheme for levying pecuniary contributions on the public. It is therefore with much pleasure that we insert in another part of this paper, a letter received from two of the Gentlemen, prisoners of war, who have come forward on this occasion to rescue their own characters, and that of their brother officers, from the degrading imputation to which (inadvertently no doubt) they have been exposed."

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Just under this they published a letter from Gravier and Lambert writing on behalf of the theatre to contradict the false and unjust statement made by the 'India Gazette'. The letter reads as follows:—

To

The Editor of the Calcutta Gazette.

Sir,

The French prisoners of war at Chandernagore, with the approbation and encouragement of the Superintendent of the place, have erected a small theatre for their amusement and that of their friends. Any attempt at ridicule against them they leave to its own merits. But what affects their character ought not to pass unnoticed. The best refutation of calumny is a simple denial of its assertions. In answer then to an article which appeared in the India Gazette of the 4th instant, stating that the Price of Tickets for admission at the Chandernagore Theatre is One Gold Mohur, we on the part of our brother officers declare the alleged fact to be directly contrary to truth, no price for admission having ever been required or accepted. Trusting to your liberality for an early insertion of our declaration.

We are sir,

Your most obedient humble servants,

5th April '08. GRAVIER,

LAMBERT.

This irresponsible report of the 'India Gazette' must have greatly distressed a good many playgoers of that time. Gravier and Lambert's letter is an important document relating to the history of the stage in India. It clearly establishes that a theatre can be set up, not for business purpose, but simply to provide free entertainment for friends and that such a theatre was, in fact, set up in Bengal by the generous French prisoners of war.

The 'Calcutta Gazette' of the 7th April is in fact full of news relating to the Chandernagore Theatre. Not merely does it carry the above letter and announcement as also a review of the performances on the 4th of April, but it also relates a most striking and amusing incident that took place behind the curtains after the show was over. I have mentioned earlier that 'L'Avocat Pateline' was one of the plays presented on the 4th. The story of this play is about the legal trial of a dishonest French shepherd, who had stolen and killed a number of his master's valuable sheep, from whose wool 'superfine English cloth' used to be prepared. The audience had returned home delighted with excellent performances of the actors playing the roles of the judge, the accused etc. The recently crowded auditorium was empty. The players were still in their stage costumes when news got round that some valuable piece of theatre property was missing. The manager noticed one of the theatre's servants moving about behind the scenes in a manner that roused suspicion. He immediately hauled him up before the actor who had played the role of the judge, and was still attired in his judicial robes. With an air of great solemnity the actor mounted the judge's bench which had not yet been removed from the stage. The accused was summoned to appear before him. Those who had played the parts of bailiffs and were still attired in bailiffs' uniform mounted guard over the accused. With an air of the utmost seriousness the trial began, and the accused was gravely questioned in

regard to the theft, the actors maintaining a solemn mien and forcing back the smiles that such a situation would naturally provoke. So realistic an air did they impart to the trial that the accused took it all in earnest and, falling at the feet of the supposed judge, pleaded guilty and revealed where he had hidden the valuable missing article. It was found at the spot he indicated. After a stern warning to be on good behaviour in future, the pseudo-judge discharged the prisoner. It was thus that behind the lowered curtain another farce was played. The 'Calcutta Gazette' described all this in detail and concluded by saying: "After a severe reprimand, he was released on his solemn promise to be honest in future, a promise which from his fears, he is likely to keep at least within the precincts of the theatre."

The plays of Moliere were the most popular in those days, and have remained firm favourites to the present day. It is not surprising, therefore, that his plays 'L'Avocat Pateline,' 'Le Depit Amoureux', 'Le Medecin Malgre Lui', and others should have been presented at the Chandernagore Theatre. Other French dramatists were by no means neglected, however, and there are reports of presentation of plays by Regnard, Corneille, Boursant, Bollly and others such as 'Le Francais a Londres', 'Le Mercure Galant', 'Menechmes', 'Le Destrait' etc.

HIGH QUALITY OF ACTING

Every single performance was well-attended. It was not merely the Frenchmen living in the locality who would attend, but a good many residents of Calcutta too would make their way there 'inspite of the intense heat of the weather' in April and May. Perhaps one of the reasons contributing to this was the fact that the one and only theatre functioning in Calcutta at that time was in a parlous state. It seemed on the verge of closing down completely and did, in fact, shut up shop in that year, 1808. It shared the same fate as Calcutta's first theatre in being converted into an auction hall. Be that as it may, it would be doing the Chandernagore Theatre a grave injustice to suggest that this was the sole reason for its popularity, for outstanding plays of eminent dramatists were most ably presented on its boards. Never otherwise would weary citizens of Calcutta undertake the arduous journey to Chandernagore and back simply for a few hour's light entertainment. That was before the days of railways, it should be remembered. The high quality of the acting at the theatre is attested to moreover by numerous reports in the highly respected paper of that period, the 'Calcutta Gazette'. Many a time did their dramatic critic, entranced by the excellence of their standards, bestow lavish praise on some artiste or another for an outstanding piece of acting or a particularly effective dance. In the limited space at my disposal I can only mention one or two of these reviews.

On the 7th of May Moliere's play 'Le Festin de Pierre' and another play 'Le Cocu Imaginaire' were presented. Moliere had originally written his play in prose, but this had been converted to verse by Corneille. In one of the roles a girl only eleven years old held the audience spellbound with her amazing dramatic ability. Of the performance of this prodigy the 'Calcutta Gazette' of the 12th May wrote: "....a young lady of Chandernagore, not yet eleven years of age, who acted in the play a part of no inconsiderable extent with much ease and vivacity." The young artiste repeated her triumph a few days later in the role of Isabelle in Regnard's play 'Le Destrait'. Once again delighted by her superb performance the dramatic critic of the same paper wrote: "The young lady, whom we have mentioned on a former occasion, performed with much ability, the part of Isabelle, one of the principal characters of the play." Many other such reviews are to be found in the journals of that period.

I have mentioned before that this theatre functioned only for a very short while. The 'Calcutta Gazette', while announcing that Moliere's play 'Le Avare' and 'Le Mercure Galant' by Boursant were presented on the 4th of June, carried also a distressing news in regard to the theatre, which the public had not anticipated so soon. It stated that the prisoners of war would be returning home and that there would therefore be no further performance at this theatre which had become so popular with the French colonists.

It is quite easy to imagine how distressing this news must have been to the residents bot' of Chandernagore and Calcutta.

WEST BENGAL'S SECOND FIVE-YEAR PLAN

(Continued From Page 30)

not be attended to in the First Plan. With an increased allotment by the Planning Commission than that we estimated, it would now be possible to extend universal basic education for children in the age group of 6-14. Work will commence in an extensive area of 100 to 120 villages in each district where a Basic Training College will be a Central institution around which most of the primary and junior high schools will be gradually converted into Basic Schools. In the Second Plan Period, significant changes are contemplated in the secondary stage of education. About 250 Secondary Schools will be converted into multipurpose school. Some of these schools would also be upgraded to Higher Grade Schools with provision for the 11th class.

Adequate provision has also been made for the promotion and improvement of University education, technical and commercial education and Social Education. Number of Social Education Centres would be suitably increased and there will be a District Library in each district, not yet covered, Branch libraries in Sub-Divisions and village libraries in selected areas.

MEDICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH

The schemes for improvement of medical and public health services in the State during the Second Plan period aim at, among other things, extending medical facilities in urban and rural areas. The work of improvement of hospitals would be carried further and training programme for doctors, compounders, nurses and midwives has been provided for.

350 more Health Centres are proposed to be established in the State during the Second Plan period. The bed strength of the Infectious Diseases Hospital would be raised, the T. B. Hospitals at Kanchrapara and Digri will be extended and considerable improvement will be effected in the Nilratan Sircar and Calcutta Dental Hospitals.

Other schemes include, improvement of Pharmacy training, expansion of Nursing Service, establishment of a Department of Preventive and Social Medicine in the Medical College etc. It is also proposed to establish a 200-bed Mental Hospital in the State during the Second Plan period.

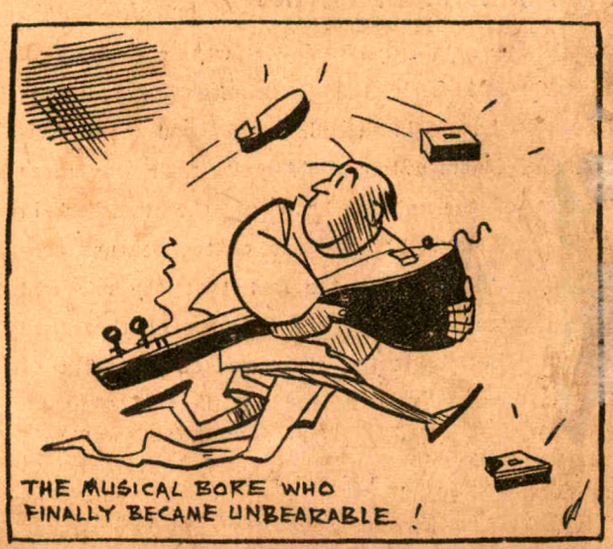
The Public Health Schemes included in the Second Five-Year Plan comprise in the promotion of maternity and child welfare, improvement of School Hygiene, to raise the standard of nutrition, campaigns against Malaria, Filaria, T.B., Leprosy etc. During the Second Plan period, it is proposed to establish 14 more chest clinics, establishment of a 600-bed Leprosy colony and 30 Leprosy clinics and a number of Anti-Leprosy Treatment cum Study Centres.

IMPROVING HOUSING CONDITION

Adequate provision has also been made in the Second Plan for improving the housing condition in the State Work taken up in the First Plan will be pursued and a number of new schemes will be taken up to solve the problem of housing in the State.

Besides, West Bengal's Second Five-Year Plan provides for further improvement of the condition of working classes and tribal people.

For the successful working of the State's First Five-Year Plan and having a distinctive Plan for it for the next five years for which he has made tremendous efforts, West Bengal's indebtedness to her Chief Minister, Dr. B. C. Roy, knows no limit. He is leaving no stone unturned to bring happiness to the people of this truncated State and has earned admiration of all for the herculean nature of the job he has already done and for the remarkable progress of the various development plans. The installation of the third steel plant in this State on which decision has been final is one of his other great achievements. May West Bengal play her part well in the coming five years towards the execution of the Second Plan.



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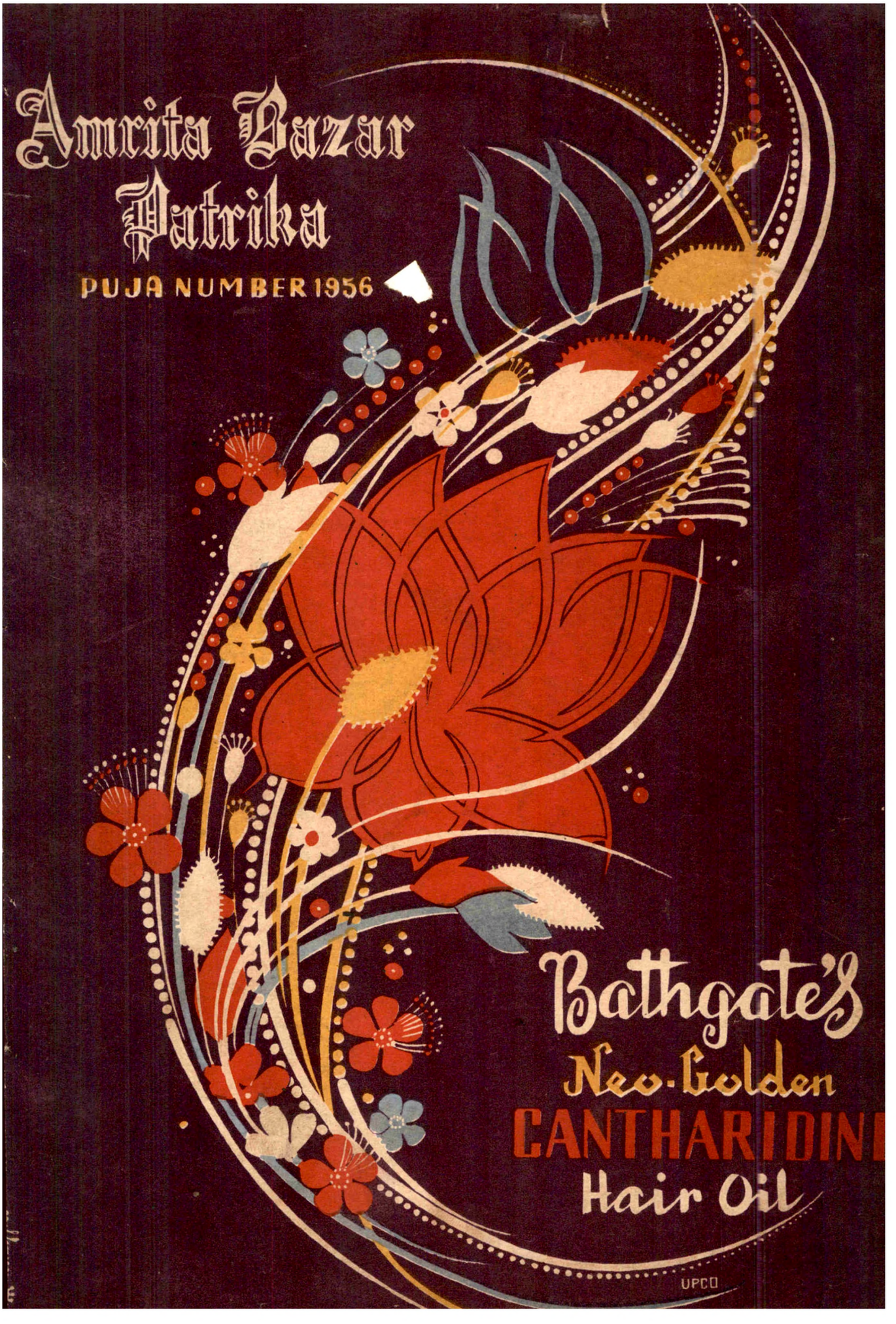

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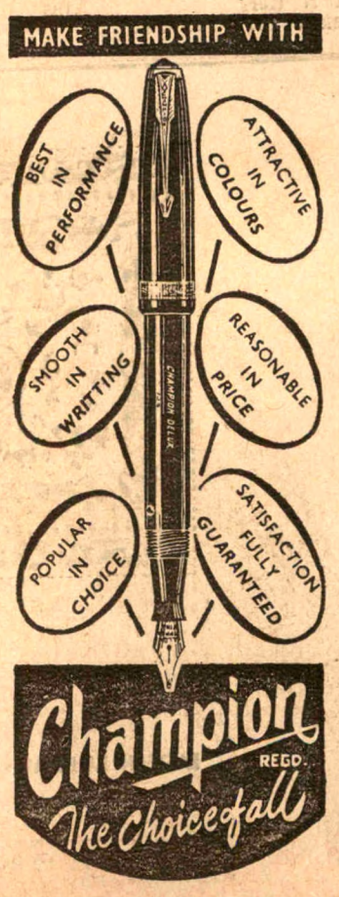

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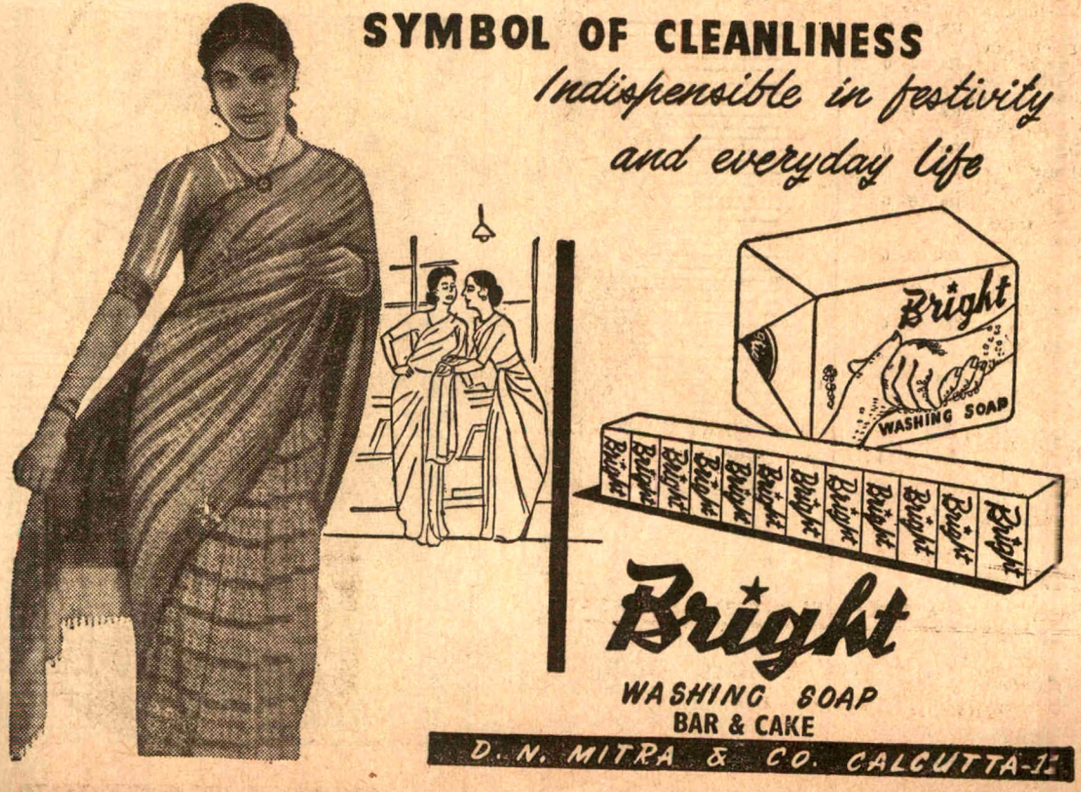

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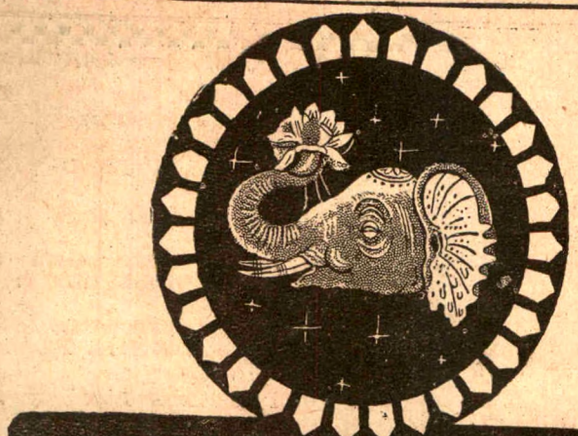

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MANIFESTATIONS OF CHANDIKA

By DR. MAHANAMBRATA BRAHMACHARI

CHANDIKA, the Divine Mother, embodies in Herself the multifarious modes of life. All contradictions merge in Her dynamic personality. She is tranquil and turbulent, serene and fierce, *soumya* and *roudra* at the same time. She is serene like the azure sky but boisterous like the thunderbolt.

Etymologically, Chandika means vehement. She is an affectionate Mother but a frantic Killer. Her all-embracing motherlines makes her intolerant of those who are inimically disposed towards Her human and divine children. With all Her might does She destroy the demon of darkness that hinders the evolution of Her creation and the revelation of the Divine Light.

The *Tantras* maintain that Chandika is the queen-consort (*Patta Mahishi*) of the Absolute Brahman, meaning thereby that She is the Supreme Energy and Absolute Being — the Agent. For the purpose of creation the Absolute Being divides Itself into two — *Siva* and *Sakti*. They are essentially identical but functionally different. For the object of creation, preservation and destruction She assumes triune forms: Maha-Kalika, Maha-Lakshmi and Maha-Saraswati.

The digest of Tantric literatures is to be found in the celebrated book called *Chandi* or *Saptasati* (a book of seven hundred stanzas). The three aspects of the Mother are the presiding deities of the three sections called *Charitras* of the *Saptasati*.

HOW SHE REVEALS HERSELF

To begin with, the story of the revelation of Chandika is told to Suratha Raja and Samadhi Vaisya by the Guru, the Seer Medhas. Both the

Chandi and the *Bhagbat Geeta* start with wars. The war of the *Geeta* lies in the actual battlefield of Kurukshetra whereas that of the *Chandi* is the internal war of the psychical and super-psychological plane. It is pre-eminently *Sadhan-Samar*, as has been aptly named by a seer of modern days.

After the introductory setting the actual discourse of the *Saptasati* begins with a time that goes beyond the beginning of creation. Creation in Hindu scriptures is always a cyclic process. The scene, therefore, depicted before the dawn of creation is invariably one of all-swallowing inundation, the Ocean being symbolic to primordial causal state.

SHE IS YOGA-NIDRA

The Vedas begin with one Great Purusha with a desire to be many. The Tantra goes deeper. With Purusha it starts, to be sure, but having no desire or action. The Purusha, in the *Saptasati*, rests in deep slumber. He is existent and non-existent at the same time, so to say. Who does then exist in that nocturnal abyss of complete silence ? She is the *Yoga-nidra*, the great motherly energy that upholds the Cosmic Sleep, the Maha-Kalika, who embosoms even the Supreme Purusha Vishnu and reigns over all that is or was or will ever be.

SHE IS MAHA-KALIKA

On the navel lotus, the centre of creative vibration of Vishnu, is seated the Creative Energy, embodied in Brahma, the Logos, *Sabda Brahma*, lost in the contemplation of the new creation to dawn. Madhu and Kaitabha, the two principles — *Rajas* and *Tamas* — Passion and Ignorance, that bring friction to Cosmic motion, came out of Vishnu and aimed at destroying the creative meditation, personified in the Logos Brahma. He was to awaken Vishnu and with that end in view sang a panegyrical hymn to eulogise Maha-Kalika and implored Her earnestly and reverently to give up Her hold on Supreme Purusha Vishnu. She did accordingly relinquish Him and appeared before Brahma who witnessed Her all-veiling existence. This is Maha-Kalika.

APPEARS AS MAHA-LAKSHMI

In the Madhya Charita of the holy *Saptasati* the manifestation of the Maha-Lakshmi is symbolically depicted. In the course of the eternal warfare of the Devas and the Asuras, the former being defeated, the latter reigned supreme in the heavenly domain. Brahma led a commission of the Gods to Vishnu and Shiva and craved for redemption.

Vishnu resented and trembled wrathfully. For the vindication of the divine rights brilliant flames of fury oozed out of His forehead and dazzled objectively. Affected by similar feelings glares of effulgent light came out of the bodies of Shiva, Brahma and rest of the Deities. All the rays of light were united, integrated and transformed into a glorious Motherly Figure of Pure Excellence. This is Maha-Lakshmi, the transcending reality becoming emanant.

To visualise Her is to view the Universe at a glance. In Maha-Kalika all the objects are latent, in Maha-Lakshmi all the details are patent. In Her the Universe is manifested in its entirety. From the epistemological viewpoint the vision of Viswarupa of the *Bhagbat Geeta* and that of Maha-Lakshmi of the *Chandi* seem to be identical — comprehension of unity in diversity.

AS MAHA-SARASWATI

The third manifestation of the Divine Mother, Maha-Saraswati, is pictured in the *Uttar Charit*, as its presiding Deity. The Mahasakti was for the third time invoked by the Devas, who were oppressed by the twin demons, Sumbha and Nisumbha. Maha-Saraswati emanated from the person of Maha-Lakshmi as the element of pure *Sattwa* predominated.

In the tenth chapter, the demon king Sumbha entered the battle field, shorn of all his co-fighters. He beheld Chandika, surrounded by many matronly figures, the Deities, siding Her to help fighting. That She should fight alone was the condition precedent and its violation provoked the opponent.

"Stop boasting of your false arrogance. Why neglect the essential condition and hire these demigods ?" exclaimed the demon grudgingly. "Alone do I stand and none seconds Me under the Sun", came the reply serene and sound, from the Mahasakti. And no sooner did She finish and the demon gazed agape than the truth was translated into a sublime demonstration under his very nose.

The myriads of goddesses moved to touch Her Person and instantaneously merged in Her all-absorbing Existence even as the rivers lose themselves in the sea. All disappeared by merging in Her and alone She stood, all by Herself, the Great Mother Ambika, as the Supreme embodiment of the underlying substratum of the Universe — Maha-Saraswati, the culmination of the Cosmic process.

THE THREE IN ONE

Mahakali may be conceived of as the snow-clapped mountains where the rivers exist potentially. Maha-Lakshmi is the plains where the rivers dance to flow in innumerable channels. Maha-Saraswati is the ocean where they all reach and merge and complete their journey for good.

Maha-Kalika is infra-red, light unmanifested, appearing dark to onlookers. Maha-Lakshmi is the entirety of variegated colour spectrum, having manifold vibratory expressions. Maha-Saraswati is the Ultra-violet, most dazzling of all rays, visible only to expert eyes, aided by the instrumentality of human *Sadhana* and Divine *Karuna*.

Today, a diabolic mentality stands out predominant in our individual, social, national and international life. This mentality thrives on the lack of a unifying vision. May our Matri-Puja become fruitful in endowing us with the realisation of Unity-in-multiplicity and may the demoniac spirit in us die out like darkness before the Solar Deity.

DURGA PUJA IN ASSAM

By HEM BARUA

THE worship of Durga in her ten-armed (*Dasa-Bhuja*) image, which is an accepted ritual in M.P., U.P., Bihar and Orissa, is a later-day introduction into the religious history of Mongoloid Assam.

It is seen that the *Saptasati Chandi* gives a fine account of Goddess Durga's physical composition in terms of the different aspects of the All-Powerful. Her feet, for instance, represent the dynamic power of the creative principle of life as embodied by Brahma,—their posture, it is seen, are not static. They are on the move, suddenly halted. Her hands in a similar way stand for preservation. This principle of preservation as suggested by the *dasa bhujas* of the Goddess is the very essence of Vishnu's power. Besides, they signify a deeper power also; that is that of the wheel of ever-lasting motion in the process of Time and Space. In a similar way the description of the rest of her body, as given in the above treatise, is imbued with a deep spiritual significance.

Besides, in the *Saptasati Chandi*, there are references to the worship of Goddess Durga in the *Markandeya Purana* also; the one in the former is the earliest of its kind. The latter records the story of king Suratha who worshipped an earthen image of Durga for three years; on this occasion, it is said, he chanted the *Rig Vedic* hymns *i.e.* the *Vaksukta* or the *Devisukta*. The subsequent worship of the Goddess in the present form is a derivation from these sources on the ritualistic aspects of it. The Aryans consolidated the local Sakti-cults, as in Assam, into the Durga-cult as incorporated in the Vedas. The worship of Durga or the Primordial Energy is mentioned in different books of the *Mahabharata* Epic as well. And this aspect of Sakti is described as *Prakriti* in most of the *Tantric* literature, and ancient Assam is rich in this. Dr. S. K. Chatterji says about it thus :

> ".. .. .. the Kamakhya shrine in Kamarupa had become already established as an important centre of Tantric worship (both Buddhist and Hinduistic), according to "Hevajra Tantra" (8th century A.D.) and the 'Kalika Purana' and "Yogini Tantra" (which was probably composed in Assam, as a later day work, certainly composed or compiled after 1000 A.D., and probably later still) already exto) Assam as a land where Sakta Tantricism was fully established."

WHEN & HOW IT CAME?

When is it and how is it that the Durga Puja came to Assam? It is true that ancient Assam was the spring-board of the Sakti-cult, and the wide-spread popularity of Kamakhya holds testimony to this fact. It was only in later times, as pointed out in the *Kalika Purana* and the *Yogini Tantra*, that this Goddess underwent certain transformations and came to be identified with different aspects of Durga *i.e.* Parvati, Tara and Tripura Sundari in the main. For one thousand years after Narakasura who is credited with helping the growth of a sort of Indo-Mongoloid cultural synthesis in ancient Kamarupa, Kamakhya is said to have remained in the eclipse. The age of Bhaskar Varma, during whose rule the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang visited this country (7th century A.D.) was one of Saivism; the Sakti-cult, as a matter of fact, suffered temporary fade-out during this rule of the Varman dynasty. This being so, when is it that the Durga-cult came to forefront in Assam? The earliest historical record of how Kamakhya was accepted as Durga is evident in the inscription of king Naranarayan of the Koches who built here a temple in 1565 A.D. after the original one suffered destruction in the hands of Muslim invaders. A part of the inscription reads as follows :

> ".. .. .. he (Naranarayan) is as bright as Kandarpa, he is a worshipper of Kamakhya. His brother Sukladev built this temple of bright stones on the Nila hillock, for the worship of the Goddess Durga, in 1487 'Sak' (1565 A.D.)".

ASSAM-BENGAL TIES

For the last one thousand years or so, Durga worship, as it is, has held its sway in Bengal; it is difficult to say when is it or how is it that Durga worship in the clay image of the present came into vogue there. In the case of Assam, it is different. It is definitely a product of Assam's cultural relation with her neighbour Bengal; the initial contact in this respect was during the latter part of the Ahom rule in this country. That was under the Ahom king Rudra Singha, aptly described by Dr. S. K. Chatterji as the "Sivaji of Eastern India"; he ruled the country from 1691 to 1714. The next historical contact

that was naturally of a wider scope was during the British rule. The first wave of cultural contact during the rule of the Ahoms was under the auspices of the Brahmin priests that were from time to time imported into the religious life of this country. The second wave manifested itself under the auspices of those people from Bengal who came with British rulers to this country as a part of their administrative machinery. The colourful ceremony of the Durga Puja initiated by them here created a climate of active interest for the people in this country. The easy and constant intercourse with Cooch Behar and other North-Bengal districts which constituted the ancient kingdom of Kamarupa, made cultural exchanges quicker and more comprehensive in spirit.

From ancient times, Kamarupa is considered as one of the three principal *Sakti-pithas* in India. When the worship of Durga was in slow degrees introduced into it, the assimilation of the two identical Sakti forces into a consolidated pattern was easier of accomplishment. The fact that "a Hinduised Indo-Mongoloid empire", as pointed out by Dr. S. K. Chatterji, "was thus achieved during the middle of the 7th century A.D." proves that the Hindu path already paved itself to a large extent for the ultimate attainment of the goal; the later-day introduction of the Durga Puja is a milestone in this cultural development in the way of a process of synthesis.

VAISHNAVISM VS. SAKTAISM

Saktaism suffered a temporary set-back here in Assam due to the widespread popularity of Vaishnavism (15th-16th century) under the auspices of Sri Sankardev. It was in the true sense of the term a religion of the people that lived and sustained itself on the sap that it drew from the people. The royal patronage of the time extended to Vaishnavism was haphazard and slip-shod while that extended to Saktaism was whole-hearted and fired with a deep passion. History has it that the Ahom king Sukhampha (1552-1603) despatched his Buragohain (Minister) to sue for peace with Chilarai of great military fame in Cooch Behar. The Minister visited the capital city of the Koch kingdom, and it is said: "a number of Koch artisans accompanied the Ahom hostages on their return to their country. Amongst them were potters skilled in the art of making images of Durga and other Hindu deities." (Sir E. A. Gait).

The policy of persecution resorted to by King Gadadhara Singha (1681-1696) on the Vaishnavas and their *gossains* (spiritual heads) had its natural effect The reasons for this persecution were two: (1) the king sincerely believed that Vaishnavism produced a dissipating effect on the people. This is because, as he thought, it abjured meat and wine and thus helped to de-vitalise the people, (2) the king had some personal reasons also for inflicting this persecution on the *gossains*. The Vaishnava priests, except the one of the Jakhalabandha Satra (monastery), refused him shelter when he was in exile for some time, before ascending the throne. This being so, the Brahmin priests who did not accept Vaishnavism as it was a religion initiated by a Sudra *i.e.* Sri Sankardev, left no stones unturned to impress upon the king the necessity of extending royal patronage to Saktaism as manifested in the worship of Goddesses Durga and Kali in the main. They said this stood for robustness and vigour, and this is how the ground was skilfully prepared by these Brahmin priests for the ready acceptance of Durga worship in this country.

PRIEST FROM SANTIPUR

On the death of Gadadhar Singha, Rudra Singha (1696-1714) became the next Ahom king. This king was of liberal views and of advanced mind. He encouraged cultural contact with the rest of India, and sent envoys to places of cultural and religious interests. He invited artificers from Bengal; of them, Ghanasyam who built the Siva temple at Sibsagar, is the most noteworthy. He invited Krishnaram Bhattacharyya, a well-known Sakta priest from Santipur (Bengal). It is to this priest naturally goes the honour of popularising the present form of Durga worship here in Assam. Rudra Singha who was already ordained in the Vaishnava faith refused to be re-ordained in the Sakta faith ordained by this priest from Bengal. The priest was duly rewarded with gifts of gold and silver, and he started back homewards *i.e.* to Bengal. As he went, miraculously enough, a heavy earthquake shook the country from the one end to the other. The Sakta priests, at this, left no time to impress upon the king that this natural catastrophe was due to this unwarranted dishonour shown to the Sakta priest from Bengal. The priest was immediately called back. When he came, it is true that king Rudra Singha refused to be formally initiated into his creed of Saktaism; he, of course, compensated this refusal with social status and money gifts made to the priest and his followers. Prince Siva Singha who ultimately succeeded his father to the throne was ordained into the Sakta creed of Krishnaram Bhattacharyya. Other princes like Pramatha Singha and Rajeswar Singha also got initiated into this new faith. This is how Durga worship came to this country on the one hand, and, on the other hand, led to a continued conflict between religious faiths, Saktaism and Vaishnavism, and disturbed the prospect of consolidated peace for the rest of the Ahom rule.

QUEEN POPULARIZES PUJA

Siva Singha's Queen Phuleswari was originally a dancing girl of matchless beauty attached to a temple; she was a *devadasi*. It was in spite of staunch opposition from court nobles that Siva Singha took her as his consort. Ultimately, because of her beauty and talents, this dancing girl came to be the main power behind the throne, and Siva Singha was willy-nilly reduced to the position of a titular figure-head. The Queen virtually became the *Bar Raja* (Ruler-in-Chief). The royal power was formally handed over to her by her husband in 1772 and coins were printed in her name. This was because of an omen which was interpreted by the Brahmin priests as meaning absolute ruination of the empire if the king held power any more; the Sakta priests wanted Queen Phuleswari on their side to fulfil their aspirations. As she got absolute power, in consultation with these priests she organised a

(*Continued On Page 32*)

BUDDHISM IN CHINA

By Dr. SUNITI KUMAR CHATTERJEE

Chairman, West Bengal Legislative Council

IN spite of numerous points of contrast which we see in the life of China vis-a-vis that of India, these two countries nevertheless present some fundamental points of agreement as well. The contrasts relating to the life and ways of India and China are due basically to the racial background and composition of the two peoples. China is more homogeneous racially than India. The basic element in the Chinese people is Mongoloid, and racially the Chinese are the immediate brothers and cousins of the Siamese, the Burmese, the Tibetans and allied peoples and tribes. In China, however, particularly in the Yang-tsze-Kiang valley and the regions to the south of it, there was a people who occupied the country before the Chinese proper from Hong-Ho valley pushed south and gradually absorbed them. In this way, there was a substratum of pre-Chinese people in the centre and south of China. These pre-Chinese people are believed to have belonged to the great Austric race which at one time spread over the whole of Eastern, Southern and South-Eastern Asia, from north-west India through the Ganges valley into Burma and Indo-China and central and southern China. But owing to this racial substratum there are some noteworthy contrasts in character and temperament between the present-day Chinese of the north and the Chinese of the centre and the south. On the whole, China presents a remarkable homogeneity of culture and mentality, the result of nearly 3,000 years of co-operation among all sections of the Chinese in evolving the same type of culture. India, on the other hand, is a land of many races and languages. But in India also there has been a racial fusion scarcely paralleled anywhere else in the world. Atleast four main groups of people with their diverse racial types, languages and cultures have been fused to form the Indian people of history. These four were the dark Austrics, the brown Dravidians, the yellow Sino-Tibetans (a branch of the same race which we find in China), and finally the white Aryans, a section of the great Indo-European speaking people who are the dominant people of the West. The *Indian Man* evolved by about 1,000 B. C. through racial intermingling of these peoples. There has been a common element through the Austrics and the Tibeto-Chinese whom we find both in India and China. The points of cultural agreement and mental attitude may be due to certain common racial elements, which are dominant in one country and subdued in the other.

Some fundamental concepts were thus to be noted among peoples of these two countries. There was, for example, a belief in the conception of a Cosmic Law or Order which is both immanent and transcendent, - what may be called a Divine Stuff or Essence which suffuses every facet of existence : this is called *Tao* in China and *Rita* or *Dharma* or *Brahman* or *Paramatman* in India, and this is also known as *Mana* among the Polyesians who are t easternmost offshoot of the Austrics. The notion this *Tao* or *Rita* was helpful in establishing in Chi some of the fundamental concepts of Mahaya Buddhism which were quite akin to the basic ide of the Brahmanical Vedanta. Then, again, there w a conception of a dual force working in the Univers In India this is known as *Purusha* a *Prakriti*, and in China as *Yang* and *Yin*, and conceives Life and Universe as being due to t interaction of these two forces, positive a negative, forces of light and darkness, of sun a shade, forces of activity and passivity. So, in th way we may say that there was a prehistoric con mon base which embraced in the domain spiritual ideas both India and China.

EMERGENCE OF BUDDHISM

When Buddhism came to China, the Chine mind found in it something which was not contra to its own most profound conceptions. Of cours there was something quite novel also whic Buddhism brought to China. And among these ne things were Universal Love and Charity for a living beings, and Self-discipline through a rigid moral life. The other matters less fundamenta referred to organisation and discipline of the com munity as a whole. Buddhism as it developed i India within the Indian *milieu* came to China at time when in that country the deeper spiritual lif had receded into the background. The philosoph of Confucius which had as its basis the philosophi notions relating to *Tao* and *Teh*, i.e., the Way (o Law) and Virtue, had developed itself along th lines of a practical and a more or less mundan philosophy, which had as its ideal the creation o good, virtuous and law-abiding citizens. It was no interested in the basic and deeper things of exis tence. Confucianism was on the surface, and no profound enough. The lofty philosophy and mysti cism of Taoism was at that time thrown into th background, and the Taoistic philosophic system had degenerated into practice of magic, exorcism and search for the elixir of life. Buddhism came at the psychological moment, and with its sense of sorrow and suffering in life which it took up as its duty to remove, its love and active goodwill for all creatures and its system of thought which went to the funda mentals, had an immediate appeal for both the masses and the elite. With Buddhism also came

art and imaginativeness, and gorgeous pageantry of ritual and imposing ceremonials, which attracted the love for the spectacular in ordinary people.

When exactly Buddhism entered China is a matter of speculation, The usual story is that the Chinese Emperor Ming Ti of the eastern Han dynasty who flourished circa 50-75 A.D. had a dream of a human personality of golden hue, who appeared in the western sky. After investigation in the matter, it was thought that the Emperor had a vision of Buddha. Central Asia was already largely Buddhist, and through the interest of the Emperor two Indian monks came to China and they were received by the Emperor at his capital Lo-yang. These monks were Kasyapa Matanga and Gobharana (or Dharmaraksha) and they are now known in modern China as Chia-yeh Motang and Chu Fa-lan. They brought a number of Sanskrit books and images which were carried by a white horse. To commemorate this event, a monastery was built at Lo-yang, which was named Pai-ma-ssie or "the white horse temple," which still exists. These two scholars started to translate Indian Buddhist texts into Chinese, and in this way they began a tradition of rendering Buddhist texts into Chinese which continued for some 1400 years.

FIRST INDO-CHINA CONTACT

Some scholars however, have thought that contact between India and China began even before Christian times. It was probably as old as the fourth century B. C., and certain Indian notions and ideas influenced China already in the centuries just before Christ. The appeal of the new religion, particularly after books on Buddha and Buddhism became available in their own languages, to the Chinese became immediate and irresistible.

It was, however, not smooth sailing always. The followers of the national religion in its two forms, Confucianism and Taoism, naturally did not like a foreign creed to capture the minds and hearts of the Chinese people. The resistance to this foreign Buddhist doctrines and practices started soon, and the scholars trained in the Confucian ideal were sometimes exceedingly hostile. There were ups and downs in the progress of Buddhism. Taoism, while fighting Buddhism, took over many of the ideas and practices from the foreign faith. However, the Chinese mind like the Indian is exceedingly tolerant in religious matters, and there started very early in China a movement, widely supported by the people, to harmonise the native or national religions with Buddhism, and later on with Christianity and Islam when these reached China. What has happened in the course of the centuries was that Buddhism entered into the very marrow bone of Chinese civilisation and Chinese life. People in China may be professing Buddhism formally, and ardent Buddhists may be taking pride in the Buddhist name. But the ordinary Chinese is a Buddhist, at least in some aspects of his life, without openly professing or exclusively practising it.

A man is a Confucian, Taoist and a Buddhist all at the sametime. People who are looked upon as scholars in the Confucian tradition may express apathy or even contempt for Buddhism, because in its popular side it has some ideas and practice which are foolish, as we find in any religion in the world. But even such a sceptically minded person takes help from Taoist priests when illness or some calamity befalls the family, to placate the benefi-cent gods and to drive away the spirits and forces of evil. When a Chinese person dies, unless he is a Christian or a Muslim, Buddhist monks who act as priests are invariably called, and they perform the funeral rituals with full Buddhist ceremonials, in which reading from Buddhist Sutras takes an important place.

RELIGION IN RED CHINA

At the present day in Communist China the attitude to religion is changing, and people are becoming apathetic or careless with regard to religion in any form. But Chinese people, men and women, would enter monasteries as monks and nuns, and sometime little children were dedicated to monasteries by their parents ultimately to become monks and nuns. The position of Buddhism is fairly strong in China even today. The Government of the People's Republic of China is not putting any difficulties on the score of religion before its people. Chinese Buddhists can perform their religious rites without any opposition from anywhere. Only the ordination into monkhood of minor children is not allowed. The Government is now repairing and maintaining existing Buddhist temples and buildings as works of national archaeological importance. Publications on Buddhist art are fully encouraged.

In China, the basic form of Buddhism, of course, is Mahayana. The ideas of the Mahayana Buddhism is very different from that of the Hinayana or Pali or southern Buddhism. Mahayana Buddhism has become a system of thought which has many points in agreement with Brahmanical theistic religion. Both Jnana or Knowledge and Bhakti or Devotion as well as Ascetic Practices (Yoga) feature in Mahayana. There is a belief in the concept of an Adi-Buddha, comparable with the Hindu concept of the Brahman or Paramaatman. The Buddhas are innumerable in number, and the historical Buddha, Gautama Siddharta Buddha, is specially honoured, and the Chinese refer to him as Sakyamuni Buddha (Sa-chia Mu-ni Fo). The most popular Boddhisattava is also the most popular divinity for the whole of China. Avalokitesvara or Avalokita-Svara (i.e., he who sees or listens to the voice) was taken to China with other members of the Buddhist pantheon. Avalokitesvara refused to obtain Bodhi or Supreme Wisdom and thus to pass into *Nirvana* or Release because he was affected by the voice of sorrowful wailing (svara) of all creatures which he listened to and observed (*Avalokita*), when they appealed to him to take pity on their plight and stay on and help them to obtain salvation. Out of mercy for suffering living beings, Avalokitesvara decided to defer entering *Nirvana* until everybody was saved. For this great act of pity, he was looked upon as a visible incarnation or epitome of mercy. In China there was a great Mother Goddess, known as

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WEAPON OF SATYAGRAHA AS ENVISAGED BY GANDHIJI: DANGERS OF ITS ABUSE

By B. G. KHER

INDIA has recently attained independence, and we have given ourselves a Constitution which guarantees to all citizens justice, —social, economic and political; and also liberty of thought and expression of belief, faith and worship, equality of status and of opportunity, assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation. The fundamental rights are assured to us and defined. It is, therefore, right and proper that corresponding to the rights of the citizen he should have duties and obligations. Obedience to Law is the first of such duties and allegiance to the State, payment of taxes, the proper exercise of franchise are others.

RULE VS. OBEDIENCE

Democracy is said to be the Government of the people, by the people and for the people. The term "Government" implies in the essence that some individual or individuals, however chosen, should rule and the rest of the community, for however long or however willingly, should obey. When the whole community ceases to obey, Government ends. The only result is that a fresh Government has to be set up. When one is formed, people must consent to obey. But rule on the one hand and obedience on the other there must be. What then is the meaning of the phrase "Government of the people, by the people and for the people ?"

Modern communities express 'the general will' of society through the exercise of the legislative power by its duly-constituted organs of authority. Therefore, regulation of the land in which we live should have a final and ultimate sanction. This would be so particularly in democracies wherein the exercise of such legislative authority is definitely related to the wishes of the majority of the people comprising the community. Even if one should happen to belong to the minority which does not accept the majority views, normally it is only right and proper that one should defer to the majority opinion as the necessary price that one must pay for belonging to the community. In this context, however, the significant questions arise not with reference to the vast majority of occasions for the vast majority of people but with reference to the exceptional occasion and in the context of the very small number of rare persons who may find themselves under necessity of having to disobey the injunctions of the laws.

WHEN TO DISOBEY

No one has written and spoken more about the ethics, method, justification and limitations of the duty or right to disobey the law of a State, in modern times than Mahatma Gandhi. Such disobedience can either be individual or by the mass. In either case, the first condition that Mahatma insisted upon was the purity of both end and means. Now we all know that Gandhiji described truth as his God and non-violence as inseparable from it. In a manifesto issued on the 10th March, 1920, he described non-violent non-co-operation which is a prior state to actual civil disobedience :

> *"Now a word as to what may be done if the demands are not granted. The barbarous method is warfare, open or secret. This must be ruled out, if only because it is impracticable. If I could but persuade every one that it is always bad, we should gain all lawful ends much quicker. The power that an individual or a nation for swearing violence can generate is a power that is irresistible. But my argument today against violence in based upon pure expedience, its utter futility. Non-co-operation is, therefore, the only remedy left open to us. It is the clearest remedy, as it is the most effective, when it is absolutely free from all violence. It becomes a duty when co-operation means degradation or humiliation, or an injury to one's cherished religious sentiment."*

METHODS TO DISOBEY

Referring to his methods of opposing the will of Government, he said in April 1920 ;

> *"I believe that it is possible to introduce uncompromising truth and honesty in the political life of the country. I would strain every nerve to make truth and non-violence accepted in all our national activities Then we shall cease to fear or distrust Government and their measures.'*

He coined the word "Satyagraha" for his method. On 10th September, 1935 he wrote, *"The statement that I had derived my idea of Civil Disobedience from the writings of Thoreau is wrong. The resistance to authority in South Africa was well advanced before I got the essay of Thoreau on Civil Disobedience. But the movement was then known as passive resistance. As it was incomplete I had coined the word "Satyagraha" for the Gujarati readers. But I found that even 'Civil Disobedience' failed to convey the full meaning of the struggle. I therefore adopted the phrase "Civil Resistance." So we see that in highly morally evolved persons their number is, alas !, very small—who have got rid of their own selfishness and maliciousness (both common and even inherent in humanity) by imposing rules of conduct upon themselves a feeling of obligation or duty is created to choose between several possible acts. It is this moral sense which made Socrates choose the duty to drink the hemlock."*

SENSE OF MORAL LAW

It is this sense of duty which was at the bottom of the doctrine of "Civil Disobedience" that Mahatma Gandhi preached and practised with such phenomenal results—even during the short span of his own personal life. There resides in every indivi-

dual a sense of right and wrong, a sense of good and evil, a sense of the moral law, which from the point of view of the individual, is called his conscience. There may arise occasions when an individual may want to and may be right in setting at naught all man-made laws under the compelling injunctions of his own conscience, that is to say, his sense of loyalty to the moral law. It was this right of disobedience that Gandhiji invoked with reference to the foreign power which ruled over us and made laws. Those laws were designed for the purpose of perpetuating their rule.

WHERE ONE MAY NOT DISOBEY

It is not necessary for me to expatiate how foreign rule is detrimental to the best interests of the individuals in the society subject to such rule. A good part of the laws and regulations of the foreign ruling authority are designed for safeguarding and perpetuating itself, and not in the best interests of the society concerned, and naturally occasions for disobeying them are likely to be more numerous. This state of affairs must, however, be distinguished from that which obtains in a genuine self-governing democratic community where democratic processes are not vitiated by force, fraud or tyranny as happened during Nazi and Fascist regimes in Europe. The normal presumption would be that the laws operative in democratically governed societies are made for the well-being of its constituents : where sectional interests happen to conflict, the laws would have been framed to subserve the general weal. In such circumstances, the occasion for disobedience of the laws would be much fewer.

WHEN ONE MAY DISOBEY

Also it is imperative that anybody who considers himself under compulsion of his conscience to disobey the laws in such a society must have, by rigorous discipline, made himself pure and wholly unselfish. Human judgments are apt to be clouded and warped by all manner of mists and fogs, and 'refractions' of the vision originating from unconscious and subconscious levels. We all know how sub-conscious states of mind are apt to colour the opinions and judgments of an individual in spite of every effort on his part to reach honest conclusions. Having regard to all this in reasonably well-ordered democratic communities, it would only be in the most, exceptional circumstances that the truthful and non-violent man with unerring perspicacity and vision, who, for the highest reasons of public good would consider himself compelled to disobey the law. And then he will do so when all other remedies have failed and after due warning with a view to convert the adversary by inviting self-suffering—his emphasis is not on defiance but on conversion by suffering.

DANGERS TO FREE INDIA

I wonder what the Father of the Nation and the inventor of Satyagraha will think when he knows how it is now a weapon freely used by dismissed employees, failed candidates, all and sundry, for redressing their grievances and obeying their conscience. The dangers of the abuse of this weapon are familiar to all by now. They are particularly grave in this country with its political freedom only 8 years old, its religious, communal, linguistic and other divisions threatening the life of the nation itself. They can only delight the heart of the enemies of India. I have stated very briefly the circumstances in which disobedience of the laws and a breach of the normal canons of patriotic duty might, or ought not, to be resorted to.

Patriotism, which is a very complex feeling built out of primitive instincts and intellectual convictions with a religious element mixed up in them, can never take the place of the supreme moral law or of religion. It lacks universality. The good at which it aims at is a good for one's own nation only, not for all mankind. So it is said "a world full of patriots may be a world full of strifes." Do we not find this to be now ?

BUDDHISM IN CHINA

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Hsi-Wang Mu, who was also the loving Mother of Mankind. In China, this ancient goddess and the new Boddhisattva from India coalesced, and as a result we have a composite deity who has been named Kuan-Yin (which means Listen-Voice, and is a Chinese translation of Avalokita-svara); and Kuan-yin is universally worshipped as a Bodhissatva of mercy who is at the same time the loving mother of all. The God has been transformed into a goddess. She is thus the Chinese counter-part of the Roman Catholic Virgin Mary and the Hindu Uma or Durga, the Mother of the Universe. There are numerous other gods and goddesses who are found in the Chinese Buddhist pantheon for the masses, and we see the worship of them everywhere.

Buddhist temples and pagodas abound everywhere in China, and some of them are rich treasuries of art. Chinese Buddhists have a number of most eminent scholars among them who know deeply the history and the philosophy of their religion. Buddhism Ju-lai is still a living force, and the average Chinese person is a devoted disciple of the great Ju-lai or Tathagata. They connect India with all that is great and good and noble in the spiritual world. A pilgrimage to India was looked upon as something worth many years of one's life in the olden days. For over 1000 years we have had a most remarkable instance of international cooperation in the intellectual and spiritual sphere through the work of Indian Buddhist writers and scholars going to China and Chinese scholars like Fa-Hien, Song-Yun, Hiuen-Tsang, and I-Tsing coming to India. China took a lot from India — philosophy and religion, art and literature, and some of the sciences too, like grammar and phonetics. But this Sino-Indian contact through Buddhism was not a one-way traffic. India also in her turn took a lot from China, and this is a matter in which investigations have scarcely started. In China there is plenty of materials for research. This is almost a virgin field, and it will be seen how the Indian mind was enriched by contact with China.

THE DIVINE MOTHER

UP AND DOWN THE LADDER OF TIME WITH DADABHAI NAOROJI

By St. NIHAL SINGH

TRANQUILLITY had seemingly triumphed. With his squall-making bellows Vayu, the storm-brewer, had turned tail and fled. The long, curving, vivid green palm fronds had ceased to thrash about. All heave had gone out of the Bay of Bombay's breast, alongside which India's Grand Old Man — Dadabhai Naoroji — was anchored. With the departure of the tide the agitation caused by the Wind-god's passionate wooing was leaving. Every split second the shadows cast by vegetation that, by some miracle of Nature, luxuriently uprose from quintillions of sand particles, were losing their wavy effect. Any moment they would be preening their perfectly mirrored images in the still, silver sea-surface.

Ardour had all but gone out of the bronze disc that, on that day of September, 1910, was hanging above this setting of exquisite charm. Every tick of Time's clock it was becoming larger and larger. Apparently heavier and heavier, too. For it seemed to be dropping, of sheer weight, like a balloon from which all the gas had escaped.

As from my room in "the Sands" — the house in which "Dad" was dwelling in Versova, some 20 miles north of Bombay City — I was going beachwards, Suryadeva was snuggling into the West—vanishing for the nonce.

AGED BATTLER'S 87TH BIRTHDAY

Still, still, lay the short, spare figure of the aged battler for Indian Swaraj, as he, at the 1906 Calcutta Congress, had defined our politico-economic goal. How shrivelled it appeared upon the long, long deck chair upon which it was gracefully curled ! Made of deftly woven, split rattan strands, that chair might easily have been blown from the hurricane deck of some luxurious ocean liner and come to rest alongside the half-moon-like curve of the Bay.

But then I remembered that, even on the Christmas day of 1893, when I had first beheld that beloved figure, it had looked fragile to my boy-eyes. Yet how briskly it had moved in the huge crowd packed round the Ghanta Ghat (bell tower) that, in their vanity, the foreigners had caused to be raised dwarfing the olden, shapely *shikhar* (dome-like top) of Sri Har Mandir Sahib — the "Golden Temple"

* * * *

And in the autumn of A.D. 1910 — seventeen years later — Dadabhai Naoroji's 86th (or according to Indian reckoning, 87th) birthday had been celebrated. Hero in the eyes of worshippers of Mother India, offerings of sweet-scented jasmine and marigold, of coconuts in the husk, candied sugar and cowrie shells, had been placed at his feet. Sprinkling sanctified water in a circle round the chair on which he was seated, gorgeously dressed women from fashionable Malabar Hill in Bombay had touched their foreheads to the geometrically correct square drawn with flowers, on the path where his feet had rested.

That afternoon, turning into evening, he lay on the outsize deck chair which so vividly contrasted with his shrunken figure. He was all alone. Not a soul was stirring, even in the offing. The fish-wives, their labours with the nets that their men-folks used to bring in the harvest of the sea over for the day, with their yellow-bordered, blue saris tightly wound round their steel-muscled, lithe figures, had wended their way to the village of Versova, where they were doubtless now lighting fires with dried cow-dung cakes and faggots gathered from here and there, in their low, crudely fabricated but ever so efficient hearths.

OLD HERO'S BIRTHDAY TALKS

TRANQUIL — ever so tranquil — looked the old, old man. Died down was the fire within him kindled by his devotion to the mother of his mothers — India — that long ago had given shelter and sustenance to his ancient ancestor fleeing for conscience sake from Iran and unflinchingly remaining true to the teachings of the sage Zarathrustra. The hero who, for three-quarters of his long life had found amusement by pulling out hairs from the British Lion's whiskers while insisting upon dwelling in that lion's den, judging by the indications that lay upon the surface of life on that September afternoon when I tiptoed upon him, was done with problems and polemics, content to rest upon his oars (a phrase he had picked up from an Englishman who had taught him in the eighteen-forties in the Elphinstone Institution — later College).

But what newspaper man worth his salt goes by surface indications ? I could not, for the colloquy that had taken place a few days prior to our receiving invitations to be his house guest. We had called upon him to express our gratitude to the gods that he, now across the threshold of his 87th year, was with us to guide us. He had then said :

"Your wife is American—"

"No ! An Indian", she had interjected.

"By marriage," he quick-wittedly rejoined.

"Yes", she assented, "and by conviction, by choice : also by Karma (in which she firmly believed). I feel that India is my spiritual home."

"All this is pleasant to hear," quoth the G. O. M., his face beaming with joy. "But as I was going to say, you are by birth an American. And

your husband has just returned to his Motherland after many years' world wanderings."

With that introduction he began asking questions about current affairs—current world affairs—complex affairs. From these only one conclusion could be drawn — that he kept his finger on the pulse of Time. Later, when his son-in-law took me to "Dad's den" I saw the mechanics and hydraulics of this process. In neat piles lay newspapers, magazines, reviews and books, on shelves kept in place by glass paper-weights—and on the desk a mass of letters. The catholicity of his taste, even at that advanced age, impressed me as well as the orderliness and organization displayed wherever I glanced.

So I would have been obtuse indeed if I were to conclude that the apparently listless figure gazing into space with what seemed to be a vacant stare was a sign of smug satiety. No. He was like that sea, I inwardly commented, that now is like a mill pond — he was like those palm fronds that were hardly stirring — he was like the wind-still (if I may make a present of that substantive from my verbal mint) that is so palpable. Movement was within them all. In none more so than in Dad.

"I am not disturbing you, sir ?" I apologetically asked.

"No", he replied. "I was expecting you. I had, in fact, told you that whenever you like you could look me up here in the evening."

Had I the power to penetrate to the heart of things, as I had recently learnt Roentgen (now X) Rays did, I should have apprehended that "Dad" was busy making, for my express benefit, a ladder down which I might descend to the beginnings of modern India. After becoming *au fait* with the rise and development of nationalism in its manifold aspects—,I would ascend it, rung by rung, to the present. Howmuchsoever far he would elect to take me, whether to Calcutta, Lahore, Baroda, London or Liverpool, back I would be brought to "the Sands." I would be physically unexhausted and mentally enriched, spiritually uplifted—exhilarated.

The first inkling of this came to me in this wise : As I took a seat near his long, long deck chair he reminded me that old men seem to strangers to be full of fancies. This because generally their mind is turned inwards. They are nearly always remembering happenings of long, long ago and are not merely imagining — inventing — incidents. Or they are relating conversations that took place years, maybe decades, earlier. A chance acquaintance, lacking intimate knowledge of their antecedents, is likely to think that they are rambling in their minds.

DAD RECALLS HIS OLD DAYS

After a slight pause, more for effect than to catch his breath, "Dad" continued : He was differently constituted. He could remember things that happened yesterday and the day before, or ten, twenty, thirty, forty years before — occurrences in his boyhood — in his childhood. He could go back, in fact, to the reign of King William IV, in which he was born, through Queen Victoria's Sovereignty, long, long as it was, through King Edward's brief decade or so of rule to George V's time. His memory was clear and definite all the way through. The more I, with my feet planted upon that ladder, went voyaging through space to the days of long ago, the more I realized how very true those pregnant words of Dadabhai had been. We did make an excursion to the scenes of his infancy, childhood, boyhood and young manhood. Neither did he show the least disposition to dally there nor would he let me wander about. The jaunts to the sites of what may be termed his professional activities were also strictly limited and breathtakingly brief. On the contrary the others . . . . (of these presently). How unoldmanlike indeed was "Dad's" memory.

Of this I was reminded only a while back when, after decades, I was revisiting Naosari (Navsari) of which that Prince among mortals Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwar used to talk to me in my thirties. The High Priest of the Parsis in India — a kindly, cultured, learned, pious man and his noble spouse intensely interested in our ancient faith — were entertaining my good lady and me in their house in the oldest portion of the city. "Well", they asked, "have you seen the house ?" The reference was to the one that had been shown us as Dadabhai Naoroji's birthplace.

"But", I blurted out, "how can that be correct ? He was born in Bombay."

"Now you have lived with him in the bosom of his daughter's and her husband's family in Versova. In the hundreds of talks you must have had with him, did he ever tell you that Bombay was his birthplace ?"

That question, so directly — so sincerely — asked made me reflect. "No", I answered, "I can recollect him speaking only of the tiny village in an humble quarter of Bombay off the sea in which he, as infant and child, dwelt with his widowed mother, supported by her brother, a poor Parsi priest as her husband had been. Near there he had had his first lessons. The *Mehtaji*, with a large tuft of hair in the centre of a shaved pate and a scant dhoti wound about his body, sat with a thin stick in hand. To his 19-1|4 x 17-3|4 = so much, chorussed the boys standing in long rows, dappled by the sun glancing through the jade web high above. Attracted by (to them) this strange sight, the visitors from abroad, fresh within the Indian gate, stood open-mouthed. The tiny, fair-faced child, looking for all the world like a Dresden China doll, attracted them more than any of his fellows. Evidently, he was proud of the impression he then made, for I first had this incident described to me by one of my London editors — "Tay Pay" O'Connor, who hailed from Athlone in the heart of Ireland, and who from journalism (that he never abandoned) rose to be the Father of the House of Commons of his day—and a long day it proved to be.

Fain would I dwell upon the sites associated with Dadabhai of early years, to which he himself took me by means of the magic ladder, and recount the echoes that, at our appearance, rang from the spots. In the stint of space provided me I can only say that he was among the first batch of Indians of that region to turn from the out-of-doors Indian academy to a modern class educational institution. He was the first Bombayite to become a professor in the only college that was just founded. He, as "Dadabhai Professor", started, in the eighteen-forties, what we would call extra-Mural lectures. These lectures were on science, couched in language that would be readily understood by the people. Not that he eschewed other subjects — he, on the contrary, descanted on social and religious reform. With some of his cronies he found the *Rast Guftar* (the Truth Teller). What storms this slip of a young man with mutton-chops on his cheeks roused !

DAD'S PLUNGE INTO POLITICS

The descent into the past that profoundly interested me was one in which figured the founder-editor of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, "brother Sisir", as I began calling him in the beginning of this cen-

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IN THE EYES OF AN OPTIMIST

By N. KANUNGO

Union Minister for Consumer Industries

IT is not an unusual sight to come across dry rivers in summer with beds of sand. We are told that soil is washed away by rain and in the process of being washed down the streams, it is washed into particles of sand. If adequate physical properties are added to the sand, it becomes fertile soil again. That is what happens when silt is added to sand or some physical process happens in other ways by which sand becomes soil and fertile soil as well. But this process takes decades, assuming that conditions are favourable or may even take many decades.

It does not require any statistical gymnastic to prove that the people of India are poor. One can see it. It is like the fertile element of soil having been washed out leaving bare sand. Is it possible that the desert can be turned into fertile land ? In other words, is it possible to convert barren sand of poverty into fertile soil of prosperity ?

MUSCLES HIS ONLY ASSET

It is claimed that it is possible, and the intensity of human ingenuity and effort can shorten the period of reclamation. The process has started and can be observed in a manner as it is like watching for the seedling when it grows into a plant, maybe a crop or a forest, when no effort at observation would be necessary. Take for instance, the conditions of the poorest type of population. There were and still are persons who have to hire out their labour to earn a living in the villages. Workers have been too many for the limited amount of work available. People have to migrate seasonally or even permanently to find work and naturally the supply being larger than the demand, wages have been extremely low. Before 1940 in many parts of the country the usual wages for a full day's work for an adult woman were 2-1|2 annas and for an adult man 4 or 5 annas. In between the person whose only asset was his muscles and a prosperous farmer, whose prosperity was merely his ability to feed his family all the year round and nothing more, there are always various grades of poverty. Even the socalled prosperous person had to go in for debts when he had to face an emergency like, failure of crops, sickness etc. Usually he could not pay back his debts but as he had no margin to pay it gradually slipped down to a condition where all his assets, possibly even his shelter, were lost and he was left with his muscles alone.

CASE OF INDEBTEDNESS

The muscles too did not last long for lack of sustenance and he was dead long before his physical disintegration. It cannot be said that this cycle has changed as far as many millions are concerned, but careful observation will show that this slide has stopped at any rate in scores of lives — maybe hundreds. Take for example the case of indebtedness; compare the number of persons in villages who had to go in for grain loans to keep themselves fed round the year, say 15 years back, and compare the number today. It will be definitely less, maybe much less. Compare the huts of two decades back in any village with those today. Changes are not certainly striking, but change can be observed. Many huts did not have any doors. It was usually a bit of frame made out of reeds or a bamboo leaned against the opening to serve as a door without hinges and latches. One could travel hundreds of miles along the coastal area, particularly in the East and not come across a piece of stone or brick. Perhaps the only stones that could be seen were the *Shivlinga* or images of deities. Metal pots and pans were a rare sight The only receptacles for water were earthen pots and pitchers and in many cases dried out rinds of "Gourds". Pots for cooking were of burnt mud and the usual receptacle for food was any broad leaf. Banana leaf was a luxury. There were many households which did not possess a single metal receptacle. Metal pots and pans are no longer such a rarity. Plough points made of hard wood could be seen though rarely, but it is gone for good.

Going round any 'HAT' one could see beads of seeds and shells, combs of wood, shells of insects of bright colour, ingenuously braided strings of hair of fibre exposed for sale. These were the objects of adornment. Bangles and clasps of brass or other cheaper metal alloys were the jewellery. Ornaments made of silver were the privilege of the very prosperous. Gold was a rarity. Gold ornaments for ears, nose or neck were the high privilege of royalty and the caste from which the royalty were drawn. There was taboo against silver for many castes even. Today ornaments made of baser metals are almost non-existent and it is rare for the poorest person to fail in providing a small bit of silver on the occasion of a daughter being married or a bride coming home according to the custom prevailing

DRESS OF WORKING MEN

It was not unusual for an adult male labourer to go to work in a piece of cloth 1-1|2 yard long and 9 inches wide hung on a string round the waist — a sort of *kopin*. Of course, women labourers had to have longer and wider pieces of cloth to cover themselves. It is not very uncommon to find this apparel on working men in many places of our country, though it can be said that the number is much less than it used to be. The best dress for a working man was a piece of cloth 36" wide and 4 yards long and a piece of rough towel, *Gamcha*, which serves for rubbing and drying the body at bath and as the only change. Of course, wider 'dhoties' and the 'chadar' were for prosperous people who could effect elegance. Even they could not afford any stitched apparel, like a 'kurta'. Going to a cloth shop today it will be rare to find a full length 'dhoti' 36" wide and even a village weaver will tell you that this size is not in demand any more. One need not look into the figures of textile

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DADABHAI NAOROJI

(*Continued From Page 18*)

tury. Patches of yellow on the map of India were, in that benighted era, under more or less dual administration. Ostensibly, the "Native Chief" ruled. The Resident stationed in his capital — no "No" was taken in this matter—pulled wires from behind the purdah. The poor wretch on the *gadi* grimaced, gesticulated and gyrated as he felt the pressure of the strings.

On the death of Khande Rao Gulcowar (as my *guru* William T. Stead, Editor of the Review of Reviews, used to spell the name), his younger brother Malhar Rao succeeded as ruler. Before the inebriation superinduced partly by good fortune and partly by spirituous liquor was hardlly over he realized that he had to reckon with the grizzly bear in the Residency. Some confidant whispered into this newly made Maharaja's ears that if he was not to be mortally wounded by the bear he must call to his aid his shrewdest subject. This shrewd Gaekwad subject bore the name of Dadabhai Naoroji, whose ancestors had settled centuries back in Naosari.

At the moment when the call came to him from Baroda "Dad" was supposed to be pursuing Lakshmi. She had never captured his head nor even his fancy. Politics had. As W. T. Stead told me, "That little old Parsi used to breakfast on blue books and make his lunch, tea and dinner on old issues of *Hansard*." He had knocked a hole into the wall built round the entrance leading to the higher services in India : the Bull Dog had stood on guard night and day when "Dadabhai Professor" arrived in England to open the first Indian import and export house in the heart of the Empire. Through that hole had crawled Satyendra Nath Tagore, with whom lived the boy Rabindra, then a shrinking violet and the famous trio — Romesh Chandra Datt, Behari Lal Gupta and Surendra Nath Bannerjea. There was trouble over Surendra's date of birth and "Dad", with his cool head, helped the irascible young man, threatened with the loss of opportunity, to what he expected was to be his life's career. The merchant-politician had established the East India Association which was stolen from him by the cliquy retired Anglo-Indians mortally in dread of the Bombayite's activities. He had been made a governor of the newly established London University and in that institution held the position of Professor of Gujerati to Indian Civil Service aspirants. He left all these interests to become Malhar Rao's Dewan; instituted with the help of hand-picked men reforms in all the realms of administration, drafted, for Rs. 100,000 (it was said) the *Kharita* (royal letter) that took Baroda out of the clutches of the Bombay Government and placed the State in political relationship with the Government of India. The Grizzly got the better of him, however, by accusing the Maharaja of attempting to poison him by mixing diamond dust in a glass of sherbet.

SWING BETWEEN BRITAIN & INDIA

All the time the ladder of Time was swinging back and forth between Britain and India. In the eighteen-eighties he was in Bombay. He helped to organize the Indian National Congress. The honour of presiding over the first session was given to that silver-tongued accomplished lawyer Woomesh Chander Bonnerjee. At the next session, held in Calcutta, "Dad" was asked to take the chair and his administration of that high office earned him the plaudits of all our early politicians.

Back in London he resumed the old, old game of badgering the autocrats in undisturbed authority over India. He wrote out questions ventilating Indian grievances in the House of Commons. The friendly M. P.'s who thus helped him bore the Liberal label — all well to the Left, as we now would call them. Some noise was made. Those diehards who constituted the Secretary of State's Council fumed and fretted. So did the hierarchs in India. To be effective he came to the conclusion that he must himself get into the House of Commons. This he did. Soon afterwards he voyaged to India to preside over the 1893 session of the Congress in Lahore. It was there, as related earlier, that I first met him — 63 years ago.

HIS PARLIAMENTARY WORK

A volume is needed to deal with Dadabhai's Parliamentary work for India. It is possible only to refer sententiously to two of his exploits. The first was the Resolution that he succeeded in carrying through the House, recommending the holding of the I. C. S. examination simultaneously in India and London. The other was his merciless *expose* of the sucking of Indian blood by Britain.

There is, I am afraid, a disposition upon the part of the present generation to tag the G. O. M. as a "Moderate" — or even a "Moderate of Moderates." Some of those who saw and heard him at the 1906 session of the Congress at Calcutta, where he dismissed "good government", of which the "sun-dried bureaucrats" boasted, as being, in the words of Henry Campbell Bannerman, no substitute for self-government or swaraj, as our Grand Old Man translated it in terms of his mother-tongue — Gujrati, an accomplished daughter of Sanskrit, — would testify to his being a Liberal of Liberals. But listen to him as getting down from the dais where he had been sitting with his colleagues of the Commission appointed through his hectoring the Government, and occupying the witness's chair, he made his demand. He did not mind, he said, a handful of Britons continuing at the top. But these must be only the Viceroy the Governors over the provinces, a few controllers of the Civil power and the Commander-in-Chief to manage the Military. He insisted that Indians be given the justification to claim that they were being ruled by themselves.

Did not Dadabhai know, asked the Chairman, a sound enough Liberal, that through the ages Indians had been "continuously slaughtering each other ?"

"What else had the Europeans been doing in Europe ?" rejoined the Parsi Knight-Errant.

Had not Dadabhai heard what the great Prime Minister of Baroda and other Indian States — Sir T. Madhava Raw — had said ?

"What ?" asked the witness.

The Chairman quoted the great Dewan as prophesying that the withdrawal of British administrators would be like loosing the bars of the cages in the Zoo upon the defenceless millions.

Without a split second's hesitation Dadabhai replied : "Is that all that the Chairman could say for the 150-year rule of India by Britain ?"

No soldier ever fought for any land so long, so steadfastly, so lionheartedly, as did Dadabhai Naoroji. No general of any nation was a shrewder master of strategy or a greater tactician. None managed withal to retain the gentleness of the dove. None wiped away the tears of widows and orphans with greater assiduity or with deeper concern for their welfare. Would they and the coming generations combined be ever able to pay him the gratitude that is his due for laying the foundations of our self-rule, while under withering fire, so truly — so soundly ?

HINDU LAW REFORM

By C. C. BISWAS,
Law Minister, Indian Union

PARLIAMENT has now put on the Statute Book three epoch-making laws which have revolutionised Hindu law. A fourth measure is on the anvil and it deals with Adoptions and Maintenance. Some time has elapsed since the passing of the above three enactments, and it is possible now to view the matter objectively from the point of view of the country as a whole.

Time was when I with some of my then colleagues in the Calcutta High Court was inclined to the view that uniformity in Hindu law is not such a desideratum as to be purchased at any price. We felt that diversities of usage are inevitable among the very large number of Hindus who inhabited this vast sub-continent, and it was not for nothing that the Hindu law-givers recognized the paramount authority of local usages and customs. We went further and posed to ourselves the questions: why then should Hindus of any particular locality be necessarily called upon to forswear their own distinctive traits and traditions in the interests of a theoretical symmetry? And why, further, for the sake of attaining an ideal uniformity must the law be cut off from its ancient moorings? Hindu law divorced from the Smritis and Nibandhas would be a contradiction in terms.

CHALLENGE OF TIMES

At the same time we were conscious that like every other system of law, Hindu law must be prepared to meet the challenge of the times. In fact, it is the adaptability of the Hindu law to changing conditions and circumstances that has helped to maintain it as a living force and it is significant that the Smritis which are the ultimate repository of the law themselves recognize the principles of such growth and development.

These observations perhaps erred somewhat on the conservative side. Maybe, we had not sized the position in the country correctly. It should, however, be admitted that the observations we then made were not without reason. In every measure of social reform the country requires to be educated and the reform must go side by side with the progress of the country. It is common knowledge that the Rau Committee was met in many places with black flags, and the Provisional Parliament in 1948 was not prepared to give any consideratio the product of that Committe's labours, in spit the fact that the Hindu Code Bill prepared by Rau Committee was being piloted by so abl persor as Dr. Ambedkar.

QUESTION OF CODIFICATION

The question of codification of Hindu law assumed prominence in 1939, and, although l on the subject of Hindu law could be placed on Statute Book only in 1955, the intervening y had not been spent in vain. Political and econo changes have been moving fast not only in country, but all over the world. In our coun these changes have been very marked and ra after independence. Political freedom can h little meaning without economic and social adjustments for ensuring the contentment prosperity of Indian society as a whole. We h given to ourselves a Constitution which secures all citizens justice—social, economic and politi and equality of status and opportunity. The Cons tution abhors discrimination between citizens ba on grounds only of sex, and one of the duties of t State is to promote with special care the educatio and economic interests of the weaker sections the people. The women of India have become fu conscious of their rights and the enactment of the Hindu law measures is only a recognition, thou belated, of their rights.

DIVINE ORIGIN

There are, no doubt, people who believe in t divine origin of Hindu law: one need not quar with them on that issue, but it may be pointed o that Manu himself, the sage and seer, wanted dispense justice according to local usages a written codes. In those days the functions of t sovereign and the judge were combined in the Kin In the ancient days we had commentators who fro time to time put their own laws upon the ancie texts and in many cases discarded rules whic though they may have been contained in the sacre books, had become abhorrent to the country. Durin the long period of Muslim ule it was th Mohammaden law which became the law of th land, though in the matter of succession an inheritance the Hindus were probably left alon Hindus must have been governed in different place by what would have been called customary law When the East India Company took over, it wa decided that Hindus and Mohammadens should b left to be governed by their own laws in suit regarding inheritance, marriage, caste and othe

religious institutions. This was very unsatisfactory, because the moment a Judge is left without any lawful rations in the shape of express enactment, he is constrained to go out foraging for supplies, and the more learned and diligent, he is, the further he is likely to go.

HINDU LAW & BRITISH RULE

The history of British rule has seen the establishment or modification of the Hindu law by judicial decisions. And very often these judicial decisions took the form of deciding, not what the law ought to be, but what it is according to the interpretation of primitive text books or forgotten phases of society unmodified by contemporaneous opinion. Now that we have a Parliament representing the wishes of the people, it is but proper that the task of codifying the Hindu law with modifications wherever necessary should devolve upon it, so that Judges no longer have to go foraging for supplies in the confused welter of commentaries and text books. No one can contend that a deliberate, well-weighed and well-informed enactment passed by Parliament grounded solely on considerations of public welfare and guided by the wishes and opinions of the chosen representatives of the people, is not preferable to judicial legislation by judges.

SUPPORT FOR REFORMS

The time that elapsed between the first attempt to codify the Hindu law of succession and the decision of the Government to split up the Hindu Code into various parts has served firstly to make the provisions of these laws more familiar to the people, and secondly, to gradually diminish and ultimately remove all opposition to the reform of Hindu law. I have read with con ·ble interest and satisfaction certain articles which have appeared in legal journals praising Parliament in this behalf In fact a sort of gallup poll taken in one part of the country by means of a questionnaire addressed to certain associations has elicited the information that a very large majority of men and women are in favour of monogamy being made the rule of law for Hindus, of provision being made for divorce for them and of daughters being treated as equal with sons. If any proof that the country is now solidly behind these Acts is required, it is furnished by the fact that Parliament, after the first few teething difficulties, was able to dispose of all these measures in fairly quick time notwithstanding the heavy pressure of work which it had to face and by the fact that no protests worthy of mention have been raised from any quarter with regard to any of these Acts. After all, sons are as dear to us as our daughters, and it is only because of certain conditions existing in society and for certain extraneous reasons not based upon love and affection that the daughter, who was once treated on the same footing as the son, had to be treated differently. Things have now changed and are changing.

WOMEN'S POSITION TODAY

I do not propose to deal in detail with the provisions contained in the Hindu Marriage Act, the Hindu Succession Act and the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act Suffice it to say that each of these Acts makes a radical and fundamental change in Hindu law, which perhaps could not have been thought of a quarter of a century ago. Equality of sexes is fully assured by these provisions. It may be that here and there a few difficulties in construction and such like things may be met with, but these are matters for simple amendments to the law after the judiciary has made pronouncements upon them. But, broadly speaking, the provision for monogamy, the provision for divorce, the right of women to succeed to the property of their parents, including ancestral property, and the absolute right vested in them will, within the course of the next few years, ensure women occupying an equal position with men in the life of the society. Our ancient texts have always regarded women with great veneration and they were given the most important place in the household. The fact that property rights were either denied to them or were given to them in a limited form did not at all detract from the reference with which they were held. But the time has now come when all distinctions should disappear and men and women should march together with equal confidence and equal ability in the road towards India's progress.

IN THE EYES OF AN OPTIMIST

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consumption of so much per head or the phenomenal shift in the quality in the sense that more and more fine yarn is being consumed.

FOOD SITUATION IMPROVES

It may sound incredulous that two decades back hundreds of thousands of people never had rice or wheat in their food from year end to year end. The staple food consisted of 'Razi' and other minor millets and starchy root tubers. Boiled rice was a luxury for festive occasions like weddings etc. Sugar in the form of *gur* was considered a rare luxury and salt was sparingly used It was not unusual for salt being the medium for barter of small articles of use, like firewood, oil etc. Such conditions in the countryside are rare today Though 'Razi' and minor millets are still the staple diet of the poorest, yet it is hardly possible to find a person who has not got rice or wheat for his food at least for some days in the year The phenomenal increase in the consumption of sugar provides its own inference. Four decades back *cowrie* or shell was still a currency for transactions, of course, in remote parts 1|12th of an anna was a current coin and perhaps still is, but there is hardly any transaction today of less than half anna.

THE CRIMINAL TRIBE

Assuming that the above observations and comparisons are agreed to it is not to be inferred that the tide has turned and poverty has been reduced to an appreciable extent, but it does give a ray of hope that the barren sand is being turned into soil, at any rate, the process has started. It is not long ago — to be exact 38 years back – that a brilliant and sensitive young Indian who had entered the Indian Civil Service, was assigned the duty of reporting on the condition of a group of people in a remote district, who were being considered to be classed as a Criminal Tribe by the administration of the day. The usual crime they committed was the lifting of a handful of grains or fruit or something paltry in value but necessary for keeping the body and soul together. The young man before finishing his assignment and submitting a report, which was expected to give the reasons to declare the group as a Criminal Tribe, committed suicide and in a letter to his family mentioned that he was shocked to see the human beings living in conditions worse than animals and he could not see any way how he could discharge his obligation as a man to his fellowmen, whose condition he had seen Perhaps suggested observations as above will help in preventing sensitive men and women from being desperately depressed and restore their faith and hope in the future of our people.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE

By TARUN KANTI GHOSH

Deputy Minister, West Bengal

IN one of my numerous tours in the interior sectors of West Bengal I was addressing an open-air rural gathering of a rather heterogeneous texture. It was not a formal meeting but just the sort of an unpretentious seminar where one could unreservedly open out one's mind, unfettered by any rigid rules of business imposing a restraint on the freedom of expression of views and comments. It was not a gathering for one speaker alone to talk long and loud and for all others silently to listen. Indeed, it was an unassuming but a very active forum where no words could expect acceptance until and unless they could stand the rigid test of practical village wisdom.

As I was developing the story of our present-day problems and venturing to suggest how best we could try to approach them effectively, I was interrupted by one from the gathering who asked for leave to put me a question. The leave was readily given. I could guess from his determined looks and stout but modest voice that he was out to throw me a challenge. Indeed, I was not mistaken, as I very soon discovered. "This Government have had been in charge of our affairs for nearly eight years now," was his question, "but could you please tell us what the people have really got from them ?" It was a straight question straightforwardly put. There was no malice in it, no motive of running one down. It was the vocal expression of a simple mind which, perhaps, believed that since we had had the independence, the Government of the country must be able to erase forthwith all the wrinkles that had been wrought on its face. But, I am afraid, the questioning villager was not the only person to hold such a view. there are millions in the country who share his hopes and, I am tempted to say, his demands.

A DIFFICULT BEGINNING

I have purposely said *demands*. Because there is a tendency in many quarters, some of them learned and sophisticated, to praise or condemn the country's Government only measuring their activities with the yardstick of what has been 'given' by them. This is an unfair approach, unfair both to the Government as well as to the people themselves. Equally unfair is the evaluation of any achievement without due regard being paid to the intentions behind it and to the odds and handicaps that might have formed an initial hedge around it. Success, after all, is a relative quantum, conditioned by the circumstances in which we are given to make the efforts. I explained to the villager, who asked me the question, how the Government began, what were the formidable obstacles in the way and what was possible of attainment in spite of the difficulties that threatened them every now and then.

As I look back, I sometimes shudder to think of the anxious years passed through. It was difficult to contemplate, at the beginning that it should at all be possible to reach the mile-stone where we now are. It is no exaggeration if I say that the desperate situation might have spelt disaster to any Government unless it had the courage and stamina to refuse to bend an inch before overwhelming avalanches. What were the legacies in 1947 ? Nothing more than too little space to contain too many people, an emaciated exchequer, a surging mass of uprooted humanity, and an economy thrown completely off the gear ! All these years the Government have been striving, consistently with the slender resources, to restore the equilibrium which had been violently disturbed and I am sure that none would grudge the charity of conceding that the Government had had to wade their way through difficulties of stupendous dimensions.

FOOD, CLOTHING & SHELTER

The three fundamental requirements of human life are : food, clothing and shelter. All economic activities, everywhere in the world, are directed towards the solution of these three problems. Though any one of these problems is as important as the others, food deserves the priority of attention. In West Bengal, the Government have not for a moment lost sight of the prime necessity of marshalling the resources on the food front. At the beginning the total production of cereals in the State was nearly 36 lakh tons of which rice accounted for about 35 lakh tons. But the Government have been able to raise the output to nearly 53.5 lakh tons, of which rice amounts to slightly more than 52 lakh tons. It is not only in regard to cereals that more has been produced, but in respect of other food crops also the Government have been able to move ahead. How this has been possible is a story of unremitting efforts towards bringing in more acreage of land under cultivation and, at the same time, increasing the productivity of the land per acre. On a modest estimate, nearly 25 lakh acres of land have been put to use as a result of the Grow More Food Campaign and more than 50,000 acres of waste land reclaimed. But the productivity of land can be increased by various agencies, the most important of which are fertilisers and irrigation. Distribution of manures and chemical fertilisers is today an extremely popular programme and the initial prejudice amongst the cultivators against the use of chemical fertilisers has been so completely overcome that the demand for such fertilisers is more than can be met. Minor irrigational facilities have increased the irrigated areas from 18.1% of the net cropped area to nearly 24 per cent. There has been an increased output of jute, for which West Bengal depended so dangerously on Pakistan, from 6.5 lakh bales a year to more than 19.5 lakh bales. The total cropped area in

West Bengal has registered an increase of nearly 16 lakh acres since 1947, standing at present at about 143 lakh acres.

The cattle wealth is a proud possession of any country. Even today in many parts of the world, not yet sophisticated and geared mainly to an agricultural economy, the index of prosperity is the number of heads of cattle. The cattle wealth was seriously depleted by the partition. This was the reason why comprehensive measures were undertaken and are still being followed not only to improve the cattle economy but also to sustain the results already achieved.

The total outlay on Agriculture in the First Five-Year Plan was Rs. 8.52 crores but the actual expenditure was Rs. 8.87 crores. In the Second Plan, the provision under Agriculture is Rs. 33 crores, which is 22 per cent of the total allotment of Rs. 153 crores for the entire State of West Bengal.

MORE WATER FOR THIRSTY LAND

The importance of irrigation to any plan for growing more food cannot be over-stressed. In fact, a considerable stretch of land in West Bengal thirsted for water — land which could otherwise yield a rich harvest. Since Independence, the Government have been vigorously following a policy of more-and-more water for our lands. At the beginning of the First Plan, the position of West Bengal in regard to area irrigated was fifth among the 17 Part A and B States of India. At the end of the Plan period, West Bengal retained its position, but in the proportion of irrigated area to the total cultivated area, her position was fourth as compared to the tenth place in the beginning of the First Plan. There would also be an increase in the area to be benefited by irrigation or drainage by about 107 per cent since 1949-50. The provision for Irrigation in the First Plan was Rs. 14.85 crores and the expenditure was Rs. 14.24 crores. The area to be benefited by the First Plan schemes, exclusive of the inter-State Damodar Valley Project, would be 10.43 lakh acres yielding an additional 111 lakh maunds of crop. In the Second Plan there is a larger provision for Irrigation amounting to Rs. 18 crores.

SMALL INDUSTRIES FOR SMALL MEN

Industries, particularly small and cottage industries, form an integral sector of our rural and general economy. Though the small industries are having a somewhat lean time, yet no less than a million men and women are engaged in them and an equally large number are indirectly associated with them. Handloom, silk, sericulture, pottery, smithy — these are some of our proud possessions. In spite of competitive economy, these small industries have possibilities for rehabilitation and development if due encouragement is addressed to them. With this end in view, elaborate schemes have been taken in hand not only to improve their lot quantitatively but also qualitatively. Undoubtedly, it is a difficult job but, in view of its tremendous importance, is worth putting in every ounce of our energy. In the First Plan there was a provision of Rs. 1.15 crores for Industries; in the Second Plan a much larger provision of Rs. 16 crores has been made, representing about 10 per cent of the total State outlay.

While food and clothing are important, equally important is education. The Government can pertinently claim to have given the matter the attention it deserves. Expenditure on education now represents an increase of 300 per cent over the expenditure in 1948-49. The programme consists of improvement of existing Primary schools, starting of new schools, gradual conversion of primary schools into basic schools, expansion of free Primary education in rural areas, increasing training facilities for Primary school teachers and improvement in the conditions of service of teachers. In addition, Secondary and College education have had due dose of consideration. To cater for the masses, there have been started about 1,000 Adult Education Centres, about 500 Night Schools and no less than 250 Centres run by Voluntary Organisations in which over 75,000 people are receiving instructions. The total expenditure on Education in the First Plan has been 11.43 crores and in the Second Plan the allocation is Rs. 21.30 crores.

Medical relief is one of the most important aspects of social service and, happily, West Bengal occupies the first place among the States in India in respect of measures for prevention of diseases and for the relief of the sick. Her *per capita* medical expenditure is the highest in India and nearly 15.4 per cent of the total revenue of the State is spent on public health and medical relief. In the First Plan, the total expenditure on Medical and Public Health was Rs. 23.35 crores.

HOUSING — A DISTURBING PROBLEM

Housing is a disturbing problem in all sectors of life. As regards industrial labour, not more than 20 per cent are now provided with houses by their employers. Efforts are being made to take advantage of the Industrial Housing Scheme of the Government of India to extend the housing facilities to as many labourers as possible. The Middle Class Housing Scheme has been of very great advantage to the people in the small income group. In the First Plan there was a provision of nearly Rs. 4 crores for Housing and it has been increased to Rs. 8.59 crores in the Second Plan.

A BOLD EXPERIMENT

Since 1952 a bold experiment has been at work, applying itself to all aspects of life. It is the experiment known all over the country as the Community Development Project. It aims at bringing about a radical change in the outlook of the people through the medium of the principle that self-help can alone show the way. From only 3 Community Development Blocks in 1952, the number of these and National Extension Service Blocks have steadily increased and the expansion will be continued until the entire State is covered by a network of 321 National Extension Blocks by the end of the Second Plan. The provision in the First Plan was to the order of Rs. 3.96 crores and in the Second Plan the estimated outlay will be Rs. 14.25 crores.

Particular mention of the plans in the foregoing paragraphs should not be taken to exhaust the list of activities of the Government. Indeed, there are many more and space would not permit referring to them all. One undeniable conclusion that emerges out of these parade of facts and figures is that, whatever may have been the actual results achieved, no efforts have been spared to initiate and implement measures and schemes to bring about an overall improvement in our economy. There should be no end of activities to that end in a welfare state. But, at the same time, the realities of the situation should not be ignored. In that case, we shall have built castles in the air and a feeling of disappoint-

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WELFARE STATE IN OUR TIME

By SURESH CH. ROY, M.A., LL.B, J.P.

OR the last decade the concept of the Welfare State has been held up before the country as the goal of national endeavour. The growth of the idea has coincided with steady expansion of the functions of Government all over the world leading to the assumption of direct responsibility by the State for the economic welfare of the citizens. In actual practice these include an economic policy designed to ensure full employment and a comprehensive system of social security. A Welfare State seeks to attain these aims without surrendering the basic democratic values. That marks it off from totalitarian systems. Most of the Western nations have found it possible, in post-war years, to provide remunerative employment to all those who are prepared to work and the means of subsistence to those who are disabled by age or illness from active employment. In India, too these are the declared aims of Government policy. The First Five-Year Plan defined the objective in the following terms:

> "The central objective of planning in India is to raise the standard of living of the people and to open out to them opportunities for a richer and more varied life. It must, therefore, aim both at utilising more effectively the available resources, human and material, so as to obtain from them a larger output of goods and services, and also at reducing inequalities of income, wealth and opportunity.
>
> "While in the initial stages the accent of endeavour must be on increased production, planning, even in the initial stages should not be confined to stimulating economic activity within the existing social and economic framework. That framework itself has to be remoulded so as to secure progressively for all members of the community **full employment, education, security against sickness and other disabilities, and adequate income.**"

The Second Five-Year Plan has accepted the achievement of a socialist pattern of society as the obejctive of economic policy.

> "This means that the basic criterion for determining the lines of advance is not private profit but social gain. Major decisions regarding production, distribution, consumption and investment and in fact the entire pattern of socio-economic relationships must be made by agencies informed by social purpose. The benefits of economic development must accrue more and more to the relatively less privileged classes of society, and there should be a progressive reduction of the concentration of incomes, wealth and economic power. The problem is to create a **milieu** in which the small man who has so far had little opportunity of perceiving and participating in the immense possibilities of growth through organised effort is enabled to put in his best in the interests of a higher standard of life for himself and increased prosperity for the country. For creating these conditions, the State has to take on heavy responsibilities as the principal agency speaking for and acting on behalf of the community as a whole. The public sector has to expand rapidly and the private sector has to play its part within the framework of the comprehensive plan accepted by the community."

The objectives of the Plan have elicited a surprisingly wide measure of support. During the recent discussion on the Plan in the Lok Sabha, the Deputy Leader of the Communist Party declared: "I say the Plan has been welcomed by almost all sections of the people and its professed objectives are such that nobody can really object to. I should think that the Government ought to be gratified with the response which has been given to the Plan." On the other hand, even the classes that stand to lose their privileges with the realisation of these objectives have not put up any significant opposition.

PEOPLE YET TO GET BENEFIT

But the objectives, however, unexceptionable, mean little to the common man trying hard to make both ends meet in a world in which in spite of five years of planned endeavour, employment opportunities, instead of broadening, are getting more and more restricted. What is of immediate significance is not the objective but the rate at which the country is advancing towards it. Though the progress reports make impressive reading, any objective observer will be hard put to find evidence of improvement in the actual living conditions of the people. Planning so far has not been able to make any perceptible difference to the massive poverty of the country.

A recent survey of living conditions in Calcutta undertaken by the Calcutta University for the Research Programmes Committee of the Planning Commission, reveals a dismal picture. The data collected during the first year's survey shows that about 63 per cent of the persons in the age group 15 to 24 who are seeking jobs are unemployed, followed by 11.5 per cent in the next age group. The report also reveals that 36 per cent of the population belonging to the lower income groups are living below the poverty line on a per capita income of less than Rs. 30 per month. In spite of the progress registered in the industrial sphere and increase in the number of establishments, the actual number of workers in employment shows a decline. The Minister of Labour stated in answer to questions in the West Bengal Legislative Assembly that, while the number of industrial establishments in the State increased from 2,613 to 2,820 from 1951 to 1954, the number of workers employed declined from 654,901 to 592,241 during the same period. While there are no authoritative figures of the total volume of unemployment in the country as a whole, it is estimated, that there are at least 16 lakhs unemployed young men in West

Bengal, the number unemployed in Calcutta alone being about five lakhs.

Though Calcutta and West Bengal have special problems of their own, it will be a mistake to regard the conditions in Calcutta as exceptional. For the fact remains that, in spite of restricted employment opoportunities, Calcutta continues to draw migrants from all parts of the country who come in search of means of livelihood. While some succeed, the less fortunate sink into unrelieved destitution. Calcutta may therefore be rightly regarded as the epitome of India. The conditions in this city bring the national economic problem into sharper focus.

MODEST BEGINNING

While economic policy has failed to grapple effectively with unemployment, progress in respect of social security schemes is even more inadequate. A modest beginning has been made with the Employees' State Insurance Act passed in 1948. Ten years after enactment of legislation, implementation is only partial. Even when it is fully in operation, it will offer a very limited measure of security to the workers of organised factory industries. These constitute less than one per cent of the total population. And it may be mentioned that there is no provision in the existing scheme for unemployment benefits or old age pensions, two essential elements of any worthwhile scheme of social security. At this rate of progress it will be a century before the entire population is covered by State Insurance, and by that time the scheme itself might have become an obsolete anachronism in a rapidly changing world. It should not be surprising if such a depressing prospect impels the people who are asked to contribute for State Insurance to harbour sentiments similar to those of an African leader regarding the slow advance to self-government. He is reported to have said that Africans were not prepared to wait for hundred years for having one Minister in the Cabinet. If people are to be cured of their cynical indifference to State Insurance, immediate action should be taken to devise and implement a scheme to make at least Health Insurance available to the entire population. It is wrong to think that the country is short of doctors. The problem, on the other hand, is one of proper utilisation of their services. The Bhore Committee's Report published in 1946 estimated the ratio of qualified doctors to the population at 1: 6,000. During the last ten years there has been a large expansion in the facilities of medical training and a corresponding increase in the output of qualified medical practitioners. In Bengal, at any rate, the present ratio of doctors to the population is likely to be nearer 1: 2,000. Statistics of unemployment among doctors also give an indirect indication of their total numbers. This unemployment is the result, not of an actual surplus, but of bad planning in utilising the services of medical men who, in the absence of inducement to settle in villages, tend to concentrate in urban areas. In the beginning of the year one hundred doctors seeking employment had registered their names with the Calcutta Employment Exchange. The comparative figure of other States was about ten.

Provision of Health Insurance will make for the rational utilisation of the services of medical men. Medical service may be nationalised, that is to say, every doctor should be asked to devote two hours in the morning and evening for attending patients on the same basis as panel doctors under the State Insurance Scheme. The rest of their time may be devoted to private practice. Provision should also be made for free dispensing of common medicines. The cost of the extension of health insurance to the whole population can be met by a small deduction from the salaries of all employees, supplemented by a slight addition to the fees charged for trade licences. If the problem is tackled in this way it should be possible to make universal health insurance effective within the next two years.

LACK OF ENTHUSIASM

The very slow rate of progress already achieved, or promised, is the most serious difficulty in enlisting popular enthusiasm for the practical tasks of planning. As the Minister for Planning stated in the Lok Sabha during the debate on the Plan there is no doubt that "the public will respond if they are approached in the right way." But it will be naive to believe that this can be achieved by publicity for the actions of the Government or the Plan targets for steel or cement. Deferred benefits have little attraction for people living on the margin of subsistence. People with experience of life insurance know how difficult it is to convince even educated people of the value of insurance, because the benefits in this case, though real and substantial, accrue years later. A gigantic programme of investment, with prospects of plenty in the future, is cold comfort to the unemployed youth wasting the most fruitful years of their lives in frustration. If planning is to be really effective, it should be designed to make an immediate and substantial reduction in the total numbers of unemployed.

There is no dearth of tasks waiting to be accomplished. What is required is the will to mobilise the entire working force of the country for a total attack on poverty and squalor. Unless this can be done, and in the near future, the outlook for ordered progress is not very encouraging.

People living below the margin of subsistence cannot afford to evaluate the merits of rival political ideologies. They can be easily persuaded that political liberty and free elections are luxuries which may be profitably exchanged for ensured means of livelihood. Otherwise how is one to explain the popularity of parties and politicians, whose only stock-in-trade appears to be the slogan *"hobe na"* or *"cholbe na"*. These are slogans which one cannot miss whenever there is a demonstration in the streets of Calcutta.

For a start, the Government cannot do better than undertake a co-ordinated programme of slum clearance and housing, so drawn up as to provide employment to all the unemployed who are willing to work at minimum wages. The cleaning up of the big cities alone will mean an increase in standard of living which cannot be adequately measured in material terms. For it will mark the difference between civilised living and bestial condition of existence which now is the lot of the slum dwellers in our great cities.

PROBLEM OF BEGGARS

If the programme is to be really effective and lead to lasting improvement, side by side with slum clearance, adequate provision will have to be made to take care of the destitutes, the old and infirm who clutter the pavements and live in gutters. Estimates of the number of beggars in the country vary. According to the 1951 Census, the total number of beggars was about five lakhs. This figure however relates to self-supporting beggars and is clearly an underestimate as far as total number of destitutes is concerned. Other estimates place the total figure at nearer two million. Even taking the higher estimate, for a country of India's size and population, the pro-

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HARDAYAL'S WORK FOR INDIA

By GOBIND BEHARI LAL

IT seems that there is a reawakening of the nationalist spirit in many parts of India, apart from the routine Government and Congress Party rituals, which are necessary to keep the country going on in an orderly fashion. Honour is again being paid to the memories of Lokmanya Tilak, Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, who were all fighting patriots.

In remembering such men, most of whom prepared the way for Mahatma Gandhi's great movement which eventually led our people out of servitude into full national independence, the present generation of Indians honour and strengthen themselves. So necessary is PATRIOTISM for all Indians now — a fact which I can discern, from a great distance better than many of my compatriots seem to do in India — that no pettiness, no jealousy, no shortsightedness should be allowed to stultify it.

VARIETIES OF NATIONALISM

The more we think of the varieties of Indian Nationalism, and of the extraordinary geniuses and patriots, saints or soldiers who shaped these varieties, the richer and stronger will be our today's Unity. However, important and expedient "discipline" in a particular party may be, it should not be mistaken for sectarianism and dogmatism that will divide us in the long run.

In this spirit of a great historic Indian national consciousness I wish to remind my compatriots of Lala Har Dayal who made, in his way, a unique contribution to the development of the Indian independence movement.

Har Dayalji was the most brilliant of the militant nationalists of the Delhi School of Patriots — or even of the Delhi-Lahore School of Patriots, which may be shortly described as the (undivided) Punjab School of Nationalism He was younger than Lala Lajpat Rai, and the two loved each other greatly Lajpat Raiji's great work for the nation had begun long before Har Dayalji entered the arena of Indian national politics in 1907 or so.

DEFIANCE OF BRITISH GOVT.

What made Har Dayalji an important man overnight was his spectacular defiance of the British Government by an unprecedented act of NON-COOPERATION. which stirred up the whole British Empire He had been awarded one of the two State Scholarships which, in those days, were given by the British Government of India to two of the most brilliant graduates of the year from all the universities.

In 1905 or so he went to England on such a scholarship, and started studies at St John's College, Oxford, where he won a Bodlian scholarship for Sanskrit studies, as well He was expected to take the Indian Civil Service (I. C. S.) competetive examination, and he would have passed it brilliantly.

But one day in London he wrote to the Secretary of State for India that he was an Indian patriot, and could not conscientiously accept any money from the British rulers of his country, where they had no business to be. Newspapers published his letter of resignation, and the British were visibly upset, while the Indian nationalists were surprised and happy

PLANS FOR REVOLUTIONARY WORK

In 1908 he returned to Delhi, then stayed a few weeks as a house guest of Raj Prithwinath Chak in Kanpur (Cawnpur), where he made plans for his future revolutionary work.

His prestige was naturally very high now; men in Lahore and Delhi started calling him "Rishi Har Dayal", for he was as simple as he was brilliant and learned. Sri Aurobindo Ghosh wanted to meet him. Lokmanya Tilak and also G. K Gokhale, head of the Servants of India Society, invited him to stay and work with them. And the Lahore patriots urged him to remain in North India, where patriotism was still exceedingly backward.

In Delhi itself, then a lazy, unpatriotic city, Har Dayalji's friend, admirer and former teacher, Master Amir Chandji, promised to give him every support possible. A few more daring and nationalistic young college graduates came to be his disciples, willing to follow his example and give up any careers related to the British system.

NON-COOPERATION IN 1908

Har Dayalji, partly urged by Lajpat Raiji, started writing and publishing in English, Urdu and Hindi a series of articles in which he passionately exhorted educated Indians to give up all connection with the British. He had launched an all-out Non-cooperation movement in 1908. The British governors, especially of the Punjab and of the United Provinces, were extremely angry with him, and yet hesitated to make a martyr of him.

Then the history-making bomb burst in Calcutta, and all Indian public, political and economic, activities were revolutionized. Har Dayalji, even before Sri Aurobindo, had to leave India, or waste away in a British prison. He went to France and rejoined the unique brotherhood of "India's Political Exiles" — Shyamji Krishnavarma, Madame Cama, Rana of Paris, Birendranath Chattopadhya (Sarojini Naidu's brother) and others. Because of his personal sacrifice for a patriotic principle, his prestige was exceptionally high among all these compatriots, each of whom was unique and ardently patriotic.

REVOLUTIONARY WORK ABROAD

This "Exiles Group" laid the foundation of what we now call "India's Foreign Policy" — not in the technical sense in which it is a function per-

rmed by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru with a rare nius, but in the spiritual sense.

The point, and a very important point, is that e Exiles made other great countries conscious of e movement for the independence of India, and n the sympathy of these countries for the Indian use in various degrees and fashions. London, ris, Geneva, Rome, Berlin and San Francisco and w York and Tokyo — all these world capitals — re activated for the Indian cause, and this was ne by human beings — these Exiles of India.

To get back to Har Dayalji, he was ill with eumonia in Paris, and wandered on to Honolulu, om where he came to San Francisco in or around 10. It was here I was to meet him again, for had been intimate friends in Delhi. Without ing into any details, I shall give here a few high ints of what Har Dayalji did for India in lifornia :

The fact that he was an Oxford scholar, who d resigned his scholarship, turned his back upon brilliant and enriching official career, as an I.C.S. aheb", was already known to the authorities of e Universities of California and Stanford and to me of the great American newspapers of San ancisco and Oakland. Mr. John D. Barry, of the *n Francisco Bulletin,* a great newspaper edited by r. Fremont Older, wrote a series of biographical ticles about the Hindu genius, Har Dayal.

EW MOVEMENT LAUNCHED

One winter evening a meeting was held by the dian students of the University of California at e Stiles Hall, off the campus, and a large number professors and reporters were present. Lala ar Dayal was the chief speaker and he declared : British rule in India is an infamy, and we will ase it. We will fight for our independence." The t was in the fire. He had launched a new ovement.

Young Sikh students, particularly Kartar Singh, read Har Dayalji's gospel of patriotism among kh and other Indian farmers and workers roughout California. A movement of the "people", t only or even largely of the "educated Babu heb", was begun. Like Mahatma Gandhi, Har yalji had tremendous faith in the "common dian people", the vital yet illiterate workers and rmers. This was his magic — his passion for his people, not for the few of his own privileged ss.

The response was rapid and surprising. What s to be done ? Har Dayalji said : "We must ve a publication to advocate our cause, to promote e spirit of patriotism among our own people wher- er they may be in India, outside." The name of e weekly publication was to be most challenging : ADAR. Every Punjabi and United Provinces man ew what it meant — GADAR was the name by ich the Great Rebellion of 1857 was known to du and Hindi speaking peoples. The British ew.

Well, the Cause of India, now given a shape, s taken up by Irishmen, fighting for their in- pendence, by the Germans and so forth : it ame an international issue for the first time in period of the First World War. All the Exiles cked for it; Har Dayalji was a representative of m, and a highly individual thinker in his own ht.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE

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ment and a sense of frustration are bound to follow. The Government can proceed only as far as our resources should permit. But, there is another factor — perhaps the most important factor — that conditions the movement and progress of all plans and programmes. I refer to the human factor. Resources of a country lie in its men and materials. It is the balance between the two that is calculated to yield the maximum results.

GOVERNMENT — PEOPLE'S CREATION

I would conclude by referring once again to the query made of me by the villager in the open-air rural gathering. His question still rings in my ears: "This Government have had been in charge of our affairs for nearly eight years now, but could you please tell us what the people have really got from them?" If the question is the outward manifestation of an anxious mind, it is, at the same time, indicative of an one-sided conception of rights. The impression that, unfortunately, lies in many minds is that the only function of the Government is to *give* and *give* and to the extent that they fail to give, they should stand condemned. Those who make demands of the Government often forget that they have a corresponding measure of responsibilities also to discharge. After all, what is Government ? It is the people's creation, it is the signature of the greatest measure of common consent. And to sustain their own creation, people must work. Is not the Government a people's movement in the ultimate analysis ? If so, it is for the people to come forward and supplement the efforts of the Government by their willing endeavours and ungrudging cooperation. Let us look for a moment to the Community Development Programme. It has created a stir in the villages not only in West Bengal but all over India. But its success has not been uniform everywhere. Its achievements have been in direct proportion to doses in which the support and active cooperation of the people have been forthcoming. It has attained striking results where the people have adopted it as their own programme. The Government has given the go, but the momentum has been accelerated by the energy and enthusiasm of the people.

During the last few years, I have had many opportunities of coming in contact with the people, particularly those in the rural sectors. I have no hesitation in saying that they are an excellent material, simple, unassuming and straightforward. With them anything can be done, once they are roused and enthused. I, for one, do not believe that anyone will ever refuse to lend his hand to a worthy cause. And what cause could be more worthy than the plan for improving the lot of the common man ? What the Government have been able to do are known to everyone. All their cards are on the table. Judge them impartially and dispassionately and one will not perhaps grudge the verdict that serious and honest endeavours have been made in circumstances none too placid and easy. The Government is grateful to the people for all that they have done to help the plans initiated so far. In the coming years, let them associate still more actively and intimately with the endeavours of the Government and there is no reason why we should not view our future with hope, faith and optimism.

CRYPTOGRAPHY AS A FACTOR IN WORLD HISTORY

By Dr. NANDALAL CHATTERJEE, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt.

CRYPTOGRAPHY or secret writing through codes and ciphers has been one of the most vital factors in world history, and is still a potent force in the domain of international relations. It is a pity that this art has not received in India the attention it richly deserves. Cryptography may be briefly described as the art of writing messages which cannot be understood by anyone ignorant of the system employed. It is one of the most ancient of arts, and it would be hardly an exaggeration to say that throughout the world's history, battles, crowns and kingdoms have been won or lost, more through the knowledge of cryptography than from any other cause.

The story of codes and ciphers is truly fascinating. But, before we proceed to examine the history of codes and ciphers, let us first briefly indicate what a code or a cipher actually is. When a word is made to stand for a phrase, or a sentence, or a whole message, it is called a code-word. The use of codes, therefore, requires the keeping of a code-book or code-dictionary by the party sending the secret message and by the party receiving it. In a cipher, each single letter of the message is represented by some other letter, figure, or symbol. If the key thereof is known or remembered a cipher message can be easily deciphered. The use of cipher, therefore, does not necessitate the carrying of code-books or any other mechanical equipment. Codes are generally used in the navies, whereas the armies generally use ciphers. In diplomatic or secret service work and in espionage, codes are generally preferred, because code messages can express more ideas in the shortest amount of space.

AS OLD AS WRITING ART

The history of codes and ciphers is so old that it is difficult to state when exactly they first originated. It may even be supposed that they are almost as old as the art of writing itself. Historians hold that the alphabet began originally as a series of pictures representing ideas and actions. This sort of pictorial writing which flourished in the ancient world is known as hieroglyphics. In this sort of writing, every symbol possessed a distinct meaning. But, in course of time, the alphabet replaced the old picture symbols, and in consequence lost the meaning which the former symbols had possessed. The introduction of the alphabet thus marks the beginning of cipher. Cipher, therefore, came into existence when and wherever people learnt the art of reading and writing.

In ancient Greece and Rome, secret writing was practised through cipher. Historians tell us that Julius Caesar used to send his secret messages through cipher alone. It is also believed that Charlemagne too employed ciphers to communicate with his distant agents. An example of a successful use of cipher message in the ancient times may be given from the history of Sparta. Lysander of Sparta was a great general. He crushed the power of Athens, and was in his own day the most powerful man in Greece. Once, while he was encamped at Sestos, he accidentally received a secret message in cipher from a slave that his friend and colleague had been murdered, the Governor of Persia had proved a traitor, and that there was danger of an immediate rising in Sparta. The same night Lysander sailed for home, reached there in time, and saved the situation before it could be too late. It was thus a cipher which saved a general and an empire.

DURING MEDIAEVAL PERIOD

In the mediaeval times, however, codes too were sometimes used along with the cipher. The oldest reference is to be found in the secret communications of the Venetian ambassador at the Court of Austria. The Venetian ambassador used to refer to the King of Hungary as "P", and the Pope as "Q". It is interesting to note that the ambassador usually referred to Austria as the "Sun". Generally, however, Italy, Spain and France used ciphers. The codes and ciphers in mediaeval times originated from two different sources - priestly authors who sought to avoid the strict censorship of the Church authorities, and thieves and robbers who communicated with each other through code words or secret signs. The art gradually came to be adopted as the principal means of diplomatic and state correspondence. It may be incidentally mentioned here that the French ambassador to Rome, in the time of Louis XIII, used to describe the Pope as "the rose", Rome as "the garden", Germany as "the stable", and Spain as "the manger". The French ambassador to Russia referred to the English ambassador as "the fox", the Austrian ambassador "the wolf", and so on.

With the advent of modern times, secret writing gradually acquired a much greater importance than it had ever possessed before. An illustration may be given from the history of England of Queen Elizabeth's time. During her captivity in England, Mary, Queen of Scots, started a secret intrigue against Queen Elizabeth with a view to securing the throne of England for herself. She used to write to her supporters in cipher. Two of these, John Ballard and Anthony Babington, made an attempt to procure Spanish help for Mary, and also plotted the assassination of Queen Elizabeth, Cecil and Walsingham. They also planned to rescue Mary from the place where she was kept confined. Mary was fully aware of these plans, and she was believed to have approved of the plot to murder her rival, Elizabeth.

But, before the plans could materialise, the cipher messages of the plotters including those of Mary were accidentally intercepted and deciphered by Walsingham. Most of the conspirators were in consequence arrested, and Mary herself was eventually beheaded. Thus it was cryptography which saved Elizabeth not only her throne but her life as well.

FRANCIS BACON & HIS SYSTEM

Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, is reputed to have introduced a special mode of secret writing with only two alphabets, "a" and "b". An examination of his system has. it is curious to note, led many modern cryptographers to suppose that it was Bacon himself, and not Shakespeare, who had written the Shakespearean plays. This has indeed been one of the most intriguing problems in the history of secret writing.

The suggestion that Bacon wrote the dramas ascribed to Shakespeare first came from Horace Walpole. Subsequently, Joseph Hart published a treatise in support of Bacon's claims. He was followed by many others. Among them were the American authoress, Delia Bacon, the American politician, T. T. Donnelly, the American professor, Dr. Owen, the latter's secretary, Mrs. Elizabeth Wells Gallup, and other writers such as William Stone Booth and Col. George Fabyan. These writers used their knowledge of cryptography to detect such secret references in Shakespeare's plays as might conclusively establish the authorship of Bacon. Mrs. Gallup, for example, made startling decipherments to show that in her youth Queen Elizabeth had secretly married the Earl of Leicester and had even a child. The child of this secret marriage was no other than Francis Bacon, and it is Bacon who wrote all the plays and works attributed not only to Shakespeare but also to Burton, Ben Jonson, Peele, Greene, Marlowe and Spenser. It is needless to say that this whole theory is fantastic, and is historically improbable. The controversy only indicates the extent to which ingenuity in the art of reading secret writing could reach.

INTERESTING ILLUSTRATION

An example of the method employed by the upholders of the Baconian theory may not be out of place here. William Stone Booth, it is interesting to note, found in Scene III, Act IV of *Love's Labour's Lost*, the following lines :—

> But with the motion of all elements,
> Courses as swift as thought in every power,
> And gives to every power a double power.

In the first line, there is "B", in the second "Co", and in the third "An". This was taken to mean a secret indication left by Bacon himself that he was the author of this play!

After the Elizabethan period, secret writing began to influence the course of historical events to a much greater extent than before. After the death of Henry IV of France, there was a strong Huguenot movement in the country. The Huguenots were up in armed revolt, and were besieged in Realmont. During the siege, the Prince of Conde chanced to get hold of a man who was trying to escape through the lines. On search being made, a poem was found in his possession. It was a secret message from the fort asking urgently for a supply of arms and munitions from the Huguenots of Montauban. The interception of this secret message enabled Conde to secure the surrender of Realmont the very next morning.

AN ADVANCED SCIENCE

In Louis XIV's time, cipher was considerably used, and after the French Revolution cryptography became an advanced science in Europe. In England, secret writing had already acquired a permanent importance, especially during and after the Civil War. An instance may be cited here. After the death of Charles II, his bastard son, the Duke of Monmouth, plotted to obtain the throne of England. The Duke of Argyle joined in the plot, and sent messages to his friends in Scotland. One cipher message was accidentally intercepted. The message was to the effect that Argyle was to land on the west coast, of Scotland in early May, and Monmouth would simultaneously land on the west coast of England. James II was thus forewarned, and all suspected persons where Argyle might land were thrown into prison. Subsequently, Argyle and Monmouth themselves were caught and hanged. Thus, James escaped overthrow because of successful cryptography. Had James been a wise ruler, he could have sat till his last day on the throne which his cryptographers had preserved for him. That was, however, not to be!

During the wars of the French Revolution, the failure to find a good cipher cost many people their heads, and it brought death to a really great leader—Charles Pichegru, general of the French army on the Rhine. One of his letters in cipher revealed that he intended to overthrow the French republic in favour of the king. For this Pichegru had to die in prison. Napoleon used cipher in his secret communications, but sometimes he suffered badly from intercepted messages as, for example, in the Battle of Leipzig.

UTILITY IN WARFARE

After the French Revolution, the invention of the electric telegraph carried cryptography a stage further. Henceforth, ciphers were almost obligatory in all important political and military communications. In France, there was an attempt made to bring the Bourbons back to the throne after the fall of Napoleon, but the attempt failed simply because the secret messages of the chief plotters like Duchesse de Berry were intercepted. Again, shortly afterwards the police got hold of details regarding the conspiracy in favour of Prince Louis Napoleon, In the American Civil War secret writing was practised by the rebel leaders, and the success of the Unionists was largely due to the fact that they could successfully decipher the secret communications of the Confederates. In the Franco-Prussian War, the Germans could easily defeat the French, because they managed to intercept and read some of the most important secret messages of the French Army. In the Russo-Turkish War also, Russian success was to a large extent due to Turkish inability to read their own secret code messages. In the Boer War, the British used cryptography with marked profit.

In the pre-War Europe, diplomats and spies considered it to be their most important duty to steal the codes and ciphers of rival powers. This enabled many clever impostors to sell bogus code books at fancy prices For example, the Austrian Government was once cheated by a Serbian adventurer who sold a bogus code book of his country for 10,000 Kroner.

The World War of 1914 found cryptography at its height. From the day when the German radio

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VINOBA'S NEW SOCIETY PLAN

By JOHN E. FRAZER

ON a day between today and 31 December, 1957, a thin, bespectacled man, clad in khadi, will announce to India that land, all land, belongs to the people, not to the present owners.

This is the promise of Vinoba Bhave, made in an exclusive interview in a landowner's swept and garnished house in Coimbatore District of Tamilnad. An American, I had gone south to walk and talk with the disciple of Gandhiji and to ask, as I had known others to ask, what Vinoba would do if the goal of 5 crores donated land is not reached. Only one-tenth of that acreage has been subscribed thus far.

JUST A FIRST STEP

"I don't know what I myself will do", said Vinoba. "But there is no misgiving in my mind. It (the 50 million acres) is not a goal—it is simply a first step. The whole land can be distributed in a single day—provided we create the proper atmosphere. I think the atmosphere is being created.

> *"Just as you celebrate Christmas all over the world on a single day, so also land will be distributed. A date will be fixed, and in all the villages (of India) people will declare that land belongs to God."*

I checked this statement later with Bhoodan party workers. There can be no doubt of the walking saint's resolve. On a certain day, yet to be determined, he will put forth a principle, and then watch, wait, and walk while, like the Quit India movement, the idea takes root.

THE SAINT'S WAY

Vinoba is impressive. All his manner is resolute and decisive. He comes to the heart of a matter, disposes of people and papers quickly, goes on to the next subject. Schedules run on time. If he is to speak at 5-30, he speaks at 5-30. Departing from one village to go to the next, he leaves the house almost hurriedly, flinging his cloth about him, walking impatiently.

His steps are firm, his shoes, of brown cloth, planted firmly but lightly on the ground. He stops halfway in the march for a cup of curds; on arrival, he sits immediately, and perspiration is patted from his legs. His voice is thin, not strong, but his gestures are strong. He taps his knees flatly when he speaks to an audience, covers and uncovers his watch on the platform beside him, prays silently, lips moving gently, with intensity; smiles warmly. "Same like the Gandhiji", said a Madras bearer to the writer. "Very soft man".

Like westerners, I knotted my legs trying to sit cross-legged. Vinoba motioned me closer. "I am a little hard of hearing". In the desire to catch and write down each word, I appeared inattentive, not watching his face closely as he spoke: he stopped, placed a hand on my shoulder, and said with a flashing twinkle, "Are you hard of hearing too?"

WHAT'S SHAME?

I asked for comment on a criticism I had heard, that Bhoodan promotes a national guilt-feeling. He did not understand this. I explained that a landowner might donate out of compulsion, or shame, not out of compassion. This shame might reach national proportions.

"There is always a complexity of motives in the human mind", Vinoba then said. "Shame is there. Shame is also a kind of knowledge. A child is not ashamed to be naked, but a grown-up boy is. He has knowledge. Shame presupposes knowledge.

"Those giving out of shame give out of knowledge. They feel it is their duty to give. If they feel that compunction, there is nothing wrong. If I can sense the atmosphere, most people are giving out of the goodness of their hearts—but others out of shame".

PLANS NEW SOCIETY

Emphasis in Vinoba's movement, to some observers, is altering. From simple appeals for a gift of land, out of compassion and love, Vinoba now pleads for a new society. He wishes to change the structure of India, then of the world. Jayaprakash Narayan, speaking in Madras, declared that "just as the goal of Gandhiji was to inculcate fearlessness, to teach every Indian to work for freedom, so the goal of Vinobaji is through force of love and reason to bring about a human revolution, to give up all, and build a new civilization based on social ownership of property".

This is a large dose to swallow. I asked Vinoba if, as greater ambition dominates the movement, the land-gift idea might not suffer.

"Flowers are dropped", he said, "and fruits appear. Suppose emphasis on land disappears and higher things come. There is nothing to be grieved about. You sow a seed, and you find that it disappears. But out of that seed, flowers and fruits come. The unity of the seed is not destroyed—it manifests itself in different forms. The seed is not lost. And so long as I do not go by airplane you can be sure that the land movement is going on!"

PRIVATE PROPERTY

What about private property? In the gramdan villages of Bihar, land is now wholly owned by the village; there is no private ownership. Even village stores are village-owned, according to Vinoba's formula of "one village one family". I ask whether he aimed, in fact, at the abolition of all private property.

"What I mean", he answered, "is not the end of private property. I want to get rid of the sense of

private property. I should feel (for example) that my body is my responsibility, my private property. I have a responsibility to keep it fit. But I should not have the view that my body is meant for me alone—it is my duty to keep it fit for society.

NO "ME" & "MINE"

'I want to do away with 'me' and 'mine', and let us use the words 'we' and 'ours'. In the Bible are the words, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit'. There is a difference between poor, and poor in spirit. (He implies here that man should be humble). You can have your own automobile (as an example), as you have your own food, provided you use it for society. Your own development is a public concern, and you are in charge of it".

If Sarvodaya is a world society, how can it contribute to world peace? And how, particularly, would Vinoba apply Sarvodayan principles to specific questions like Suez?

SUEZ & NASSER

"Egypt is a small nation", Vinoba said, "and against it are strong nations like England, France, and America. What should they do? "Agree with thine adversary quickly"—and finish the matter. Suez is no real question, but a fiction. Big nations should be strong enough to agree with their adversary, and the problem would be solved. When Nasser says he will keep the canal open for all, why not test Egypt"s sincerity? If I were a representative of America and Britain, out of strength of my position I would fully trust Nasser, and I would have patience because I am strong enough".

WORLD PEACE

About world peace:

"I have often said that a land gift deed is a vote for world peace. I claim this movement is doing for world peace what is not being done anywhere in the world. Here we are trying to change the basis of human society. Sarvodaya will first have to transform Indian government and Indian society, and through them the world. We can't expect to change the world without changing India. To outward appearances this is a national movement: but actually it is an international movement, broad and inclusive".

Perhaps it is rash for an outsider, and presumptuous, to judge Sarvodaya on short acquaintance. But impressions remain, as one reads, talks, and then watches Vinoba among the villagers, or walking a dark morning road in silence, a lantern bearer in front, and quiet, devoted followers pressing forward steadily with him.

WORKERS' CONFIDENCE

A first impression is one of continuing confidence. There is no slackening of enthusiasm among the workers I talked to—"they are hopeful and confident", said Vinoba. Gifts of land may decline, but devotion continues. Every party worker to whom I spoke declared firmly that interest in Vinoba's walks was increasing; more workers are joining, and the sense of mission is stronger than before.

And still the desperate need continues, as only the blind in heart could fail to see. I watched the searching, hungered stares, particularly of women in villages, as Vinoba spoke: some hope for a change must surely stir within these people. Gandhi's question, 'Pray tell me, what am I to do with a fifth of the human race on the verge of starvation?", still bitterly cries for an answer.

VINOBA'S TOMORROW

One asks, however, as others are asking, whether the simplicity of land sharing, which all can understand and perhaps agree with, is not lost in a complexity of dreams for a new society.

Vinoba's tomorrow is a world dominated by love, not a new idea, but the world's strongest idea; but he allies theology with a specific economic system—a unanimous society, where all goods, all property will be socially owned.

In more practical aspects, also, questions arise. A Bhoodan leader told the writer in Coimbatore that 80 per cent of all land collected by Vinoba is still undistributed. The Herculean task has not yet been tackled. But administration is part of revolution too.

CALL OF LOVE

The deepest instincts of the human heart respond to the call of love and generosity, and it is to these that Vinoba first appealed. Now he goes further, to the new ideal society. Is this where India wants to go?

On a day between now and 31st December, 1957, a thin, frail man, walking a dusty road, will give India a chance to decide.

DURGA PUJA IN ASSAM

(Continued From Page 12)

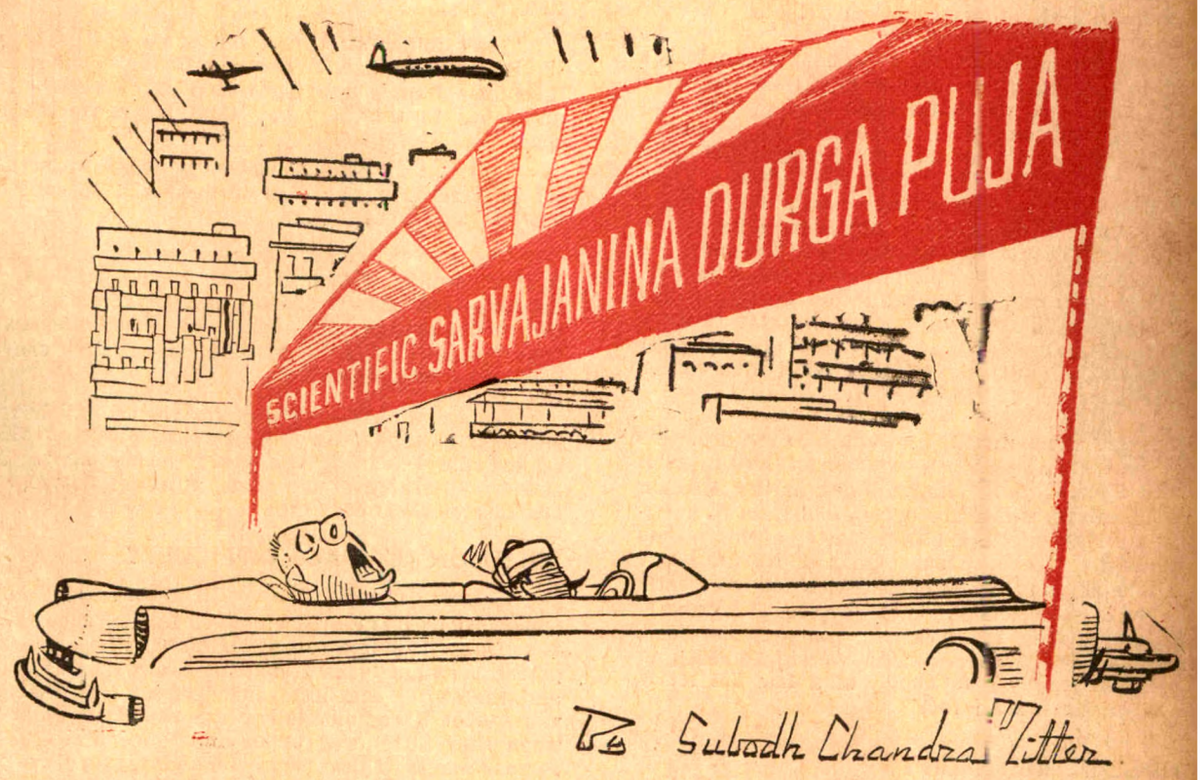
Durga Puja on an astounding scale. Animals, goats and buffaloes, were sacrificed in hundreds, and *bhawanas* (village operas) and folk-plays were organised on a lavish scale. It was open for public co-operation, and those who refused or failed to do obeisance to the Goddess, as desired by the Queen, were forced under threat of death to do obeisance to the Goddess. The Vaishnava preachers, including Chaturbhuj, a powerful spiritual head of the volatile Moamaria sect, were invited by the Queen to the celebrations. As is natural, Chaturbhuj and his followers politely refused to do obeisance to the Goddess. At this, the Queen had them brought to the place of worship under threat of arms, and were forced to do obeisance to Goddess Durga at her behest; their foreheads were forcibly besmeared with the blood of the animals that were sacrificed in the ritual.

CRUEL BLOOD BATH

The efforts made to introduce Durga Puja into the religious life of Assam constitute a history of political discord and cruel blood-bath. This is the first chapter of the history of the introduction of Durga worship here; the second chapter of it came to be written with the Bengalis who came to this country along with British administrators. The spirit in which the Britishers introduced Christmas celebrations into this country *i.e.* to keep up home traditions in a foreign country, was the spirit behind the enthusiasm of the Bengalis who came with them in their efforts to make Durga Puja an item of religion here. It was natural to a people separated from their homeland and their local cultural environments.

By now, it has, naturally enough, gone deep into the mind and heart of the people here, and it is with great eagerness that they await the autumn to come, and with it the Durga Puja,—the autumn bebause it brings a refreshing time and the Durga Puja because it brings them the joy of celebrations and a few care-free days from the chronic tedium of life. It is an undeniable fact that the deep religious appeal of it and its mysterious and highly esoteric aspects are over-shadowed by the spirit of gay abandon and *joie de vivre* inherent in its very life-spirit. Whatever religious appeal of the Puja exists, it is only in its pale cast.

SREEKRISHNA—THE SUPREME LORD



KALURAM VIDYADVIGAJA came back home after having finished his long tour round the globe extending over a period of well-nigh four decades and a half, rich with scientific lore both ancient and modern. Nothing surprised him so much, neither the present Howrah Bridge, nor the spacious roads like Vivekananda Spur and Chittaranjan Avenue, nor even the tall mansions that skirt them, as the red pieces of cloth with the words Sarvajanina Durga Puja inscribed on them with bold silver letters, suspended high across these thoroughfares almost regularly a furlong apart, from a verandah to a verandah across the streets. Soon he found himself asking, 'What do these things really portend ? Are they commercial advertisements ? In our time they used to write *Pujar Vipula Ayojana*. Are they something akin to that or are they merely kite-flying by party politicians ?'

Ere he could come to any definite conclusion, his car swirled into an alley, kissed a ground-floor balcony and stopped at the entrance of his ancestral house. Some youngsters assembled on the balcony with bunches of paper in hand resembling booklets of lottery (Raffle) tickets greeted him with folded arms. He returned their greetings, exchanged smiles with them and said : 'Do I know you at all my young friends ? No, you were none of you perhaps born when I left home last !

'No sir', replied the boys, 'We are satellites of great men. We move in high circles. Your name and eminence have reached our ears. So, we n gather round you.'

'So nice of you, replied Kaluram, 'but this is r perhaps the proper time, either for you or for n to pick up new acquaintance.'

'No sir, subscription sir, we leave you quick cried out a pert youngster of the party.

Kaluram smiled at him and asked, 'What am to subscribe for? 'For the Sarvajanina Durga Pu sir,' came the reply.

'Glorious!' ejaculated Kaluram, 'You have cor just in time! I was simply getting mad to know wh it actually meant. Come in, come to my roc please.'

Kaluram led the way, the boys followed hi looking askance at each other. Soon they all ente ed Kaluram's office room.

WHAT THIS PUJA?

When they had all taken their seats Kalura began, 'Yes, my friends, what is Sarvajanina Durg Puja ? Nothing of it was even in air when I le home. Is it really a form of congregational worship

'No, no, sir, nothing of the kind,' replied th leader of the juvenile party, 'Only one and or minister officiates at the function. The rest are a spectators.'

'No, sir, another person plays the role of prompter.' Thus corrected second boy.

'Yes, I know that', replied Kaluram, 'He is know as Tantradharaka'. 'Yes sir, yes sir, you sti remember it', cried out the boys. 'How then can

Sarvajanina ?' enquired Kaluram and added, en I was a small boy, like many of you present , I read a poem named Universal Prayer—Father ll etc. That poem was translated as Sarvajanina ra *Sakaler pita tumi tumi sarvamaya.* So, I rally thought it to be a universal worship of ga where Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsees istians and all others could participate.

"Surely sir, we have no objection to anybody's ng part in it, if he chooses to do so", observed of the boys to which Kaluram replied, 'Yes that be so, but some such element must be introed in the worship so that none might feel any ple in joining in it. Rabindranath was a great . Others before him might or might not have ered him in poetic genius, but there is no denythe fact that today Rabindranath's name is e universally known than any of his predeces-. Go to any part of the world and ask the people re, they will say, yes we know him through nslations of his poems. Have you ever stopped hink of the real cause of this world-wide fame? The boys cried, 'No, no.'

Kaluram went on: 'Rabindranath never drew his tic inspiration from any wonder of Nature such Aurora Borealis, or Niagra Falls, or the Amazon the Himalays, which are but special gifts to partir countries, but the subject matter of his poems confined to the commonest gifts of Nature, such the blue sky, purling streams, green foliage, gentle eze etc., which one comes across everywhere. nce his universal appreciation. You are, therefore, introduce in the Sarvajanina worship something ch is not merely a monopoly of a few but really mon to the human race.'

ONDERFUL RESEARCH !

'Yes, please find out what that element is and we ll spare no pains to introduce it in our mode of ship. As a matter of fact a competition has wn up almost unwittingly among the different ties about the introduction of novelty. So, yearly novelties crop up in different sectors.' Thus gested one amongst the boys present there.

Kaluram answered: 'In my humble view man is orn self-seeker. Self-seeking is congenital to human race. I am supported by Darwin in view, although he uses a different expression. It n this struggle of self-seeking that the fittest ne survives. So the present generation of men women is only the cream of self-seekers' comnity. Parents' love towards their children, which s so speciously selfless, is not altogether free n expectation of help in times of need. So my s, try and introduce this self-seeking element in r mode of worship and you will find that not y all men but all birds and beasts will join you in time!

Laughter marked the scene and the boys reked: Thank you sir, for your wonderful research, that element is not altogether absent in the pret day Sarvajanina Puja.

ACE SHORTAGE

'Very well', said Kaluram, 'tell me all about your lculties and I shall remove them scientifically as as it lies in my power to do so'.

'Our first difficulty is about space,' remarked one the boys and added, 'Influx of displaced persons in city has encroached upon so much of its space t hardly a square foot of vacant land is now available for the erection of the pandal. The other factor is also of no mean order. Sarvajanina Puja is increasing by leaps and bounds every year due to party faction.'

'Paucity of space is no real difficulty to scientists nowadays', replied Kaluram and added 'Modern scientists can create space almost *ad lib,* out of time.'

'Can't follow sir,' burst out some of the boys.

Kaluram replied, 'Why not? Haven't you noticed in cinema houses light converted into speech? It is analogous to that, here time is converted into space.'

'How can we possibly believe it unless we actually see it done as in the case of light and speech?' remarked those boys.

'Yes, you will follow me after you have heard me in full', replied Kaluram and went on: 'Yes, by applying the theory of *commintern* scientists can now convert time into space so that one having time eternal at one's command can easily convert it into infinite space.'

'Yes sir, we have heard of the theory, but haven't yet seen it applied to any practical purpose.' Thus replied the leader of the young men's party, and added: 'Please give us some practical advice, we are sick of theories.'

SOLUTION OF SPACE DIFFICULTY

Kaluram now went on with a grave and philosophical look: 'The oft-committed fallacy about space is to think it limited to the earth's surface alone, forgetful of its existence in abundance between the earth and the sky. The first businessmen to take advantage of it commercially were the Railway people when they introduced upper and lower berth in the compartments of carriages for conveyance of passengers. But the greatest exploitation of this space that has uptill now been made is by the American architects who have introduced sky-scrapers in their country (Laughter).

'But sir', said the leader, 'we have been allotted a delta shaped pavement at the crossing of two main thoroughfares. Its measurement hardly touches 10 sq. ft., and we have to keep clear space for a two-way traffic. How can that be feasible?'

'Why not?' replied Kaluram, 'Erect scaffoldings with layers of shelves. The different images can be arranged in a vertical column each being accommodated in each of these layers of shelf.'

'How can that be, sir?' asked a boy, 'Lakshmi and Saraswati are to remain by the side of Mother Durga.'

'Not necessarily', retorted Kaluram, 'Some people place Saraswati on the right side of Durga while others place her on the left side. So you see there is no hard and fast rule to follow about the location of these images. Besides, these two goddesses are neither A.D.C.s to Durga, nor did they ever participate in the fight against the demon Mahisha. They are silent figures, mere side shows and function like apothecary's show bottles.' (Laughter) 'No, this objection must be overruled. What next please?'

'How do you propose to arrange them'? enquired the leader.

'Yes, that's a point to be settled,' answered Kaluram and said, 'Ganesha must be placed at the bottom and Shiva at the top'.

'Why?' asked the boys. 'Ganesha is to be worshipped first and Shiva last,' replied Kaluram.

'All right sir, we appreciate,' replied the boys. Kartick must be placed just above Ganesha ready

KALURAM IS A MAN OF WONDERFUL IDEAS AND BOLD INNOVATIONS

with bow and arrow, lest Shani might once more do him any harm. Of course ordinary arrows won't do, they must be tipped with some explosives.' Thus proposed Kaluram and the boys agreed.

Then came the question of the two wives of Vishnu. Who was to get the precedence? Vishnu himself has not assigned precedence to any and has always allowed them equal status. So, how to decide this troublesome question of precedence of the two co-wives? Kaluram cut this Gordian knot by judging the ratio of their devotees. Undoutedly Lakshmi claims the larger number. As times are getting harder her devotees are increasing by leaps and bounds. The school teachers, who had ere long been exclusive devotees of Sarasvati, being pinched with poverty are now turning their heels to her and casting a look of supplication at Lakshmi. So, it is settled that Lakshmi should have precedence over Sarasvati and should be placed above the shelf occupied by Sarasvati. Accordingly, Sarasvati's place is allotted to the shelf above that of Kartick and Lakshmi's to the next above it. The fifth shelf from the bottom is to be occupied by Mahisha and the one above it, which is to be pretty high, is assigned for Durga on Her lion. The one above Durga's being the topmost is reserved for Shiva. Nobody having raised any objection this arrangement stood confirmed.

ANOTHER DIFFICULTY

A point, however, was raised as to how the offerings were to reach the deities on the upper shelves. Kaluram at once answered: 'By means of a toy rocket flowers and other offerings are to reach them.' So, this point also was settled.

At this suggestion the boys cried out: 'Sir, you are a man of wonderful ideas and bold innovations, we leave the entire management at your hands, we will utilize our energies in collecting subscriptions. So, please say how much you propose to subscribe to our funds.'

Kaluram said, 'I shall bear the whole expense of your Sarvajanina Puja, if you only follow my advice.'

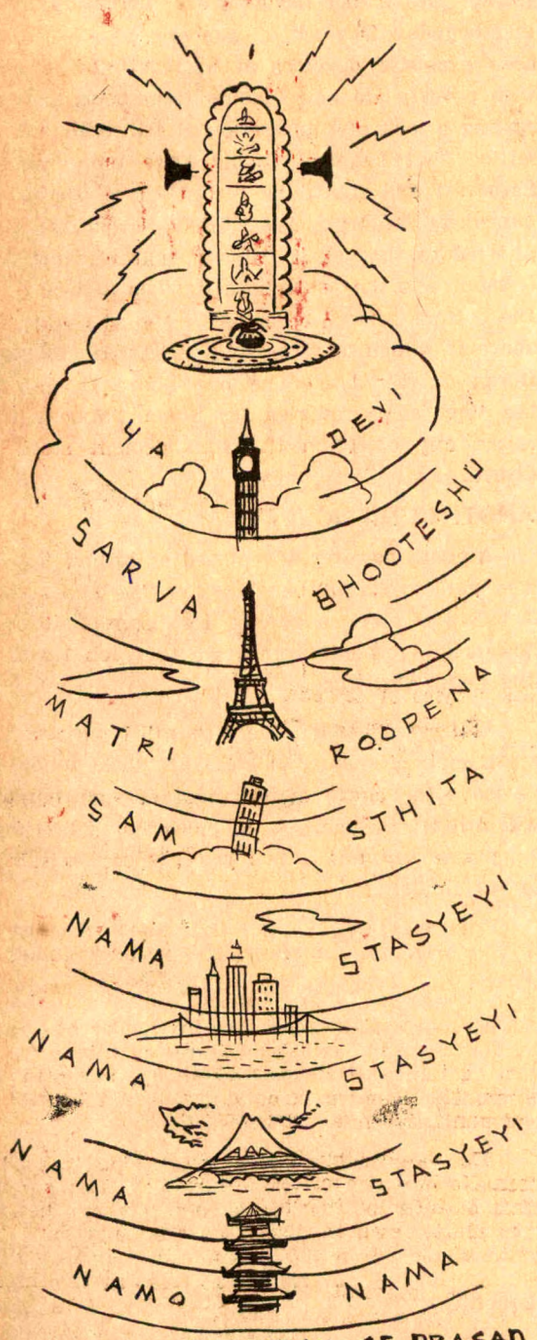
The boys raised their eyes in wonder at him and he continued: 'You see we are scientists, we can turn coal into diamond. So, we are never in want of money. Diamond is only jewellers' favourite, but gold and silver are favourites of all'.

'Can you make gold out of nothing?' asked one of the boys and Kaluram replied: 'That's not at all a difficult job, but we should stay our hands in the matter. All civilized governments are now converting paper into gold and silver and we should not tread on government's toes in this matter.' (Laughter)

GRAND PREPARATIONS!

The next day Kaluram inspected the delta-shaped spot, had high scaffoldings erected with shelves and placed the images in the order proposed the day before. In course of a few days he brought several helicopters, fixed telescope on the parapets of high buildings of the town as well as on the high railings of the bridges over the river Hooghly, planted broadcasting instruments in a park in North Calcutta and converted that park simultaneously into an airport and a landing station of numerous hang-

ing bridges and hanging roads constructed temporarily to divert the crowd of spectators, flash lights were fixed on tree-tops to illumine the sky so that plane-crash and other such accidents could be avoided. A network of rope-ways were constructed to send Puja offerings to the deities from devotees



AFTER THE DISTRIBUTION OF PRASAD BY AIR, THE RECITAL OF CHANDI WAS BROADCAST TO REMOTE PARTS OF THE WORLD

of far off lands. A publicity board was set up to proclaim this festivity to the far easterners and far westerners through their representatives in Calcutta. An unprecedented enthusiasm prevailed in the town and its suburbs. Devotees' excitement knew no bounds. Visitors from foreign countries began to pour in. Some were accommodated in the Tereti Bazar colony of the town and entertained in subterranean gambling dens after being served with black tea, prawn cutlets, roasted bacon etc., others were housed in sky-scrapers as could be found in Calcutta-1, and were entertained in a cinema house at Chowringhee after being served with cocoa, ice-creams etc.; still others were lodged in the secret cells of a defunct fort in the Calcutta Maidan with iron guards to protect their secrecy. They were entertained with secret games of an astute nature after being served with secret dishes, everything being secret with them.

PRASAD : SCIENTIFIC DISTRIBUTION

On the Mahasaptami day a special police force was seen hovering in chartered Dakota planes round the monumental pandal and shouting through mikes *'Apahatasi Asurani Vedisata'* (Evil spirits round the pandal go to the ruin) Some helicopters fitted with ambulance requisites and bearing red cross marks were seen lifting with the help of parachutes the injured people from amidst the mass of pedestrians struggling on hanging roads and hanging bridges, the main thoroughfares being reserved for vehicular traffic.

When the Puja was over *prasads* or the sacraments of the deities were dropped from flying planes packed in plastic bags with marks of Swastika on them specially made for the occasion, in the same way as is done in times of war to the besieged garrison. *Charanamrita* or the sacred washings of the deities' feet were also dropped in like manner sealed in plastic ampullae. When these things threatened to get exhausted the Governor of the management ordered the *prasadas* still remaining to be pulverized into fine attenuation and sprinkled through sprays to the devotees assembled in the pandal zone. *Charcnamrita* too was ordered to be reduced to mist and cast over them in nebular form. Nobody, of course, ostensibly grudged at this arrangement which ensured even distribution to all, but many felt sorry at heart for not having stomach loads of *prasadas*. After this *pradsada* distribution ceremony the recital of Chandi was broadcast to remote parts of the world such as North Cape, Godhab, Honoluloo etc, where it was still an unheard of things. In this way passed the three-day worship of Mother Durga amid thumping excitement and cheers.

IMMERSION: IMAGES IN BALLOONS

When the fourth day came difficulty arose as to the immersion of the images. How to take them out through these heavy throngs of people ? Kaluram solved the problem by taking them in transparent balloons so that every one who once turned his eyes at the sky could easily have a full view of the images flying. They are landed in a sea-moth moored in the river Hooghly. That vessel moved listlessly on the river exhibiting the images to the long lines of spectators who had assembled on both banks of the stream. People from different bridges fitted with telescopes also saw them through those instruments. So did also the people gathered on the high terraces of the telescope-fitted houses near the strand. Durga Devi being a fighting Goddess, immersion cere-

(*Continued on Page 48*)

FROGS and THE MAN

By Ananda

"Yes, take it all around, there is quite a good deal of information in this book. I regret this very much; but really it could not be helped. Information appears to stew out of me naturally, like the precious ottar of roses out of the otter.....I can only claim indulgence at the hands of the reader, not Justification."

— Mark Twain in his preface to "Roughing it and the Innocents at Home"

WITH me, it is not otters but frogs. Two hundred frogs. No, two thousand frogs. Stewing out.

No, don't tell it. I know it myself. I know very well that at my time of life, "frogs" should hardly be a suitable subject to spill on people,—specially in a "Puja" number. A week ago, I had no such designs.

In point of fact, I was just on the brink of a ripe brain-wave,—"humorous" as they call it,—and then three days ago, this friend of my youth came and filled me up with frogs. He told me all that could conceivably be told about frogs in the course of one morning.

You remember what happened to me when another friend dropped in and talked "cement" for three hours? You should, for I told you all about it in one of my Sunday talks His sole excuse was that he was not getting cement for his house from "Control." So he sought relief by talking cement to me. He got it after he had finished. All I got was a head full of cement. For three days, I could only speak on the subject of cement.

On the fourth day, a loud speaker down my street crashed into song and broke the spell. The shell, I mean.

The surprising part of this man's breaking into the "frog" theme was that I had never suspected him of having any truck with these animals. I thought that I could say of him what Wordsworth the poet had said of another man in the context of "primroses":

"A bull-frog by a river's brim
Was just a bull-frog to him
And was nothing more."

It couldn't be anything more with other bees buzzing in his bonnet for years No, not quite bees. Birds. This man has birds on the brain. He is what is commonly called a "bird-watcher."

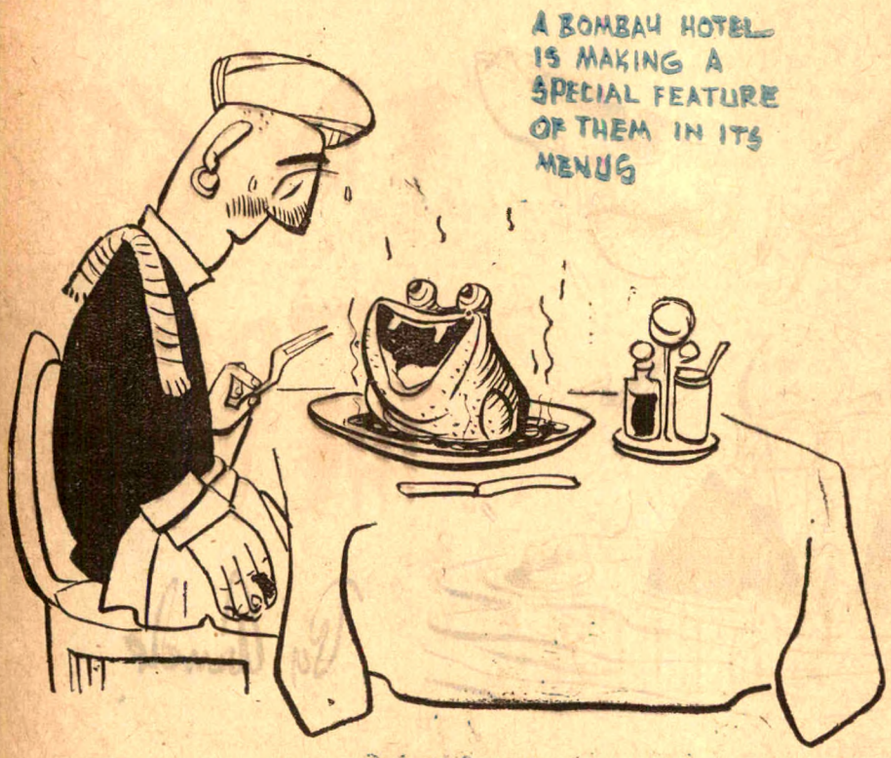
He watches birds Heaven knows why, but he does. No bird can escape his watching. Miss Mallika Mala bathing in the Dhakuria Lake might escape the eyes of our research students but nothing in feathers could elude the watchful eye of this bird-watcher.

One moment, he would be talking intently about Tagore and his contributions to humanity. Next moment, his eyes would light on a crow or a rook or a sparrow or something out of the window, —and he would quietly pass out as if you had shot a horse's dose of morphine into his veins. After that, No Tagore, no humanity, nothing.

And then he would walk out of the room, sort of "sleep-walking," and shadow that bird for miles.

It is on record that once when he was lunch-

ing with a friend on the latter's back verandah, he saw a bird pottering in an adjoining field. Nobody else did. He left that table without a word and returned to it in the evening when the family was sitting down to dinner. He explained that it was a rare variety of the "Shrike," and naturally, he wanted to get a first-hand knowledge of its habits.



It is also on record that once he held up traffic on the Chowringhee junction for full three minutes, — standing on the middle of the road and staring at something. When the sergeant came up, he pointed to a bird on a tree-top. The sergeant had a lot to say but didn't say them. Just the day before, the Commissioner had given a talk to the "Force" on the importance of Courtesy in crises.

When he started bringing the frog *motif* into the conversation, I asked him why he was doing it. "Why "frogs"? He was surprised at the question. He said that he understood I was interested in frogs. He had read my article "Bang!" in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. Did I know that the price of frogs in Travancore-Cochin had gone up last week from one anna to double that amount ? I didn't. He said that whether I believed it or not, it remained a fact.

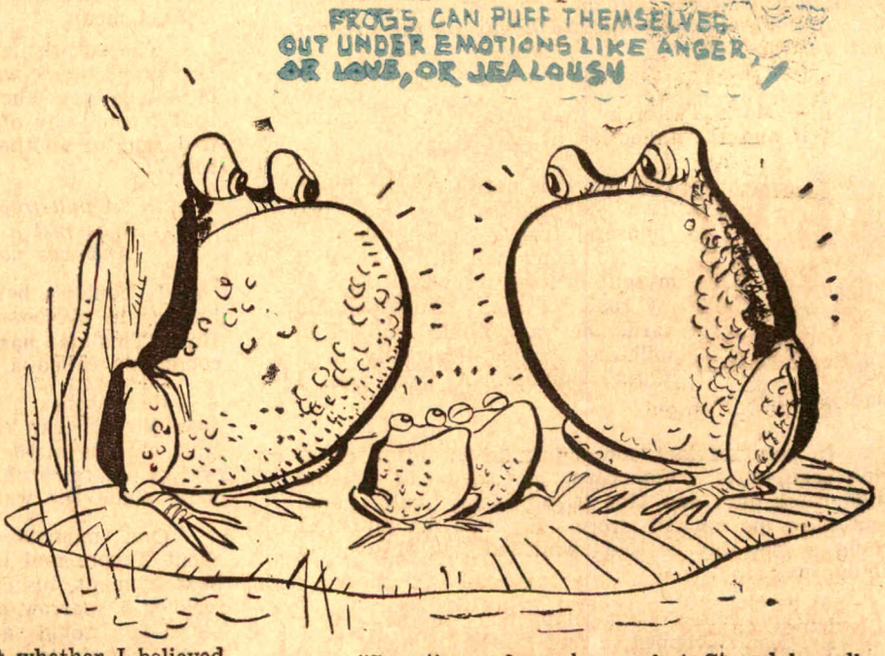
It was all because of these frogs belonging to the saline species "Rana Limnocharis," edible and very popular in the U.S.A. Frogs were being exported to America by hundreds, like monkeys. A Bombay hotel is making a special feature of them in its menus. So the price is shooting up. The question of a price control on frogs is being hotly debated in the knowledgeable circles of Kottayam.

If he had stopped there, perhaps it would not have been so bad. But he didn't stop. He confessed that my "Bang" had tickled him to such effect that he had been giving a miss-in-baulk to the birds for the last two months and watching forgs only. He had also read up all available on the subject.

He said that the Travancore-Cochin forgs were 2½ inches in size and the males had black patches on their throats. They are remarkable among amphibians for their readiness to take to brakish or even salt water. They occur in the Himalayas up to 7000 ft.

I asked him, how did he know all this ? He said that he had read it all in Sterndale's "Mammals of India." I asked him again, what made him read Sterndale's whatever-it-was and who was Sterndale, anyway ? He confessed that it was all brought on by my "Bang!" After that, I sank back in my bed. He went on with his job.

"The common Indian toad (Safo melanostictus)", he drooled, "is a crawler rather than a hopper in its gait. It readily comes indoors. The bull-frog (Rana tigrina) is the largest amongst Indian frogs. It spends much of its time in water. The Tree frog is 3 inches high.....



"Sometimes, frogs have what Sterndale calls a 'dry time.' Then they get thin. They absorb plenty of water and become plump again and fit for the table.

"Frogs can puff themselves out under emotions

(Continued on Page 48)

Social Satires of Old Calcutta

By Mukul Gupta

SATIRE is the medium, in poem or prose, for holding up to delightful ridicule the failings and follies and the lapses and defaults of the people in the contemporary society. It does not respect any persons or personalities. Indeed, more often than not, the higher strata of the society are the easy and handy victims of satirical assaults. The assault may or may not be born of malice. Its objective may be reformative. But there is no denying that it wobbles on the borderline of the corrective zeal and benevolent wickedness. Whether it does or does not leave a sting, a satire is an index of the vigilant eyes of the social or political watchdogs who would let no slip go 'unbarked'.

The satirists lend joy and jest to the social life which sometimes suffers from dull monotony. Eighteenth century Calcutta was a blend of many conflicting vices and virtues, of simple undertones and outrageous excesses. In the twilight of those early days, the English settlers led a life which could not be claimed, in general, to be a story of untainted virtues. Lapses and false steps were there, and often in plenty. Merriments, in many instances, degenerated into unseemly indulgences. Easy wealth and easy conscience made an unholy alliance in which the old and the youngsters were active partners. But there was a cross-section of the people who honestly endeavoured to restore the erring brethren

most common instrument, not always unsuccessfu wielded, was social satires mostly ventilated throu the hospitable columns of the journals a periodicals.

JAMES AUGUSTUS HICKY

James Augustus Hicky, the wild Irishman w gave India her first English newspaper, was one the earliest satirists of Calcutta. Himself a man easy conscience and suffering from no over-burde of scruples, Hicky would not pardon the follies a failings in his contemporaries. Sometime in 178 his famous Gazette gave a rude but enjoyable sho to its readers by a pungent satire in the form Questions-and-Answers.

Q. What is Commerce ?
A. Gambling.
Q. What is the most cardinal virtue ?
A. Riches.
Q. What is fraud ?
A. Detection.
Q. What is beauty ?
A. Paint.
Q. What is punctuality ?
A. An observation of the appointments c duelling and intriguing.
Q. What is gentility ?
A. Extravagance.
Q. Who are the people ?
A. Nobody.

lished in the form of an advertisement sometime 781. It read :

"WANTED - A resolution not to bribe, or a determination not to be bribed.

LOST - The dignity of high life in attention to trifles.

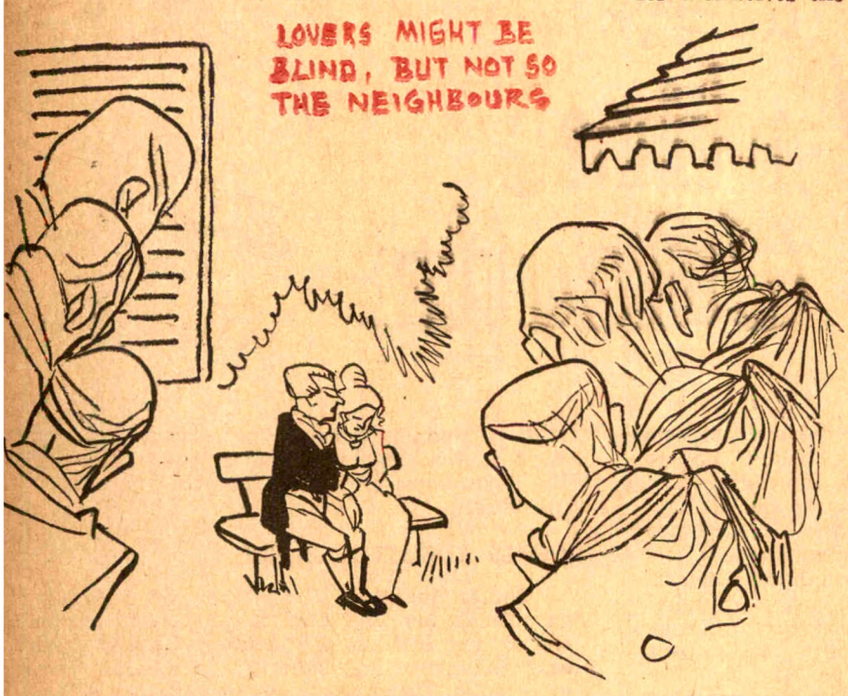
STOLEN - Into the country, the inhabitants of Esplanade.

ON SALE - For ready money whatever ought to be purchased by merit only."

The veiled references are to the undesirable al habits to which the contemporary English abitants of Calcutta had become all too suscepti-

OROUS EXCHANGES

Love-making is as old as the Man and Woman. re is nothing wrong with it as long as it is within ts and does not overtoe the bounds of graceful raint. But in those days it sometimes went into ths which the accepted codes of decorum and ncy could not sanction. Amorous exchanges of



rts and side-long glances came in for a good deal panter. Once a member of the Government took cy for a Miss Wranghams - a charming lady of t beauty. Lovers might be blind, but not so the hbours. And it was not long before their affairs, ch. they thought, they had succeeded in keeping the public gaze, came to be widely known and ned the subject of saucy social gossips. Imagine discomfiture of the unsuspecting gentleman n one fine morning he opened his paper to find :

"Counsellor Feeble now constantly drinks a sort of cordial dram which he calls W-g-h eye-water and of which he drinks so freely that he d'ye see, retires tipsy - he, he !"

In 1781, there appeared another satirical sketch against whom it was directed is not known. It :

"LOST on the Racecourse, last Monday evening, Buxley Clumsey's heart whilst he stood simpering at the footstep of Hooka Turban's carriage."

LADIES NOT ALWAYS FIRST

In 1797, something happened which caused considerable anguish and annoyance to the ladies in the higher rungs of the official and social aristocracy. A new church was to be consecrated in Calcutta in that year. Formerly, the ladies used to sit in a pew in a line with the Governor-General. But the order was changed and in the new church they could not occupy the seats more advanced than those of the Judges of the Supreme Court. The vanity of the ladies was pricked by this judicial infiltration but they were helpless. The anguish of the displaced ladies peeped through their knitted eyebrows and there were not a few who wickedly relished their delicate discomfiture. The discontent of the ladies produced a delightful satire :

"The ladies on the LORD relied
To dignify their forms divine,
But now, forsaken by their pride,
To COURT the praying maidens join."

LAWYERS HAD THEIR SHARE

Somehow or other, lawyers and attorneys earned for themselves the dislike of the people and no opportunity was spared to have a dig at them. A man of wit and humour must have been responsible for offering, free of all cost, the following epitaph for the lawyers and attorneys which they might use for themselves or for their brethren in the trade, without any infringement of the rights of the author:

"God works wonders now and then,
Here lies a lawyer and on honest man".
"This a mere law quibble not a wonder,
Here lies a lawyer and his client under."

But there was, indeed, a cruel but amusing hit in what came out as an epigram:

"The attorneys of Calcutta may be said to be lawyers what apothecaries are to physicians, only that they do not deal in scruples".

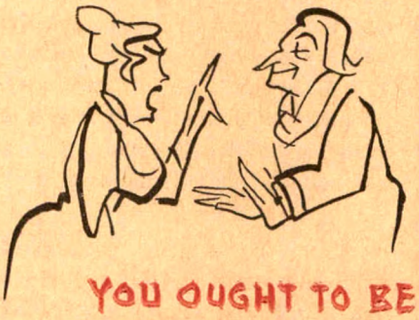
But the satirical poem that excited a real sensation in the social circles of the then Calcutta fringed on Philip Francis, sworn enemy of Warren Hastings and also his Counsellor in the Supreme Council. George Francis Grand, a man in the East India Company's civil service, married a Mademoiselle Werlee whose "fine, blue eyes with black eyelashes and brows gave her countenance of a most piquant singularity." Francis attached himself to this French girl and laid himself, by his conduct, open to be attacked by law. In the suit filed by Grand, the Judges differed in their findings. Justice Hyde said that "though the evidence was slight, it satisfied his mind of the guilt of the defendant and justified a judgment for the plaintiff." But, Sir Robert Chambers, another Judge, declared that he thought that the "plaintiff had totally failed to make out his case, and must be non-suited, in support of which

A CONTEMPORARY SATIRIST WHO GAVE A PICTURE OF THIS MENTAL ATTITUDE PREVAILS EVEN TODAY AMONGST CIVIL SERVANTS —

I AM A COLLECTOR

HE WAS A COLLECTOR

WE SHALL BE COLLECTORS



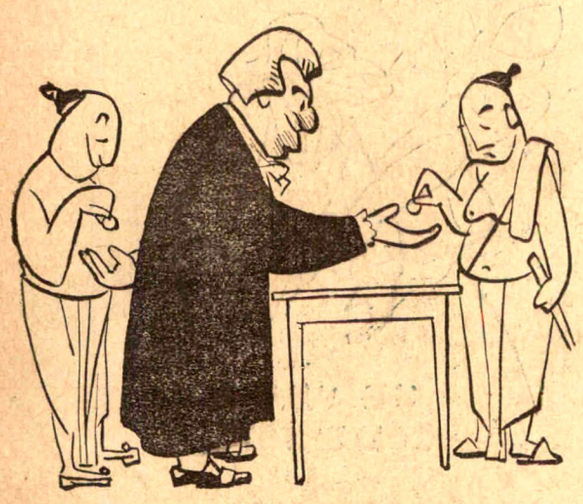
YOU OUGHT TO BE A COLLECTOR

THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN COLLECTORS

(A CONJUGATION OF THE VERB 'TO COLLECT')

AN EPIGRAM :—

" THE ATTORNEYS OF CALCUTTA MAY BE SAID TO BE LAWYERS WHAT APOTHECARIES ARE TO PHYSICIANS, ONLY THAT THEY DO NOT DEAL IN SCRUPLES "



opinion he cited many late cases wnerein the law had clearly been laid by the ablest civilians of the present-day, men who were equally an honour and ornament of the British Bench." Sir Elijah Impey, the Chief Justice, concurred with Justice Hyde in the opinion that "the evidence entitled the plaintiff to a judgement and that such judgment should be fifty thousand siccas."

Within a week after the trial a petition of Appeal to His Majesty in Council against the judgment was preferred. As the petition was being moved, Grand's Attorney Mr. Tilgham, received a three-line note from Francis. Soon after he had glanced over the note, he requested the leave of the Court to "withdraw the motion he had just made." All present in the Court were taken by surprise at this sudden move from Grand's side. The leave was granted. Gossips and conjectures were spun in plenty to explain the reasons for the withdrawal. But the prevailing opinion was that Grand, who felt embarrassed, had proposed a composition and consented to take a part of the damages to put an end to the none-too-pleasant affairs. Francis, on his part, was only too anxious to draw the curtain over the matter and bury it once for all, since, as a married man, the incident, if carried to England where his wife used to live, would bring upon him dishonour and indignities.

In all these affairs Francis had a useful accomplice in one Mr. Shee who, later, was Sir George Shee. The Chief Justice made most caustic remarks about Shee and observed that "his behaviour was as reprehensible as it was derogatory to the character of a gentleman." The censure of the Chief Justice on the conduct of Shee, the amorous adventures of Philip Francis, the sudden composition of the suit by Grand—all these inspired many lampoons of which the most relished one was by one Colonel Ironside. It was :

"Psha ! what a Fuss, 'twixt SHEE, and 'twixt her !
What abuse of a dear little creature,
A GRAND and a mighty affair to be sure,
Just to give a light PHILIP (fillip) to nature,
How can you, ye prudes, blame a luscious young wench,
Who so fond is of Loves and Romances,
Whose customs and manners are tout a fait French,
For admiring whatever from FRANCE-IS !"

HUNT FOR BRIDEGROOMS

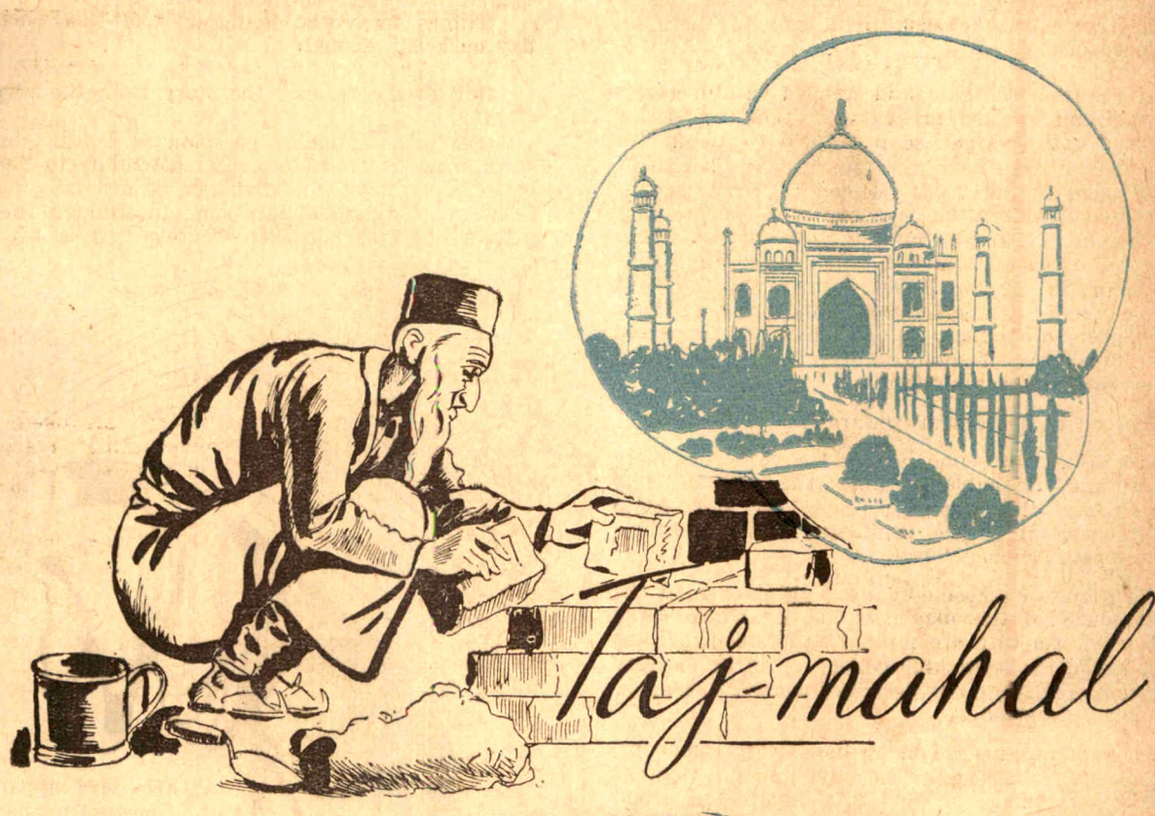
Another theme, which provoked frequent satires, was the 'husband-hunting' craze of the damsels of the day. Their eyes roved about for civil servants who, by common consent, were considered to be the most eligible as grooms. They were called "Three - hundred-a-year-dead-or-alive-men" from the fact that their pay, when they joined, was £300 a year. If they had put in sufficiently long service before death, their widows drew a pension of £300 a year. To capture such young men, it was not unpardonable for ladies to make all endeavours to clothe them in unfailing charms by undergoing an elaborate prescription of beauty treatment and top-dressing. A contemporary poem satirised the frantic efforts of unsuccessful husband-hunters to retain their English bloom and freshness :

"Pale faded stuffs, by time grown faint
Will brighten up through art;
A Britain gives their faces paint,
For sale at India's mart."

GIBES AT CIVIL SERVANTS

Civil servants of those early days used to put on airs around themselves and spared no opportunity to lend an impression of a superior social status. Such an attitude created obvious displeasure in the minds of those less fortunately placed. The snobbish exclusiveness of the civil servants provoked saucy satires not unoften. Whenever these civil servants met, they used to talk shop. Their vocabulary was restricted to the limits of official language and they found no delight or interest in talking about matters which were not official. Most of them were Collectors—the heads of the district administration—and whenever they met, whether in clubs or in private get-togethers, the only subjects they relished to discuss were transfers, promotions or prospects for better employment. A contemporary satirist gave a vivid picture of this mental attitude which, perhaps, prevails even today amongst the civil servants :

"Whatever subject may be started they contrive to twist it, drag it, clip it and pinch it, till they bring it round to that and if left to themselves they sit and conjugate the verb 'to collect' : I am a Collector—He was a Collector — We shall be Collectors — You ought to be a Collector — They would have been Collectors."



Taj-mahal

By BANAPHUL

Emperor Shah Jehan's death-defying love for his wife is enshrined in the world-famous Taj-mahal. But there is no monument to speak of the equally great love of a Faquir bearing the name of the Emperor, who has remained obscure. The writer discovers the man and tells us all about him in a remarkable way.

OF COURSE the first time I visited Agra, I went to see the Taj.... The feeling I had at sight of this world-famous specimen of superb architecture, I remember vividly to this day.

I had been travelling by train, and was yet some distance away from the station....Sudenly a fellow-passenger bawled out excitedly....."Ah, there's the Taj!" he was beaming shining delight, and proudly pointing to it.

Quickly I thrust my head out of the window.

So, there was the Taj, really!

But this wonder of wonders, if I must be frank and truthful, from this distant compartment of a fast-running train in revealing daylight, rather disappointed me ... It was so much like an ordinary masjid, was this Taj ... One of many, and indistinguishable from the rest.

Still, I gazed at it with unwinking eyes....For, whatever it might look like, it was, after all, the Taj, the fondest dream in spotless marble of the love-lorn emperor to immortalise his dearest sweetheart.

During the wearying days of captivity and humiliation the helpless lover would sit on a languid afternoon, on the balcony of the historic fort, his dimming, wistful eyes rivetted upon this noble mausoleum, hallowed by the sacred memory of his beloved Mumtaz.

However he might have been depicted otherwise, and disreputed for unfeeling inhumanity, Alamgir, all his atrocities notwithstanding, was not, really, altogether heartless... He respected the last wishes of his aged, infirm father.

As I looked on and on at this far-famed tomb there arose before my mind's eye the vision of a long and solemn procession slowly meandering along the winding streets of the city with a bier with the once mighty monarch laid in it in eternal rest.

At last Shah Jehan, with all the pomp and splendour due to the late sovereign ruler of Hindusthan, is on his last journey to re-unite with the darling of his heart in everlasting union.

The long and painful separation is at an end ... The gruelling torment of body and soul is, at last, happily over.

The coffin with his mortal remains, is gently and tenderly lowered into the bowels of the earth ...

Mumtaz and Shah Jehan ... Side by side they lie in calm, interminable repose in this lover's paradise, the Taj.

If memory does not play me false, there was—or rather, probably there still is—a third grave adjoining this Taj-mahal.....It interred the severed remains of the beheaded crown prince Dara Shiko.

As the train sped swiftly on the plain mosque-like Taj, as it then appeared to me, fast disappeared from view.

On the day following the full-moon I went to see the Taj for the second time, after sun-down.... The tingling of ecstatic thrill I felt on this occasion, is still fresh in my memory ....

It was early in the evening. The stately moon

had not, as yet, made her appearance of grace and grandeur in the sky ... Only a mellow effulgence lit up the fringes of the eastern horizon and heralded her approach ...

As I crossed the gate and stepped within, a very faint murmur greeted my ears ... The whispering music did not, at least, so it seemed to me at the moment, emanate from the soaring firs bordering the adjacent avenue....It seemed to come floating to me from the forgotten depths of some remote past, long gone by .... It was more like the stirring, strangled sobs of some anguished soul than the silky rustling of the sighing leaves, fanned by the soft evening breeze ... And, in that transparent darkness the exquisite monument, as yet unsighted, appeared like a huge heap of sombre gloom, only denser and blacker than its surroundings.

Slowly I bent my steps towards it.

As I drew nearer and nearer, the more and more defined and definable became the Minars and Minarets and the cupolas....Even the snow-white principal central edifice itself was now discernible in its sable envelope

Then quite unexpectedly, as if all at once, at the merest touch of the magic wand, the whole thing was flooded over with dreamy light and stood revealed before me in its bewitching beauty....in its entirety it became a reality to my electrified consciousness....

I was galvanized ...

The radiant fairy moon, in her silvery splendour, was now there smiling in the sky: and me thought that the very image of Mumtaz's dream, the proud empress of a mighty monarch, warmly welcomed and received me in the open arms of cordial hospitality ... I was completely overcome ...

In speechless awe I stared at it, charmed and subdued...

A long time has rolled by since I had this glimpse of the ethereal fantasy woven intimately into the texture of this magnificent and marvellous memorial.

Apart from the delicately poetic and divinely artistic aspects of this glorious piece of splendid and unique architectural achievement, I have, in the meantime, been posted fairly accurately, in matters grossly mundane as well.. I have been informed what a wide margin between the amount earmarked for and the amount actually spent in its maintenance, is left over to the credit of the lucky contractors entrusted with this job, how from the ceaseless stream of visitors the keepers of near-by hotels have leapt from indigence to opulence and turned into veritable nabobs, what an enormous profit the pedlars raise from the sale of miniature replicas of the Taj, and of peculiarly-shaped cigarette-holders, made of cheap and useless stone what criminally exorbitant rates the ignorant sight-seers are charged by the unscrupulous tongawallahs (drivers of a particular variety of light two-wheeled vehicles) to take them to and from the Taj, and so on and so forth.

I have subsequently seen this matchless beauty at all conceivable earthly and unearthly hours of the day, at dawn, at dusk and at dead of night; I have seen it in all seasons, in summer, and winter, and in autumn, sometimes aglow with the glittering rays of the glaring sun, and at others, veiled in the sable shroud of gloom-indeed, I have seen it so often and anon, that it has ceased to be a thrill to me any longer ... The charm has worn off from my eyes.

For some time now I have been appointed the medical officer of a charitable dispensary near the city, and when I pass and re-pass the Taj I hardly ever turn my head to look at it.

Things had been going on like this when one day curiously enough ....

* * * *

But let me recount the story from the very beginning.

On this particular occasion as I was stepping down from the verandah after attending to the out-patients, as usual, in pursuance of my daily routine, I saw an old Mussalman come in through the gate with a big wicker basket securely tied to his back.

I saw an old Mussalman come in with a big basket securely tied up to his back.....

He was apparently unequal to the task, and had nearly doubled up under the strain of its enormous weight.

At first I thought that he was probably some itinerant vendor of fruits. But as he deposited his load on the ground I found to my surprise no fruits in it, but a lady in a borkha (a long over-all garment, usually donned by Muslim women, covering the wearer from the head to the ankles) instead....The old man in his flowing robe and for his snow-white beard, looked like an austere dervish.

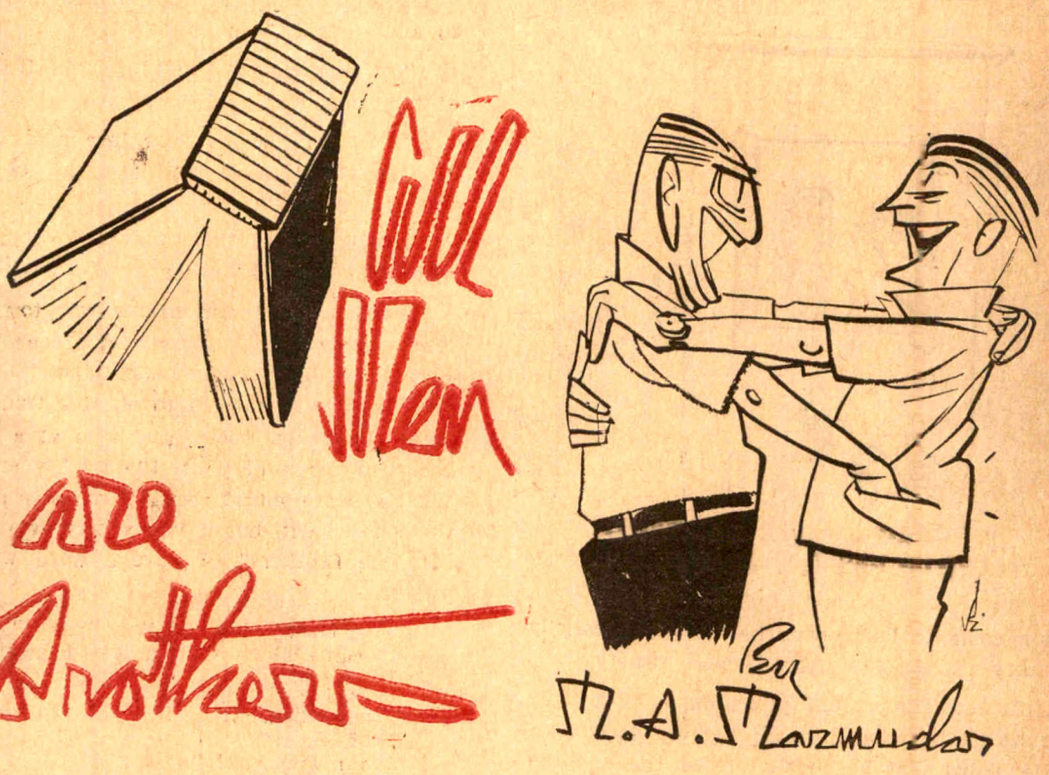
He came up to me, and made a low salaam.

Then in his faultless Urdu he politely informed me that as he was an extremely poor man he could not afford to call me in to his wife....Accordingly he had borne his Begum on his back all this way to the hospital.

Now, if only I should be so graciously disposed as to ... How the man wore his ailing wife in his heart!

This singular instance of unflinching and are

(Continued on Page 47)

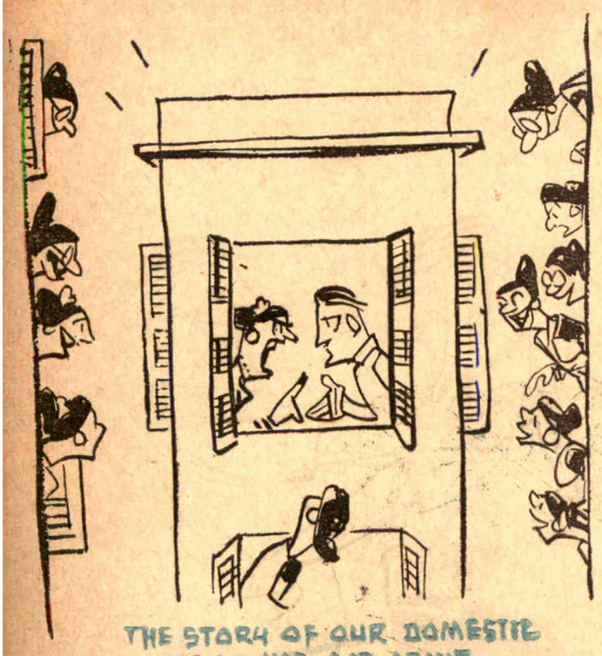


SUNDAY: I go happily through a long and substantial morning meal. At its conclusion I experience the heavenly joy born of a most satisfying fullness. Then I bend my foot-steps in the direction of my bed-room for a quiet snooze or nap. On my way I stop at the revolving book-case to take out my newly-bought best-seller entitled "All Men are Brothers" by the celebrated American philosopher Dr. Ulysses F. Schnellenhamer. I always love to read myself to sleep. Alas, I cannot find the volume. I am plunged into deep and dark disappointment. Where's the book gone? I yell out wildly for my wife. She blows in like a storm. She looks like a study in female fury. I demand from her the whereabouts of my "All Men are Brothers". She says Prof. X dropped in here this morning during my absence, fell in love with the book at first sight, and insisted on 'borrowing' it. But he promised to return it in a couple of days. This drives me to the verge of madness. I tell the woman that she's a pretty wife to allow a man no better than a sneak-thief to make away with my property. She says she didn't know I associated with sneak-thieves, and anyway there was nothing she could do to prevent the hunter from pouncing upon the quarry and going away with it. A brisk and blazing exchange of words here ensues. A real display of fireworks. I am fearfully put out. Tell wife she's no wife of mine, and stamp out to the bed-room in a huge huff.

Evening: The story of our domestic flare-up has got about. Not more than an hour back, a gang of neighbouring fatheads called on me 'to restore peace between us', as they put it. I got furious at this most uncalled for invasion. I hounded the whole lot of them out of my house. I have now broken off all neighbourly connections. The disappearance of my cherished "All Men are Brothers" still rankles in my heart. I feel like treading on Prof. X's prostrate body with spiked boots. The snake!

Monday: I sack the maidservant. Serve her right! It was she who trotted round, blabbing to all and sundry about our quarrel. The cat! There is now a well-marked estrangement between me and my wife. I am not on speaking terms with her. Cannot forget that a great deal of the responsibility for the exit of my "All Men are Brothers" rests squarely on her shoulders. I am a great believer in universal brotherhood. I am anxious to see mankind united and living on this planet in peace and goodwill. And, therefore, I have taken this loss of the book (albeit temporary) greatly to heart. Prof. X. had absolutely no right to grab it and march off with it. I wish, I ardently wish, he and his kind were rubbed off the face of God's green earth. The vermin!

Wednesday: I have waited for the promised return of my "All Men are Brothers". In vain. The book has not been forthcoming. I send a stinging note to Prof. X. I call him every name I can think of or even invent. I demand prompt return of the book per bearer. I add by way of postscript that he should never darken my door in the future. I



THE STORY OF OUR DOMESTIC FLARE-UP HAS GOT ABOUT

have now come to look upon the man as a wholly unnecessary excrescence upon human society.

Afternoon: The servant just brought in a reply to my note to that clod Prof. X. Not the book, alas. Prof X explains that he couldn't resist the temptation of "All Men are Brothers". Dr. Ulysses F. Schnellenhamer is his favourite author, and he (X) is keenly interested in human cohesion and welfare. But, says X, on his way home from my house, he happened to drop in at Dindoomal's General Stores (which keeps closed on Wednesday), and forgot the book at that establishment. As he, X, is particularly busy just now preparing a paper for an important conference, would I please make it convenient to look for "All Men are Brothers" at Dindoomal's. The old thug puts in a post-script drawing my attention to a certain best-selling book on manners. He also wedges in a bad-tempered comment on my culture, or rather the lack of it, and most cordially desires me to take a trip to hell. I wish I could ram "All Men are Brothers" by Ulysses F. Schnellenhamer down his throat with a crow-bar.

Thursday: I go to Dindoomal's the first thing in the morning.

"Ah Dindoomal", I speak to the barrel-shaped proprietor.

"Yes, sir. What can I do for you, sir?" he asks.

"My book, if you please".

"Book, sir? What book, sir?"

"Dr. Ulysses F. Schnellenhamer's "All Men are Brothers", Dindoomal. That idiot Prof. X pinched it from my house and forgot it here".

"Ah. But, sir, I saw your name on it, sir, and was just on the point of sending it on to you when Prof. Y turned up, picked it up, said he'd return it to you after having a dip into it, and walked away with it. Didn't you get it back sir?"

"No, Dindoomal, I didn't. And let me tell you, you're a fatheaded chump to have allowed Prof. Y to make off with my book".

"I should advise you to refrain from that kind of language, sir".

"I shall never see your face again, Dindoomal".

"That will spare me the sight of yours, sir. Thank you, sir".

I walk out of the shop. I see Prof. X on the way. We cut each other.

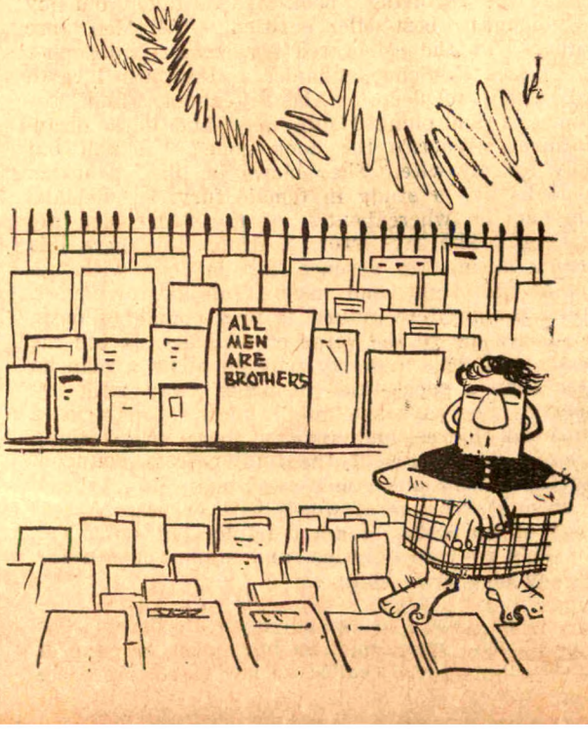
Afternoon: I am on my way to the world's leading pest Prof. Y for my "All Men are Brothers". Hate is seething in my heart against the two gumboils who have put me to all this trouble. I am a great lover of books, and stop at a second-hand bookshop for a peep at 'the mighty minds of old'. What's the very first book I happen to pick up? You won't believe it, but it is my very own copy of "All Men are Brothers". I have a word with the proprietor.

"This book. How did it get here?" I ask.

"It came along with a lot I bought recently, sir", he replies.

"From whom?"
"Prof. Y, sir".
"It's my property".
"I bought it from Prof. Y, sir".
"What did you pay him?"
"Can't tell you, sir Business secret, sir".
"Well, I paid fourteen rupees for it".
"You can have it for seven, sir".

I have it for seven. The experience of rebuying your own book is certainly not pleasant. "All Men are Brothers" in my hand, I walk homeward, heartily cursing humanity in general and the professorial part of it in particular.



TAJ-MAHAL

(Continued from Page 44)

devotedness moved me to genuine pity, and I directed her to be taken into the hospital.

As I approached the patient in the examination room an intensely foetid, sickening odour assailed my nostrils, and I could not, for the life of me, place it correctly at the moment.

But when at last, in spite of vehement protests, she could be persuaded to emerge out of her hiding, the whole shocking truth was instantly revealed, and lay bare before my eyes in its naked hideousness .... She was the pitiable victim of a dreadfully fell disease ....

She had been suffering from Cancrum Oris.

Half of her face had already been decomposed and fallen off .... The right cheek having completely disappeared all the teeth on that side had been revoltingly exposed to view in all their lengths.

It was altogether a horrible and scaring sight .... And the foul smell of putrid would not besides, allow anybody to stand near her.

If she was to be treated at all she could not thus be daily carried from her home to the hospital on the back of her husband .. And, no bed was just then available either so that I could admit her as an indoor patient .. So, left with no other alternative I asked her to put up for the time being at the corridor in front of the ward.

He had two ends of a spread-out coverlet firmly gripped in his fists.

Unfortunately for her even the comfort of this unenviable shelter, she was denied to the last .. And it was the infernal stench that did all the mischief.

The other patients in the hospital resented this, and objected in a body to her presence in their vicinity .. The compounder, the dresser and even the menial staff flatly refused outright to go near her.

But the strangest aspect of the whole affair was that this offensive and odious smell did not perturb the old man, her husband, in the least. For twenty-four hours in a day and for seven days in a week he ministered like an automaton to the needs of his wife real or imaginary .... It was more than flesh and blood could do.

Unanimous and persistent demands for their removal were strong and compelling, and ultimately I asked them to move away from their present abode to establish themselves beneath a huge spreading tree standing in the hospital-compound.

They were most obliging, and this they did readily.

Every morning the old man would attend the outdoor for her day's supply of medicine ... If she required any injection, besides, I would go to her and administer it.

Things thus went on pretty smoothly.

One day as I was returning from my round of professional calls, an unprecedented spectacle arrested my eyes.

It was raining cats and dogs, and the old man was standing there under the sky, exposed to the fury of the pelting rains. He had two ends of a spread-out coverlet firmly gripped in his fists, the other two ends being securely tied to a branch of the tree.

Quickly and quietly I motored up to him. The crudely improvised apology for a canopy was but an extremely ineffective contrivance, and afforded no protection against the steady, heavy downpour from the sky ... The poor Begum had been pitiably drenched to the very bones from head to foot, and shivering terribly ... Her teeth were chattering ... Yet, paradoxically enough, a happy, hideous smile lit up all that was left of her face....

She was, my practised eyes told me at once, running a very high temperature as well.

I was greatly distressed at this sad plight of the wretched couple .. And, under the circumstances, I could not but ask them to go back, if only temporarily to where they had come from.

Suddenly a sweeping sense of frustration, a sense of the pettiness of all human endeavours against in-

(Continued on Page 112)

SCIENTIFIC SARVAJANINA DURGA PUJA

(Continued from Page 36)

mony was conducted in a military style by torpedoing the plane from under the water. A huge column of water spout sprang up forthwith lifting the images high and placing them full before the view of the spectators who cried : *'Durga Mai Ki Jai'* (Glory to Mother Durga).

BIJOYA HILARITY

After the immersion party had returned to the Vijaya Sammelana Pandal the people were caught in a frenzy of laughter and mirth, the zone being charged from beforehand with colourless, odourless

THE MORAL EFFECT OF BIJOYA HILARITY SCENE (WHICH WAS BEING WATCHED THRO. TELEVISION FROM DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE WORLD) WAS THAT THE OPIUM EATERS OF THE EAST PASSED A RESOLUTION TO GIVE UP OPIUM EATING AND TO TAKE TO BHANG.

and impalpable fumes of highly concentrated Acqua Canabas Indica. From titter to giggle the laughter gradually rose and ultimately ended in a roar. Men, women, and children began to roll on each other almost promiscuously. Soon decency seemed to recoil from the scene. Some attempted to fly without wings, others to walk on head with toes turned to the sky, others clasped round their neighbour for fear of falling down on the ground, menfolk began to exchange Vijaya embraces with stanger women folk, old people doing prostrate obeisance to children. None looked sad, hilarity seemed to saturate every particle of air. When reminded of the presence of the ladies an old man cried : 'Verily, verily, there is no distinction between man and woman, young and old, rich and poor, fair face and dark complextioned people in the eye of Mother Durga. Soon started Vijaya carol in 'sing as you please' style. Some sang : 'Raghupati Raghava Raja Ram', others sang 'Hari Tomaya Bhalavasi Kai, others 'Ma Amaya Ghurabi Kata', others 'Vande Mataram', others 'Aman Deshti Kothao Khuje Pave Nako Toomi', still others 'God save the queen'. One harlot woman sang 'Praner Pakhi Ure Gelo Ar Elo Na'. None, however, sang a syllable in praise of Durgadevi. Vijaya dance too was equally multi-coloured. Some danced 'Nataraja', others 'Rasleela', others still 'folk dance', still others 'Koal dance'. A few also indulged in 'Manipuri dance'. A band of little folk too attempted 'Bratachari dance'. To crown all some non-Asiatic domiciles took to 'Waltz' etc. In fact the scene gradually presented such a curious medley of music, dance, pranks and frolics that it lost no time to gain the admiration of those who had been watching it from their own places through television apparatus. The moral effect was that the opium eaters of the east passed a resolution to give up opium eating and to take to *Bhang*. It also set athinking Nihilist Governments who have declared god worshipping a crime, whether they should not introduce this festivity in their countries to secure greater fraternity in their States. The far westerners too whose watchword is 'work is worship', began seriously to contemplate if they should not punctuate their yearlong, tiresome and strenuous working life with indulgence in similar festivities.

FROGS & THE MAN

(Continued from Page 38)

like anger, or love, or jealousy. As their colour is likewise changeable at short notice like lizards, considerable allowances must be made in identification of amphibians for temporary alterations in figure and complexion." He added,—though I hadn't said a word,—that Sterndale said so.

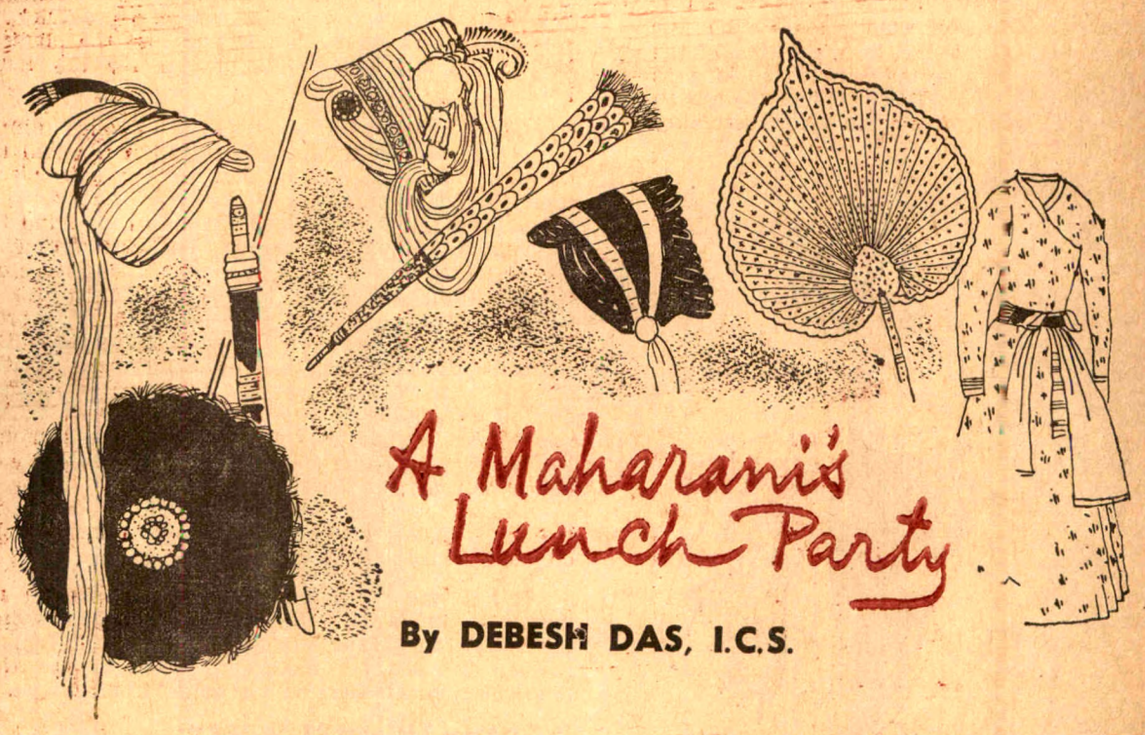
"Frogs spit," he went on. "Some can spit further than men. I discovered that for myself. Remembering Mark Twain's story of the Jumping Frog, I wanted to see if a frog could really be filled up with shots. I caught one which appeared to be quite harmless, opened its maw, and started pouring a handful of buck-shots into the opening.

"The frog said nothing. I went on filling it with the shots till it could hold no more. Still, the frog said nothing. And then, what do you think happened ?" Following the frog's example, I said nothing.

"That goddam frog opened its mouth and spurted the whole lot of shots in a stream. It was quite clear that the rascal had aimed at my face,—for one of the shots hit me over the left eyebrow." I still said nothing.

And then he left. It was quite apparent that he had obtained considerable relief,—like the "cement" man. So have I,—now. But, honestly, I didn't believe that last thing of his.

By the way, if you wish to know more about frogs, will you ring up 46-3377? You will get it all there.



A Maharani's Lunch Party

By DEBESH DAS, I.C.S.

A colourful and intimate picture of the private affairs of the Princes, the sighs and significance of life in the harem.

YOU would hardly realise what a terrific thing it meant for me. It was not for the afternoon tea nor evening coffee, nor even for the omnibus reception of a princely durbar. This was an invitation to a private lunch party specially for me.

If you are poor you may still attain God provided you are devoted enough. You may be of an humble origin, but with your brain and abilities you might become a Rockefeller or even a Hitler. But the private lunch party of a Maharani is something unheard of. It is true that such incredible things happen occasionally in the Rashtrapati Bhavan. But the codes of Maharanis do not admit such strange changes even now.

Moreover, she was not just a Maharani. She was the Maharani of the famous fighting clan of the Rathors of Jodhpur and not a mere Maharani either. The princely order has been deprived of ruling authority. Otherwise it would have been she who would have controlled the fate of her millions of subjects. You may almost say that the Twentieth century is all the poorer for this change. But for it we might have had a new edition of some Maria Theresa in the Maharani.

REGARD FOR THE BENGALI PEN

It was this Maharani from whom I got the invitation this morning. Only a few family members and a few Maharani's guests from other states, would be present. The other invited guests were the Raja Sahib and his younger brother, the Thakur Sahib. The barony of the Raja Sahib forms the frontier of Marwar State. Time and again, century after century the Moghuls and the Pathans and the Marathas have had to enter the state only after having their first bloodbath in the county of Kuchamon. The Rathors' first Maginot Line lay in the Kuchamon. In the forbidding fortress there are arranged in impressive array the history of the Kuchamon Clan. It was written in blood and painted with glory. Various types of turbans, dresses and banners hang on the wall. So do mediaeval armaments.

In contrast my only armament in Rajasthan is the pen of mine. It is my only introduction in this land of princes. But I know that the Rajput has great regard for the Bengali pen. The Maharani herself has mentioned this in her invitation. I held my head high in the air and remembered that the Rajput expresses his satisfaction after a heroic exploit by twitching his moustache. I admitted to myself that for the first time I was keenly feeling the absence of my own moustache.

But I bowed my head with reverence at the honour shown to literature.

ROSES IN MIDST OF A DESERT

Just at this time the gardener brought in a bunch of roses. Yes, roses in the midst of a desert.

I leaned forward and took a long breath over the roses. Their fragrance lent wings to my imagination. I remembered a story of another desert. Caliph Al Mutawakkal had said, "I am the prince among princes and the rose is the queer of flowers. So we are the best companions for each other."

But how am I less than that Caliph of Arabia just now? I remembered a fine Turkish poem com-

sed by Emperor Babar, "My heart is like a rose
id, spotted with blood."

Of course I am prepared to yield the honour to weaver of the same Arabia. He gave up all his rk, his only means of livelihood, in the rose ason. From morning he would start with the ellow wine of Shiraz and sing, "Oh, the time of the es has come now. You go on drinking so long as rose has her buds and flowers." When the season ne to an end he would sing again before resuming

Oh, if Allah keeps me alive until the season of roses is on again, I shall start again with the wine.

s work, "Oh, if Allah keeps me alive until the ason of the roses is on again, I shall start again th the wine. But lest I should die even before that oment comes I leave here two drops of tear for my ses and my wine."

But the Caliph was no less a connoisseur of the od things of life. Dare a mere weaver compete with in this rosy enjoyment ? Alright, I also know how honour a connoisseur. Here is an annual pension ten thousand dirhams so that he can enjoy him-f in careless abandon in the rose season.

Let me come back to my story. I held in my nds the letter written by a Maharani herself. A y other Maharanis were also in view. So were the ely red roses on my table. The whole of Arabia was esent fragrantly in my mind. I felt that I could t do adequate justice to these feelings with my n pen. So I remembered the poet Amir Khusro.

Tipsy Khusro has poured wine that Shiraz people e.

In the cup of the Muse who descends from above.

HAT ABOUT THE PLUMES?

I have seen many a connoisseur start his mor-ng with beer. But unfortunately I am not initiated o the pleasures of that fine beverage. Instead I t my perched throat and mind with the pleasures poetry. Not that I would rate my-self as superior my friends who enjoy beer.

So I went on reciting to myself the fine poems Persian poets one after another. I was happy beyond measure and my happiness flowed smoothly like a yacht on the Norfolk Broads. But suddenly my yacht ran aground.

At this stage I was remembering a line of Tagore "My heart dances on and on like the peacock." It was dancing no doubt, but what about the plumes ? Have I got any plumes to put on for the lunch party ?

Of course I still possess the English dinner jacket tailored years ago in London but it would not do for a lunch party. Nor have I yet surrendered myself to the temptations of the new formal dress so proudly worn in New Delhi. I figured in my mind the Raja Sahib and his brother the Thakur Sahib. They will certainly put on the Prince coat and bow before the Maharani with grace abounding. Coloured turbans will make their bow still more colourful. This ordinary writer also has got a Prince coat like that. But Bengalis do not put on any head dress. Critics attribute this to the fact that our heads are strong enough even without any gear. I pictured in my mind these Rajput princes in Prince coats and myself also in the same attire. For me the Prince coat was summarily dismissed. What then ?

I read the letter again carefully. There was no indication in it regarding dress. Should I then depend on the commonplace lounge suit ?

But it was the letter itself which showed me light. The invitation referred to the Bengali writer. Surely the Maharani would expect me in Bengali costume. I was not a mere quill driver of the New Delhi Secretariat. Here was a writer from Bengal.

PURDAH—THE NEXT WORRY

The next worry was regarding the purdah. Does the Maharani observe purdah ? Will she appear in person before me ? Shall I have the privilege of talking to her normally as one person to another ? Will she herself serve on my plate a few delicious puris (oven-fresh fried loaves)?. If she does, I shall certainly lose my balance in joy and arrange my ten fingers in such a way as to produce a figure of classical Indian dance. Surely the other guests will be filled with joy by discovering in this an artistic pose expected from a litterateur.

The purdah has different shades. Take the case of the Maharani of Udaipur. No male can approach her. Even her own brother can see her only because her husband has given him special permission. I could not therefore meet her but my wife who was admitted to her presence came back highly impressed with the intelligence and the personality of the lady behind the purdah. Probably she had ability enough to look after the administration herself. She knew about all that was happening in the state and the causes and effects of things important. The gleam that played in her eyes was not one of diamonds and jewellery but of acute intelligence. Even then she is purdah.

We were also told that she was an expert hunter and had shot dead a tiger with only one bullet. How could a mere purdah veil her eyes ?

THE SYSTEM OF HALF PURDAH

There is also the system of half purdah. Here is the story of the queen mother of another state. During her grand daughter's birthday anniversary there were elaborate festivals and she was present throughout thanks to the half purdah. It will be difficult to describe it but here is a small sample of this system. There was a musical soiree in a palace and the musicians were at their best. The queen mother wanted to enjoy the music as closely as

possible. A curtain was arranged and she covered herself in a shawl to take her seat behind it. But the music was very fine indeed and she must come nearer. She peeped out and noticed another flimsy screen just in front of the musicians. So two chairs

She suddenly leapt forward before the very eyes of the people.

were placed in the intervening space and she suddenly leapt forward before the very eyes of the people in the party. All these exertions made her very hungry and she called for a plateful of sweets. We could not, of course, notice the film of satisfaction that must have enveloped her face behind the apology of her veil.

No wonder that the interest is sweeter than the principal amount and half purdah than purdah itself. The whole thing is covered in mystic half light and half darkness. You hear everything and still leave something unheard. You see everything but do not touch them. Nothing is hidden but everything is beyond your reach. This indeed is the climax of romance in life.

SCENES IN SHAHJAHAN'S DELHI

If you do not believe me, come with me to the Delhi of Shahjahan. His daughter, Princess Jahanara, has started from her palace for the durbar. There is no end to pageantry. The mounted bodyguards, the infantry and the eunuchs are moving in state. It is the eunuchs who have the good-luck of being nearest to the princess. They are shouting and jostling and pushing people right and left. Even respectable people get no better treatment. Gorgeous litters follow carrying the lesser princesses. Rose water is being sprinkled in front so that the dust does not reach the litter of Jahanara. It is covered with fine golden threads and is ornamented with gold inlaid with jewellery. The fan is made of the plumes of the peacock and is put in a gold frame. The elephant is proceeding in slow majestic movement but the movement of the fan in the hands of the Turkish bodyguard is more majestic and slower still. The daughter of the "emperor of the world" wants to have just half a look at the moon through a veil of fleecy clouds.

Immediately the Moghul knight of the middle ages would alight from his horse. From hundred yards away he places his hands on the chest so long as the princess does not pass by. Then he bows in deep respect with his turban almost touching the ground.

Has the princess not noticed anything? Of course she has, and she has also made herself fully noticed in the process. If it would please Her Highness she sends down her casket of golden brocade embroidered with jewellery containing betel and betel leaves, the ceremonial proof of her royal pleasure.

Roshanara, the younger sister, was no less fond of pageantry. In fact she went one step further. Her litter was carried by a huge elephant and the seat was inlaid with gold and the canopy was like one adorning the royal throne. One hundred and fifty smart colourful Turkish girls formed her retinue. Countless palanquins followed the procession. But the veil in each case consisted of diaphanous yarns of gold. Flutter they would and so would the bosom of the fair cargo in the litter.

Which fool on this earth wants to take an account of what he has got and what not from the fair one behind this veil? You bet I am not yet so devoid of aesthetics as to do that. Truly has the poet sung —

If my eyes rest on her glance and my heart on hers,
Can a mere dam of sands resist
The endless waves of the ocean?

VISION OF THE QUEENS' COUNTY

I was mentally handling the delicate barrier, the flimsy difference between purdah and half purdah when came to my mind the vision of the Queens' County seen from the top of the mighty hill fortress of Jodhpur. The name of the locality came to my mind with a shock. I have heard of different localities like the Brahamans' area, the washermen's area etc. in our orthodox villages. But the Queens' County was quite a different proposition.

Yes, it was so. A Maharaja might sever his tender connections with this world leaving behind some 27 queens, 57 half queens and 387 recipients of private favours. But why should his successor consider himself obliged to meet their expenses or annuities? Why must he accommodate them in the palace or even its outskirts? The claims of the new queens, half queens and quarter concubines should certainly come first. Naturally the locality that comes to the rescue of the fallen stars after the moon has set is called the Queens' County.

I found nobody to explain to me the exact degree of marriage that had taken place between the dead prince of a state and chief recipient of his matrimonial honours. I asked some of the courtiers aside and in oblique glances and hushed whispers they just mentioned that there are degrees of difference in the marriage of many rulers just like the difference in the dilution of homeopathic medicine. A little while later the private secretary of that late ruler got hold of me privately and made the situation a little clearer. It was not the queens alone. The

mistresses also had graded classes among them like the gold Queen, the silver Queen, the diamond Queen and so on.

A KEAL RAJPUT HEROINE

In this atmosphere of punctilious social classifications and inequities Didaji Bai was the unquestioned queen of her husband, the sole luminary in his spacious sky. There were no stars to share the space with, nor any sudden or even accidental eclipse. She shared all the joys and sorrows, pleasures and worries of Maharaja Umed Singh. She answered the true description of the definition of a wife in the Sanskrit classics, a housewife, minister, a friend and a sharer of secrets as well.

One monsoon the mountain rivers of the state were in spate and the picturesque town of Jodhpur built up with great care and solicitude was on the point of being washed away. The Maharaja himself came out of his palace at the dead of night to look after the erection of a dam. By him stood Didaji Bai herself to encourage the labourers. She was a real queen that moment, unfettered by any veil or any thought for the rigid purdah of Rajasthan. She was a real Rajput heroine, wasn't she ?

Finding me taking interest in her story of the Maharani-ship of bygone days tears rolled out in her eyes. She went on telling me the stories of her past life of greatness and effectiveness one after another, the story of a husband who was no more, of a kingdom that had gone. But there was neither pain nor criticism in this rumination of the past. I calculated in my mind how much has been lost by those who had so much and silently bowed my head before this heroic lady.

MELON AND THE KNIFE LEGEND

The butler was standing like a statue in my front in his immaculate Rajput outfit. In his hands was a tray containing the fresh juice of watermelon grown in the desert. The Maharajkumar i.e., the younger brother of the young Maharaja who had died in an air crash only about 18 months back while piloting his own plane, was pressing me to taste this cool and delicious fruit of the desert. He was dressed in Rajput breeches and in his waist band was tied a huge Rajput dagger and a pistol to match. Both were, as rumours had it, manufactured in the secret armament factory of Jodhpur. But it was not for that reason that I was looking at this instrument of aggression. Here was the melon and here the Rajput dagger on one side. On the other was sitting the Rathor queen. The curtains of centuries began to lift themselves.

The Maharajkumar was pressing me to taste the cool and delicious fruit of the desert.

It was towards the end of Shahjahan's reign. His four sons were engaged in a bitter war of succession against one another. Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur fought for one of them and fell back on Jodhpur after a crushing defeat. The Maharani closed the gate of the huge fortress against her husband. The husband was, in her eyes as good as dead. The husband of a true Rajput woman must come back home carrying the shield in his hand. In the alternative the shield must carry his corpse. What should the queen do in such a situation ?

The Maharani asked for the funeral pyre to be lit up with royal pageantry on the plea that the husband was already dead. Jaswant Singh somehow tackled her for the time being and promised to go to battle again and fight like a hero. But alas broken glass and broken heart cannot be mended, once broken.

One day the Maharaja sat down for his meal. The Maharani took her seat by his side and herself began fanning him. The maid servant brought in a piece of melon and a knife for cutting it. But suddenly the Maharani cut a joke more cutting than the knife itself. Take away, take away this knife quick; my Maharaja might faint at its very sight.

DISHES—NO SURRENDER CALL

We came to the dining room and took our appointed seats. This was not a big and gorgeous room like the banquet hall on the ground floor. Here there was no risk of losing my way or being at my wits' end in the wake of pageantry and royal formalities. But who knew whether I, an average middle class Bengali, would be able to digest the food taken in a room so richly and royally appointed. The Maharani sat at the head of the table and seated me on her right. She was talking to me very informally with a ring of sincerity. Imperceptibly I became one of them.

She requested me time and again to take the dishes prepared in their own Rajput way. For the last few days I had taken Rajput food every day without a break. The nobles of Kuchamon had put me up in great comfort and treated me with greater attention in their palace of yellow stone. My suite was next to their lounge. Just across it started the private apartments where my casual entrance in a careless moment might bring me face to face with the ladies of the family. But if even Sun, my maternal uncle, gets no opportunity to have a look at their faces, why I, the humble guest, should try for better luck ?

As I used to come down to the modern dining hall treading my careful steps on the spiral staircases of mediaeval type I always had the feeling that the modern mahogany table and the upholstered chairs did not befit the surroundings. The only thing that fitted in was the Rajput food served by the khan-

sama with his majestic turban tied in the Rathor style. Daily would I swim across the saffron coloured ocean of ghee (cooked Indian butter), spices and meat risking my life on the mission. My modest appetite, trained in the English way, used to cry halt in mortal anguish. But my chest blew up and announced the call of no surrender. Defeat I shall never acknowledge, oh, never, never. Every day would I wade my way through this heavy and hot Rajput meal, every day. Never mind the risk of indigestion and serious upset of the system. In this country of heroes the least I could do was to eat like a hero.

AHMED ALI'S TOUCHING STORY

I could not help it. I could not forget my friend Ahmed Ali who has gone over to Pakistan now. He is gracing a big post in the Central Government of Pakistan. He had confided to me with great regrets a personal incident of his. How could I forget that touching story ?

In his young days he went to the North-Western Frontier as a guest of a class mate of his, a dour tribesman. But the day Ali arrived there his friend had to go away to a far off village in connection with pressing personal affairs. He left instructions with his wife behind the purdah to look after the guest well. From behind the purdah the lady began to despatch mountain loads of food, to which not one but seven Ahmed Alis could not possibly do any justice. Earnest requests and entreaties and at last regrets came floating from the other side of the purdah that the Duke of Lucknow was not relishing the food sent by the Begum Sahiba. Otherwise the guest who was superior to any god according to the tribal scripture and was a friend of the husband in addition could not have resisted her entreaties. The lady was beyond herself in grief behind the purdah.

Ultimately she could not control her emotions and came out of the purdah. She insisted on the guest taking all the food brought out. Ahmed Ali was in mortal fear of his own life and tried to obey Her Majesty's orders while secretly taking digestive pil's of local manufacture.

In the meantime the friend came back from the village and was furious. He was shocked beyond description. His wife had cast away all sense of decency within these two days and discarded her purdah. The scriptures of the Pathan and the codes of his society as well had received short shrift.

From across the curtain angry arguments of the husband and the wife came wafted to Ahmed Ali's ears. He did not know how to get over his own regrets and embarrassment. But he did not know even at that stage to what further length his mortification would go.

The friend's wife started loudly shouting and shocking the whole area. This little birdie, this friend of yours from Hindustan, from what time did he become a male ? He cannot cope with even a nightingale's share. How could a woman be considered lacking in decency if she came out to face him ?

Poor Ahmed Ali had no moustache. He quietly passed his fingers round the slender waist and consoled himself, "Allah be praised. Occasionally I am a little hard of hearing."

I used to sit down to meals with Kuchamon and his friends and remember Ahmed every day. My whole life was hankering for some other lighter food. I wish I could at least have an English meal one night consisting of a little soup and the three course dinner which has been a fashion since the last war. That alone could give my stomach a little rest. One day the Master Sahib appeared on the scene. He was the Headmaster of the local Rajput school. His bones were old but mind young. In his school the arts of fighting formed as important a subject as ordinary university education. Indeed he was producing scholars who were the future military officers of Rajasthan.

RASOMALAI FOR CALCUTTA MAN

The Master Sahib was surprised to see me engaged in a tussle with a huge piece of meat and a rich portion of pillao. He was almost on the point of beating up the butler. Yes, he could not have let all his instructions in the Military School go in vain for nothing. The wretch of a butler was such an expert shirker that he was entertaining the guest of the Raja Sahib with only Indian dishes. Why ? Could he not produce for a day at least Poulet Polonaise, that tasteful Polish delicacy ? Surely the Raja Sahib would have been pleased and his guest would also have had a change of menu.

I pricked my ears to catch the reply of the butler who not only knows how to cook a chicken but also the formal French name of the dish. It appeared to me that Tensing the great climber brought down the whole Himalaya of his turban with a flourishing bow and whispered the reply. The Rani Sahiba herself was cooking the meal every day for the distinguished guest, each meal every day. It would be an insult to the guest if the butler were allowed to suggest the menu or prepare it for him.

I remembered all that. On all sides of the table the army of butlers was moving about in silent footsteps with Indian plates and English dishes. Some were carrying the Indian menu and some the English ones. But all English food was finding its way to the other side of the table where Kuchamon and his friends were in occupation.

Even the Maharani who was sitting just on my right with her radiant beauty and lighting up the whole room started with delicious hors d'ouvre. But Didaji Bai herself was immersed in her native Marwari meal and herself serving it in huge quantities on my plate.

I was contemplating how to loosen the waist band of my trousers without being noticed. While struggling with the huge bread of maize soaked in butter I noticed the sweet called Rasomalai. Its size was

not what we are accustomed to in Calcutta. This delicacy was of a proportion which could be of great help in times of civil commotion on the streets.

Beaming with smiles the Maharani requested me to take at least one whole piece. She added that

Beaming with smile Maharani requested me to take at least one whole piece of Rosomalai.

though it was first invented in Calcutta it is Marwar, her capital, which has developed it. She had asked for it specially today as she thought I would like a sweet which had its origin in my town. How kind and thoughtful of her.

THAT YOUTH THEN IN LONDON

Pleasant conversation and the gleam of jewels and dresses filled up the whole room. I was at a loss to understand as I did not know whether to concentrate my attention on the jewels round me or the beauty. In a moment of absent-mindedness I looked up at the magnificent chandelier of Belgian cut glass above. Its chiselled form carried the reflection not of my face as I am but as I was in my younger days.

That youth was then in London. He was studying in the university with the help of a small scholarship. An ordinary boarding house in the north of London was his shelter and two other Indians shared the place with him. On his return from the college one evening he found another Indian sitting in his room with a handsome Anglo-Indian girl. The object was financial assistance. With his Indian drawl he mixed English and Bengali and described how he had come to the United Kingdom as a seaman, got married to an English girl and settled down for good. Though he could not maintain himself adequately he maintained the Indian custom of producing a big family all right. Therefore .... We felt great sympathy for this little girl who could, by no means, be blamed for this pitiable condition. But her famished face carried the imprint of Indian incompetence. We became fired with patriotism and helped the man with cash as much as possible. Many big Indians were then in London on account of the Round Table Conference talks with Great Britain. The friends wrote out forceful appeals to them asking for financial assistance for this poor countryman of theirs.

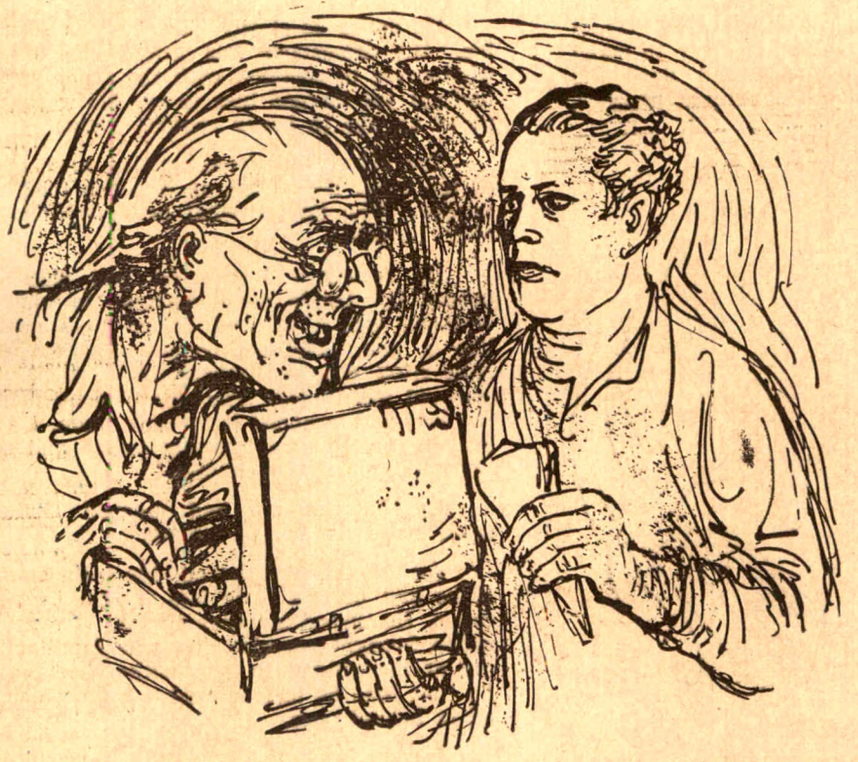
DAYS OF SARDINES ON TOAST

Next week the fellow turned up again with his little daughter. He was not getting help from any quarters. The week after he made his appearance again, and he repeated the performance week after week. Ultimately the friends decided that tmporary help would be no remedy. The fellow must be made to stand on his feet. After many enquiries they came to the conclusion that the only possible way of putting him in independent business on a small capital was to buy him a wheel barrow of fruits. But where was the capital to come from ? Ultimately they pooled the whole of their monthly remittances from home and gave the amount to the man. They themselves would be starving but at least one countryman of theirs would be put on his own feet. Three small hungry mouths would get their bread in this way.

Thereafter the three friends started starving or doing with as little food as possible. No money was due from home until the beginning of the next month and till then they must carry on somehow. Great Britain does not believe in giving credit to unknown people and if they were to beg or borrow from others surely the sacrifice made for the sake of an ideal would lose its edge. The ideal supplied the sauce to the cheap sardines on toast which became their mainstay for lunch and dinner. But alas, at that age appetite also is sharp and uncompromising. Still the flag was held high.

One evening they were coming back from the college. They were making a short cut to save the bus fare. Somebody tottering on his feet was coming out of a pub and swearing violently. Oh, where was the wheel barrow at Covent Garden and where was the principle of self help ? All the money produced by the self imposed starvation of the three friends had disappeared in the pub. Living on sardines on toast day after day failed to give them further sustenance, imaginary or idealistic.

Sitting in front of the Maharani and the plate of Rasomalai all that I could do was to send up a silent entreaty to the reflection of those young days, "Forget not, forget not, those days of sardines on toast."



HEIR

By BIMAL MITRA

A tragic account of mighty Purandar Khan's heir, Roy, now passing his days as a vendor selling "G. C. Roy's Jolpan" at railway stations.

IF you ever travel by the Machada Local you ought to be forewarned.

The train leaves from Platform No. 6, Howrah Station, at 7-25 a.m. You will have to get up a little earlier than usual the day you take it. You live in Tollygunge. From there to Howrah is a long way. It will take a full hour either by tram or by bus to get there. There may not be much time left after you get up, dress and shave.

Perhaps you think you will breakfast at the Station but when the tram finally arrives a glance at the clock overhead dispels your hunger. You have to run to catch the train. And you even find a place for yourself in the corner of a Third Class carriage. Then ? The rocking of the train and the heat of the crowd will make you thirsty for a cup of tea. You will get tea. You can purchase pure tea in an earthen cup for an anna. You can purchase lozenges also. At Uluberia and Kolaghat cool green coconuts are available. At Andul you can get *pantuas*, hot *singharas* at Sankrel, fried food at Mourigram. You can buy any or all of these but one thing you must not buy. I bought it a I know. Let me tell you abou it. I have travell by the Machada Local twice.

The first time nothing in particular happened The train was very crowded. I bought a new paper and began to read it. There were so mar people in the compartment, I couldn't even put n feet on the bench in front of me and be cor fortable.

After the train left Santragachi the vendo began to deliver their speeches one after another

What a strange collection of commodities They advertised and tried to sell everything th could or could not be of any use in a household starting with twelve-anna pairs of half-pants. The sold their wares cheaply as an advertising stun Medicine for asthma, from a holy man's prescri tion, was being distributed free for the benefit suffering humanity but the copper amulet cas cost five annas one pice. The Kalimata Tailorin Co. sent a vendor to sell half-pants that could nc be bought for less than Rs. 1|12|- in the market t the passengers on the Machada Local fo twelv annas in order to solve the clothing problem in th country. And there was ringworm medicine put ou by Das Co. The name indicates its efficacy i ringworm but it is an unfailing remedy in a

kin diseases. A single application is enough. does not stain clothes. The salve contains no ercury. Those who have tried it once can buy nother jar for the benefit of relations and neighurs. There is also that fund of humour, the funny ories of Gopal Bhanr, sole pilot of a way to make ou forget grief sorrow and tears and flood the d heart with happy laughter. Father, mother,

Neem tooth powder!
Priced at only two pice!

ughter, son—a book that can be read by all toether. Only three annas. Small to look at but more ntertaining than the Arabian Nights, Gopal Bhanr's *unny Stories!* A blind beggar tapped out the ythm of his pathetic song on an earthen pot, rother, I am blind! I suffer because I cannot e!' Tillotoma Chemicals sell Banga Lakshmi ndur. That day was the first day of a Grand eduction Sale. The price was liable to rise the ry next day. Better buy a stock! It is indispenble in a Hindu home! If you purchase five packets gether you get a commission of three annas. on't miss such an opportunity! Neem tooth wder! Priced at only two pice! But people ffering from diseases of the teeth, people who ve spent thousands on dentists without obtaining y relief, should try it. Believe and buy. Two pice e spent in so many ways! Thrown away! And en there is.....

But is it possible to remember all the things at are there?

Push carts on the platform peddle *balusai* and *hidana*. Pure tea with sugar is sold in earthen ps and glasses. Young coconuts, fried food, sweet tel, cigarettes, biri — in a word, what wasn't ere?

The Machada Local went slowly on its way. nall stations sat on its left and right. Mourigram, ndul, Sankrel, Abada, Nalpur, Bauriya. When the ain stopped the vendors left one compartment and oved on to the next.

At Fuleswar a very old man came in. He was rtly bald. His grey hair was scanty. He was earing a khaki shirt without any buttons. The lens of his spectacles were thick. He was carrying a torn suitcase.

"G. G. Roy's amazing Jolpan! Will you buy one? G. G. Roy's amazing Jolpan!"

He spoke so slowly that he was scarcely audible. His demeanour was grave. He had nothing whatsoever in common with the other salesmen. He had not yet learned how to cry his wares. Nor was he of an age to board running trains.

The elderly gentleman sitting next to me raised his head. He looked up into the face of the old vendor. Who knows what he thought. "Give me one," he said.

He bought a Jolpan for two pice. Then he opened it. Inside the newspaper in which it was wrapped was a sal leaf folded in a neat triangle like a *pan*. The leaf contained a few peanuts, a little fried dal, and several little sticks, fried and smeared with spices. The elderly gentleman refolded the leaf and wrapped it up once more. I was watching. He turned apologetically to me and murmured, "Something for the children."

By that time we had reached Uluberia. The train stops for half a minute.

As the old man got out the train started again. If he had been a little less careful he would have fallen. He turned his back to me. A sense of recognition brought surprise. He was familiar! I hung out of the window to get another look at him. But by that time he had entered a train which had pulled in behind ours.

I came back to my seat. It wasn't Roy, was it? Doubt seized me.

But another diversion was being created in our compartment. Birbal's wonderful ointment! Birbal's wonderful ointment! Infallible for cuts, burns, sinuses, scabies, ringworm, itch, inflammations,

Gopal Bhanr's funny stories, priced only three annas.....

cold and cough, persistent cough, asthma, headache, wind, dysentery, indigestion, and all other diseases !

* * * *

Some five years later I travelled by the Machada Local again.

This time something happened.

I managed somehow to evade Gopal Bhanr's *Funny Stories*, pure sugar tea, half-pants and the rest and get down from the train. I had planned to finish my work and return by the evening train. But the down train rolled out past the distant signal when the station was still a mile away. It was late in the evening. Darkness was thickening all around. I paced up and down the station platform alone. Apparently no train was expected soon. The platform was deserted. Several red dots stood alertly at the head of the distant signal posts like watchmen. Before them and behind them lay the endless mystery of the night, wrapt in the smoke of a faint mist. When I stood still the silence itself seemed a strange and marvellous sound.

Suddenly I heard, "G. G. Roy's Jolpan ! Will anybody take one ? The amazing Jolpan !"

At first it seemed to me that the words were a murmur in my memory. Then I looked sharply around, trying to see through the gloom. The opposite platform was empty. Who would try to sell anything there ! Who would buy ! I watched him. The shadow crossed the overbridge and came back to this side. He kept on babbling, 'G. G. Roy's Jolpan ! Will anyone buy ? The wonderful Jolpan ! Will anybody buy ? Jolpan !"

He advanced, repeating his formula like a prayer. Descending the steps he began to walk across the empty platform towards me. I stood still and waited. He was like the ghost of a vendor seeking customers for his extraordinary commodities. I experienced a sensation of fear.

Stopping under a lamp post he looked around and saw me. Turning his face away he walked quietly off in another direction.

In the light I got a good look at him. He was the same person I had seen the last time. Old. Thick spectacles. Grey-haired. Slightly bald. He seemed to be muttering inaudibly to himself. Now I recognised him distinctly. Roy. The same Roy. The heir of Purandar Khan. There was no mistake.

But he did not recognise me.

"Have you any Jolpan ?" I asked, going up to him.

An instant only. But in that instant I felt as though I had circumnavigated the globe.

I remember how strange the world seemed on the day I took my first job. Sudhir Babu handed me a bag of edibles and said, "Hold it ! Here, take it !"

"What's the food for ?" I asked.

"Purandar Khan's heir has passed the Matriculation examination."

I still did not understand. Harish Babu was next to me. He said, "You are new. You will see a lot of things here, any number of famous people. Look over there. See that fellow in a torn shirt, drinking tea out of a glass ? He is a well-known doctor. If you give him a call at your house he'll charge you four rupees. And over there, the fellow dressed in a second-hand suit, his brother has foreign education and if you come to the Record Room I'll show you Purandar Khan's heir."

I saw Roy for the first time that day.

I went to the Record Room to look up a letter. He was wearing thick lensed glasses and his dhoti was pulled up over his knees. All the buttons of his tunic were undone. The iron grey hair on his chest was showing. He raised his head when I stopped beside him. "I haven't seen you before !" he said, "Are you new ? Whose man are you ? Das's ?"

"No," I answered.

"Then Benoy Babu's ?"

"No," I said again.

"Then McClean Saheb's ?"

I had heard that no one could get into this office without belonging to one group or another. When he was told that I belonged to none he said, "It will be difficult for you to get on, Brother ! You'll have to rot away in the Journal Section. Look at me !"

He checked himself and asked, "What is your name ?"

"Mitter ?" he commented, "Are you related to the Nayanjora Mitters ?"

"No," I said.

He didn't give up. "Then Raja Kailash Mitter's family ?"

"You've never heard of Raja Kailash Mitter ?" my answer made him patronising. "How is that ? Don't you read the papers ? He spent twelve lakhs on his mother's funeral and thrilled the whole of Calcutta. He used to smoke a silver water pipe with a golden nozzle. You've never even heard his name? My aunt's brother-in-law married one of his granddaughters."

Bhudhar Babu was passing. 'Don't you know who you are talking to? Have you heard of Purandar Khan ?", he said, giving me a little push.

"Of course I have," I answered.

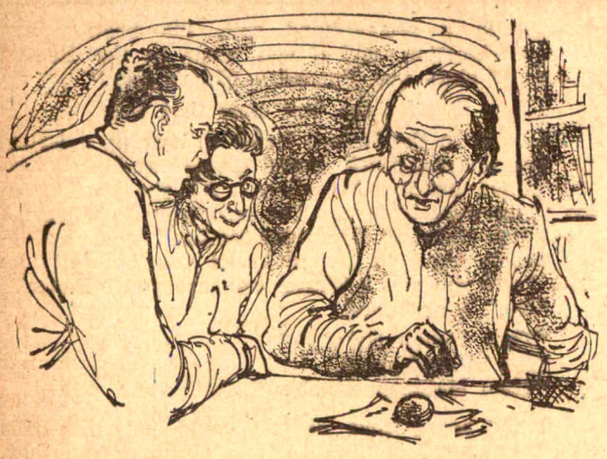
Roy stopped me. "Don't pay any attention to them, Brother. Would I be rotting in this sixty-three-rupee twelve-anna job if I were the heir of Purandar Khan ?"

Later I realised that it was his modesty which described his job as a sixty-three-rupee twelve-anna one. And I also realised that everybody knew the story of Purandar Khan's heir. Sixty-three rupees twelve annas, or however much it was that he got, he accepted only because he couldn't help it. Ganga Govind Roy, the owner of property worth six and a fourth lakhs, had come, through the sordid conspiracy of his co-sharers, to work in the office of a railway. And all this—the short dhoti, the torn tunic, the four or five days' old beard, his walking to office from his home in Bhawanipore and back and drinking half a glass of tea for lunch — was done with a purpose.

A relative of Panchanon Babu, Sub-head of the Journal Section, sent his son-in-law a present of mangoes. He brought four to the office. They were divided among thirty people.

During the lunch interval I went into the Record Room. "Why don't you taste the mangoes, Roy Mahasay ?" I asked. "The others were passing comments."

Roy put a stone on the letters under his hand as a weight and said confidentially in a low voice,



Then listen.....There was a time when I ate at least forty mangoes all by myself

"There's no harm in telling you, Brother, but don't say anything to anybody else."

I did not understand why he should be so secretive about such a small thing. "No, I won't say anything."

"Then listen. We are not accustomed to eat mangoes cut up in small pieces like that. I'm telling you the truth. There was a time when I ate at least forty mangoes all by myself. And those mangoes ! What are these compared to them ? Each was ripened on the tree and plucked in a net on a long pole. If you ever go to my part of the country I'll show you. And the trees ? One hundred and three fell to my share, of the best variety. Seven lichi trees, eighty-five breadfruit trees ! What breadfruits ! Holes are dug under the trees when the fruits ripen to keep them from touching the ground. Never in my life have I eaten mangoes by the slice !"

"Who are eating those mangoes now ?" I asked.

Roy applied himself to his work once more. "Its a long story," he said, "If I were to relate the whole eighteen chapters would be required, like the Mahabharata. Nobody believes it and I myself do not go around boasting. I am Purandar Khan's heir. Who would think so looking at me ? It is better not to say annything about it. People who have no feelings go around talking about such things. But I don't. Those who know the history of our family, who keep in touch with our fortunes, still respect me. Don't say anything about it to anybody. I am not in the habit of doing that. My father's palanquin is still lying beside the pavilion in front of the temple. Eight bearers were required to carry it. My co-sharers tore out a panel and made a cradle from it. The Raja Bahadur's brass cannon is still lying on its side beside the tube well. If you go there you'll find the village women using it as a wash board."

"Let me tell you something else," he called me back as I turned to leave.

"What ?" I asked, returning.

"Do you know a good lawyer ?"

When he heard that my elder brother is a vakil at Alipore he asked, "In which court, the civil or the criminal ?"

"Civil," I answered.

Roy suddenly became animated. He pushed away the work in his hands, "You must help me, Brother, my....."

He caught hold of my hands before he went on. "I only want to show him my papers. I showed them to K. Bose, the barrister, once. He went through everything, the rent receipts, the *sanad* from the time of Lord Clive, the lease and its counterpart, I've had copies made of all of them, you know. He said that the papers were clear. There is no snag anywhere. I am sure to get a decree if only I can place them before a court. But....."

"But what ?" I asked.

"The expenses. Who will pay them ? It is not a criminal case. It will take several years. The expenses of a lawyer and of the court must be paid for all that time. The property involved is worth more than six lakhs; it is not just a tap of a finger. The trap must be as big as the tiger to be caught. A court, the place which is called a court of justice, is the tiger's father. Where can I find so much money ? I manage to save three or four rupees a month and put it aside but if I can find a good lawyer....."

When I came back to my place and sat down Sudhir Babu said, "Has he asked you to go to his house ? Be careful ! Don't go !"

"Why ?" I asked.

"He'll pester you to death. He'll show you a whole trunk full of papers, give you something to eat, and then read them out to you regardless of how late it may be before he is finished. You'll have to decipher the handwriting on the deed, look at the map, read the names of his ancestors. He

'Has he asked you to go to his house ? Be careful ! Don't go !' said Sudhir Babu

won't let you go until you do. He gave me hot luchis and fried potatoes."

"Did he show the papers to you ?"

"Only to me ? Ask also others. No one in the office has been overlooked. Jivan Babu, Harish Babu, Sanatan Babu—even Dwijapada the chaprasi, has been invited to his house. Dwijapada doesn't know how to read so he had to listen."

After office we were all waiting for the bus when Roy set out on foot. He went straight home, swinging his cane, without paying any attention to anything on the way. He lived in Bhawanipore, walking the entire distance.

Sudhir Babu asked, "Do you know why the old man puts himself to so much trouble ? It is all for his brother. He starves himself and dresses poorly in order to educate his brother. That brother is developing into a brute. After failing twice he managed to pass the Matriculation in the Third Division. I wonder how long it will take him to pass the I.A. Roy has promised to feast us on meat when he does."

Roy used to say, "Don't tell anybody, I'm saying this to you confidentially, I want him to pass his B.A. and then study law. Don't you see ? A lawyer in the family ? He'll be able to look after the family affairs himself and conduct our case. The property is worth six and a fourth lakhs. Let it take two years, three years, as long as necessary! Let the case go on ! I have a job. Once we get a decree I'll be off ! Basanta won't have to practise at the bar for a living. We can live for seven generations on what we have. I'll be able to throw my cane at this sixty-two-rupee twelve-anna job !"

Roy never spoke much. But once one became friendly all the barriers were down.

"Don't tell anybody," he said to me one day, "Have you noticed this cane I carry ? It belonged to Raja Rudra Ram. He made it himself. He was most fastidious, you know. The head used to be goldplated. Four generations have used it. How many are the memories it evokes ! Once the fate of Burdwan rose and fell with it ! Why should it look well in the hand of a railway clerk ? That's why I had the gold, ten tolas, taken off. I've kept it to meet the expenses of Basanta's wedding. When I get the money I will have a crown made. A bride in a noble house cannot be blessed with a few guineas, can she ?"

A day came when Roy really did feast all his fellow employees on meat. The thirty people who worked with him were all invited. Basanta Ballav Roy had passed the I.A. examination at the first attempt.

"I can write the title of Kumar in front of my name," Roy said, "There is no legal bar. But I haven't done it. A clerk on sixty-two rupees twelve annas a month and he.....if ever my fortunes change....."

Basanta passed the Matriculation. Basanta passed the Intermediate. He took admission for the B.A. Roy told me when Basanta was indisposed, what he liked to eat, when he got up in the morning, what he looked like.

"Don't say anything to anybody," he whispered one day, "Basanta lost his temper today."

"Why ?"

"Just ! You can call temper a distinguishing characteristic of the Roy family. Raja Rudra had a lake filled up—he was so angry when croaking of frogs kept him awake one night. Digambar Prasad lost his temper once and set to forty villages and Raja Nilambar Prasad...

"Last night Basanta couldn't sleep. You k Brother....."

"Why not ?"

"He was playing cards with his friends."

"How can that be ?" I was surprised, exams are so close ! Wasting time ! Didn't you anything !"

"I thought I would at first," he said, "b kept quiet. Our family is a whimsical one ! I be a sixty-two-rupee twelve-anna clerk but does not cancel the blood of kings ! I know mys Raja Sarbeswar turned monk just for a w You'll find it in the history books. And my gr father Raja Kailash Chandra took a fancy to his only daughter, that is to say, my aunt, ma to the son of a cow-dung picker ! That f got a princess and half a kingdom as well !"

"How can that be ? Family pride ! Honou

"What else is a whim ? This lawsuit is ag them. My father died when we two brothers both minors and my uncle became my guar He transferred the property anonymously. haven't come to my house. I'll show you a s with the Emperor Aurangzeb's seal affixed to i keep it carefully in a trunk. Once Basanta p his Law exams.....but please don't say anyt about this to anybody."

"Roy is very friendly with you," Bhudhar said one day, "Has he told you the story a what Raja Rudra Ram did when he was angry

"I've heard it."

"Have you heard the story of the gold-he cane ?"

"Yes."

"The story of the *sanad* with Aurang seal ?"

"That too."

"How the crocodile was killed while cro the Ichchamati on an elephant ? How Raja N bar Prasad fished with a golden rod ?"

"No I haven't heard those."

"You will. Wait a little while. Everybody heard them. Why shouldn't you ? Is that poss Yet he warns everybody not to tell anybody el

It was true, what Bhuchar Babu said. I those stories also when I visited Roy in his He had been asking me to go for a long time. at last I went.

But I regretted going.

It was Bhawanipore only in name. There nothing of that fashionable quarter about houses.

Roy was wearing only a *gamchha*. He w think, cleaning a drain. He drew me into the

"I'll dress and be back in a minute," he "Please sit down, Brother.'

I was silently contemplating the floor. A platter of rice and curry lay scattered all ov Apparently some one had sat down to a meal a minutes before and, for some reason or overturned the platter and got up.

I was most embarrassed. Roy's humili revealed to me in this surprising way, seeme most to put me also to shame.

"I am so happy to see you," Roy said, returning dressed, "You have come. But....."

Noticing my embarrassment and following the direction of my gaze he said, "Oh, don't mind that! That is the little Bahadur's way. Make yourself comfortable in the bed and tuck up your legs, will you please ?"

"Who is the little Bahadur ?" I asked.

"Basanta, my younger brother. He was kept waiting for his lunch, you see. It was time for his train. He has gone fishing with some friends. This is nothing unusual. It happens all the time. What would you like to see first ? The *sanad* or the other papers ?"

The naked poverty of the room and the house upset me. I could not respond to Roy.

"Tell me what you are thinking ?" he asked, suddenly curious.

"Oh, nothing," I said, thoroughly put out, "You....."

Roy's hesitation was not dispelled. "No, you are thinking something. Does the dirtiness of my clothes disgust you ?"

"No, no. I am not thinking anything. You can talk....."

"Why should I accept your no, Brother ? Certainly you mind what you see. Woodburn Saheb himself was astonished to see me as I am, and you....."

"Which Woodburn Saheb ?"

"Woodburn was a judge on the civil side at Alipore Court. You know what courts are, don't you? Nobody cares who anybody is, whether he is a Raja or a Wazir. My petition was placed before Woodburn, you know. I walked my heels off. And I gave money away. Eighty-five rupees I had to pay a muktear to make a copy of the *sanad*. Woodburn looked at me in amazement. 'Are you Rudra Ram's grandson ? The Rudra Ram at whose death the cannon was fired at Fort William ?' "

" 'Yes, Sir,' " I answered him.

" 'But why are you in this condition ?' " the Saheb asked, " 'What do you do ?' "

I remembered the Roy of long ago, a sixty-two-rupee twelve-anna clerk in the Record Section of the office of the B.N.R., the heir of Purandar Khan, Ganga Govind Roy! He spent one rupee three annas cash on refreshment for me that day. I added up the price of everything he gave me, *rashagolla, pantua, darvesh*, cheese *goja*, it was not less than one rupee three annas. Perhaps it was the market allowance for two days of a man who walked to office and back to save money for his civil law suit and to educate the little Bahadur to be a lawyer. I could scarcely swallow. It seemed I was being unfair, taking what I should not.

Opening an iron safe in the corner of the room he showed me a great many papers, very old manuscripts. There was no end to the genealogies and marriage records. He was late for lunch that day, I remember, and so was I. It was 3 o'clock before I was able to get up.

And then Aurangzeb's *sanad* came out.

"I must go today, Roy Mahasay," I said once more.

"No, no, a little longer, a little longer, you haven't seen everything yet."

The care with which he kept each of the documents in the iron safe was pathetic. He handled them so gently! As if they were so valuable!

The next Sunday I brought Roy to my elder brother. I was not present during their conversation. He brought nearly fifty pounds of papers with him. They were wrapped carefully in oil cloth. The weight made Roy stoop. He recovered somewhat after resting a little. "They look like just a mess of frayed paper," he said with a dry laugh, "but they're worth six lakhs!"

The next day he called me aside as soon as we met at the office. He said, "Don't tell anybody. Everything is settled."

I was surprised. So easily ? At least it was settled, at last !

(Continued on Page 64)

Opening an iron safe in the corner of the room he showed me a great many papers very old manuscripts.

A Vision of Truth

The story gives a fascinating picture of the ways of a particular type of labour leadership.

By GOURI SHANKAR BHATTACHARYYA

MEN were on strike. Compared to the millions of Calcutta it was not much. Still as strikes go, it was unique. "Accept our conditions, accede to our demands or down with tools", said 80,000 workers, "The pay is not enough for two square meals a day".

The discussion went on in Comrade Noren's private office.

"Yes, it's time it was settled", agreed Mr. Choudhury who held 50% shares in an insurance company and was connected with two important banks. What the industrialists handed over to the Govt. as Excess Profit Tax, he suggested might as well be spent on the workers.

Noren agreed. "Yes, but you see Mr. Choudhury, it is best not to let the beggar know where the store is. If we bow down too easily the next crop of demands will be here in no time. Of course I know you cannot continue indefinitely with empty promises". He rang the bell, ordered coffee and offered cigarettes

An important meeting of the party was scheduled at 4-30. The members had started to drop in. Comrade Ram Talukdar with his unkempt appearance threw himself in a chair. "Intolerable", he grumbled, toying with a ringlet on his forehead, "intolerable is this oppression by the rich".

"Excuse me", apologised Noren, "you are 45 minutes too early, Ram babu. Save your breath now. The meeting starts at 4-30".

"Of course, it doesn't concern you. You are well off. Forgive me I am off my head today".

"It's not exactly the place to come when one is off one's head", reminded Norendra.

Mr. Choudhury smiled, "Right you are. Come, come Care for some coffee?"

Ram nodded his head. "Sure. Coffee by all means".

The telephone rang. Noren picked the receiver up. "Hello. Yes, it's me. Yes. Did she have chicken broth at 3? Oh I see, I'll collect the blood report on the way back. Are you sure she is improving? What! You haven't yet! Really you wou dn't let me work quietly for a minute even! All right. No no. Don't bother. I'll manage it," and he snapped the receiver down.

"How's she?" enquired Choudhury with evident interest.

Flicking the ash off the cigarette Noren answered, "It's an acute case. I told them to get Col. Lahiri. I learn he hasn't been asked yet. A precious life is at stake and nobody seems to bother. Well, I'm afraid I have to leave".

Ram looked longingly at Noren's expensive cigarette and said, "Pity, Noren babu can't stay. But can't be helped. Wife's illness is more important than a party meeting".

Noren interrupted, "My wife is not ill".

"I didn't know you had a daughter" apologised Ram.

"When you think only in terms of wives, daughters and parents," impatiently retorted Noren, "how can you think of humanity in general?"

Ram was taken aback. "Of course the whole country is brothers and sisters, but how few can grasp the idea ? It's too big for most. Anyway whoever she is, I wish her the speediest recovery.

4-25. The room reeked with cigarette smoke unbrushed hair, perspiration and dirty clothes. A dozen voices talked loudly together. There had been a police lathi-charge The clerks had to be taken to the hospital. A strong resolution must be drafted to condemn it. Large sums had to be collected for the trolleymen on strike. Choudhury suavely piped in, "Don't worry on that score. I may manage that if I get a definite guarantee that at least a 100 men will insure with our firm. They of course don't lose anything by it. The rates of our company...."

Ram Talukdar said, "Certainly Why merely a 100? Everybody will insure there After all you are

ıg them over a difficulty. That shouldn't be ɔtten".

"Right", said Choudhury with a broad smile, "I a straightforward person and I like straight ".

The hall-porter came to say that a person was ing outside. He would neither give his name nor way.

'I'll go and see", said Ram, "Probably the son bitch is a spy.

Some boys poured in. "Where's the president?" nquired of them.

'Couldn't find him", they said.

'Comrade Protap Singh is like that. Probably up with something or other. He isn't fond of s either. Only, the flowers and garland are ed. Anyway, sit down. I'll be back in a minute".

An elderly man stood across the road smoking holding a bag. His shoes were worn. He came ard on seeing Ram Talukdar and asked, "There to have been a meeting here. Not exactly a ing."

Ram greeted him effusively, "Hallo!. Welcome rade Protap Singh. It is a pleasure. He chaperon-

Hallo, welcome, comrade Pratap Singh !

im inside and then started scolding the boys. s is unpardonable".

'We looked everywhere" they insisted.

Protap Singh intervened. "I came straight from station. You needn't have sent them. This is a job, not a celebration. Let us start. No need ormalities; that is a waste of time and energy".

After the meeting president Protap Singh was n to comrade Noren's residence in his car. Ram kdar had arranged everything. He now told Protap Singh, "Noren is a genuine worker. You must meet him. He couldn't be present today due to an unfortunate illness at home".

"Illness at home!" interposed Protap Singh, "Then to go now would be to disturb him. We could meet some other day".

Ram insisted, "But he would be disappointed".

"Well, in that case let's go", said Protap. "It's a pleasure to meet such people. We can do very little, Rambabu. Work is the only thing we can offer, but their sacrifice is for the sake of an ideal — they are the true workers. Born with silver spoons in their mouths, they have yet dared to face their obligation to the country — it's a great thing."

Ram agreed. "Exactly. And talking of workers, you are unique too. We in Bengal have never seen another like you. Most of us are glad tc get the work done somehow but nothing holds you back. Nothing tempts you — neither fame nor money."

"Oh, you exaggerate. You are great men. You guide the destinies of thousands of workers. We can do so little in the villages — we only fret".

Everything had been arranged by Ram Talukdar. Protap Singh was Noren's guest but in the midst of the expensive furniture and fashionable pictures he sat incongruous as an ugly stain.

To wait thus was exasperating. Protap could easily have returned to the village. There was such a lot of work left. This was the harvest time — the crucial time of the year. From subscription to sharecropping — the villagers needed him in everything. Of course the urban problems were vaster and of course it was nice to have a chance to meet the elite and the intellectuals. Still Protap found it a bit unnerving. You have to think twice before opening your mouth. He wondered when Ram would return or whether he would return at all.

Evening came. Protap sat in the gloom till a servant came to switch on the light and bring tea.

Protap enquired, "Is Noren Babu at home?"

"Yes but he is very busy. You see the very biggest doctors are coming".

"I see. I shouldn't have come at a time when he is so worried".

The servant paid no attention to the words. He only wanted to know whether Protap liked bread or rice for dinner.

Anything will do.

At 9 o'clock came both bread and rice with a paraphernalia of rich delicacies. The lavish meal made him uneasy. He decided to return home by the first train next morning.

At 9-30 he heard some footsteps recede and in their wake entered a person, to say, "So you are Protap Singh".

Protap was delighted. "Yes. You are Noren Roy I presume."

Noren didn't look very happy about the guest. Still he said, "Glad to meet you. I have heard a lot about you. It's a pity we meet at a moment when it is impossible to discuss much. I want to apologise for what must have seemed to you the height of rudeness".

"No. No. Please don't mention it. It makes me feel embarrassed. After all it is an emergency. Tell me how is the patient?"

A note of despair comes into Noren's voice. "It's a tragedy, sir. It's the result of relying on others. Who ever thought it would get so serious within three days. Men like us cannot afford the luxury of

a little rest, it seems. It has come to such a stage now that she can't even recognise me!"

Protap hurriedly enquired, "Is it your wife?"

"Oh no. That wouldn't have mattered. After all she can speak. It is her silent vacant look that upsets me so much. The attendant is a big fool. Col. Lahiri should have been consulted in the first place. Instead he called a vet who simply pocketed the fees and did nothing. Afterwards I tried all the specialists of course and consultants still the dog gives a vacant look — cannot recognise her master even. This evening she passed through a crisis. She seemed to be sinking. Excuse me, I must see if the terramycin has come".

"Terramycin! But that's awfully costly", almost unconsciously comments Protap.

"Can't be helped. Life's worth more than money. Anyway, goodnight. See you in the morning".

Protap was still in a reverie when that servant turned up to say, "Won't you come up? The bed is made."

It came as no surprise to Protap. In a house where animals get costly antibiotics, it was quite expected that a suite of rooms be offered to a working comrade.

In his bed Protap recalled the past. He remembered his wife. Their struggle through poverty, starvation, the social quabbles and police tyranny — Sumitra had put up with it all in silence. When she was dying they had taken her to the hospital. The doctor had ordered those costly medicines.

Where could poor Protap find that much money? He had hopelessly stood there thrusting his hands in the empty pockets. For a moment he had thought of the cheque book. But it was the party fund. A doubt had come to his mind, can money be more precious than life and he had the answer too. It was the lifeblood of many. The country of many. The country was a greater stake than a single life.

In the silence of the night, he heard the moaning of dog Suddenly his head and body seemed to be on fire. This dog and its vacant look! If he had a revolver he would shoot that dog. No, rather shoot Noren. He paced the room and then slowly opening the door at one time came out. The dog was still moaning.

The next morning the house was in a turmoil. Noren ran about like a mad man and telephoned everywhere. The servant had been given notices and police had been summoned. Noren swore to send everybody to jail unless they confessed. It was useless. Then it transpired that the guest of last night was missing too.

The police officers interrogated everybody and examined everything. "Noren babu", they said at length with regret, "an astute man like you should have got in touch with us last night. This is a hardened criminal type. And after all, how could you let a staunch Communist enter your house?"

Noren apologised as he offered an expensive cigarette to the officer, "Seen lots of communists, but never one of this brand"

"The trouble with those fellows is that they seek to put the ideal on a basis of reason. They are the intellectual type whose life is spent doubting both the dream and the reality But a true communist is nothing if he is not a realist. Your dog has a good market value."

Noren smiled sadly. "You are right. Even the dog soap, chicken broth and shampoo are gone. I'll catch him yet — a regular burglar. His voice choked with emotion.

Protap had proudly walked out with the dog. The night was nearly over. Walking along Hazra Road he came to the bank of the Ganges. It was completely deserted. He glanced at the light of the sickle moon shimmering on the strip of water, then patted the dog.. "Lucky chap", he said, "I have

Freedom. You are free now !

denied you the solace of costly medicines, but I offer you something greater, much greater". He loosened the collar and shouted, "Freedom. You are free now".

The dog perhaps couldn't appreciate it. He stood and wagged his tail and became vociferous.

"No, nothing else", Protap commanded, "I give you nothing less than absolute freedom. The rest goes to deserving candidates". He walked down to the water for a bath. "At least one soul is saved from slavery", he thought.

The dog was still standing when he came out of the water. He wondered if the look was 'vacant' but couldn't decide. He started doubting whether the brute fully appreciated the newly got freedom. The dog came near him and started moaning.

He felt pity for the animal. It will at best lead a dog's life. But he couldn't tolerate the luxuries. It was too much for a bitch.

"This world is large enough", he said in a tone of viceregal majesty. "Isn't it enough that we have given you freedom unasked?"

The dog stood with an unappreciative stare.

"It only shows what an ungrateful dog you are", thought he. The poor soul can't appreciate liberty. He remembered his wife. She had been ill too but there was no costly medicines for her. "That damned dog" he swore and started to walk rapidly

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HEIR

(Continued from Page 60)

"Why didn't you tell me you are the Nayanjora Mitters?"

"How do I know! Where is Nayanjora? I never heard of it!"

"Such a distinguished family! Why have you taken a job in the railway office, Brother? I said as much to your elder brother. He is a highly educated man! He's drunk the law down like water. Why else should he charge a fee of five hundred and one rupees? A real lawyer! He said the same thing barrister K. Bose said."

"What did you decide?"

"He said that the papers were perfectly clear. There is not the slightest discrepancy anywhere. The case is in my favour. Raja Rudra Ram's own signature is on one of the documents: 'As long as my grandsons, Sriman Ganga Govind Roy and Sriman Basanta Ballav Roy are minors Sri....will act as their guardian and look after the affairs of the estate' ....It was decided that we shall divide our share as soon as the judgement in the case is delivered. Half and half. Your brother will take half and my half, that is to say, the half remaining to us two brothers, will amount to something like three lakhs twenty-five thousand but there is one thing....."

"What?"

"He promised to win the case. He said he would get a decree from the High Court. But the case will last for three or four years. He said I won't be able to manage it unless I give up this job. It is not a criminal case but a civil one, not a tiger, a tiger's father!"

"What have you decided to do?" I asked, "Are you going to give up your job?"

"Immediately! If I could hit the job over the head with a stick and get out I'd be saved. Let me finish my work today. I'll submit a petition tomorrow. I have about four thousand rupees in the Provident Fund. The family can manage on that for three or four years. After that—but don't say anything about it to anybody yet, Brother....."

"How I do not know, everybody in his Section came to know about it that very day.

"Is it true, Roy Mahasaya?" Sudhir Babu asked.

"Then you are really going to quit your job, Roy Mahasaya?" Bhudhar Babu asked.

Sanatan Babu, Abinash Babu, the brother of the man with a foreign education, the doctor—they were all interested. When their questions were answerd in the affirmative, if not by Roy, by me, they seemed depressed. If some one you know should suddenly win three lakhs twenty-five thousand in a lottery you would feel the way they did about it. Roy Mahasaya had suddenly risen far above everybody else. He was envied and at the same time regarded with respect.

The petition was not submitted the next day.

"You've sent the petition?" I asked him.

"No, I couldn't manage it today! I can't do it without consulting the little Bahadur! His consent is essential. He is also the heir to half the property, isn't he?"

Not long after I was transferred to Bilaspur.

"I cannot tell you how grateful I am," Roy Mahasaya said, "You made it possible. I dared not even dream of recovering my fortune. I shall keep you informed. Your brother will tell you everything. I also shall write to you. Don't imagine I shall forget my friends in the office just because I am rich. Whether I am a Raja or anything else. We've passed so many years together....."

* * * *

Several years later I came to the Head Office on official business. I found Roy still working in the Record Room, sitting in the same chair, in the same position.

"What's the matter?" I asked, "Haven't you given up your job yet?"

"Practically. You can call it that. Basanta has agreed. I've drawn up the petition and had it typed. Only placing it now remains to be done. And my wife said....."

"What did she say?"

"She has her wits about her. Her advice is good. I have also thought it over. Basanta should pass his law examinations while I still have my job. What do you think? Isn't it better so? I've shown the papers to an advocate also. He said the same thing. The papers are clear. No difficulty...."

I did not come again for several years. But Roy was still there, in the same position, in the same chair, in the Record Section. He was older. Bhudhar Babu had been promoted. Abinash Babu had been transferred. Sudhir Babu had retired. Many changes had taken place in the Head Office. But Roy....

"What has happened? Haven't you quit yet?"

"There now. Everything is ready. Basanta is married. The girl is auspicious. Have you heard of the Duttas of Mulajor. A famous family! I've brought a girl from that family into ours. Basanta passed the law exams at his first attempt. I have the petition with me today. This afternoon I shall hand it to Das Saheb myself. The day is a lucky one I looked it up in the almanac. Now is the time to hit this job over the head with a cane and....."

Bhudhar Babu commented, "And you! Do you think a person can ever get out of this cage once he is in? It doesn't matter whether he is a Raja or a pauper."

Three years later I heard that Roy had retired not a day earlier nor a day later than his fifty-fifth birthday. He applied for a year's extension but it was not granted. That had been about seven months' before. I found a young man sitting in his place, in his chair. Bhudhar Babu was the only one left of those whom I had known. "Have you heard about Raja Ganga Govind Roy?" he asked.

"No. What is the news?"

"Have you heard that he has retired? He asked for an extension but he didn't get it. Have you heard?"

"I have heard. I was told when I arrived."

"Have you been told anything else?"

"No."

"Then you haven't heard anything. Have you heard that the little Bahadur with his wife from the famous Dutta family of Mulajor has set up a separate household?"

"How is that?"

"Yes, sir, he rented a house in Bhawanipore and practises as a lawyer in Alipore. He took the six and a half thousand that Roy had in his Provident Fund away from him and turned Roy and his family out. Sudhir Babu met him on the street one day. He said Roy is in a bad way! He is living in a village in Howrah. They are destitutes, almost starving! They haven't a pice. He has two unmarried daughters and his sons are still minors."

It was a long time after all these events that I suddenly came face to face with Roy on the empty

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The ADVENTURE Of THE FRIGHTENED BARONET

A deductive detective story in the great tradition of Poe and Conan Doyle

By AUGUST DERLETH

FROM the chess problem in which he had been absorbed, Solar Pons slowly raised his head, cocked a little, and smiled. His fingers relinquished their hold upon the knight; he leaned back.

"Yes, yes, as I thought", he murmured, "we are about to have company".

London was lost in fog, a heavy autumnal curtain shutting the city away from our lodgings in Praed Street, and at first there was only the distant hum of diminished traffic that was the pulse of the city, and the several small noises of water dropping; then I heard the curiously muffled sound of hoofbeats, travelling a short distance, stopping, then coming forward again.

"Surely he is looking for Number 7," observed Pons with satisfaction, for time had been pressing heavily on his hands since the bizarre adventure of the Octagon House. "To whom else would he address himself at this hour of the night? Nor is it amiss to surmise that he has come up from the country not far from London; horsedrawn carriages are uncommon indeed within the city. "Clearly now," he went on, listening intently, "he has got down just a few doors away; he has gone up to the door, flashed his light on the number. No, that is not number seven; yet number seven cannot be far away. Hear him! He returns to his carriage—but he does not get in; no, he is too close to the desired address for that—he leads his horse down the street a few doors, and here he is."

I looked toward the night bell, back to Pons' expectant features, marking his keen eyes, his acquiline nose, his firm, thin-lipped mouth, touched still by his smile, and once more at the bell. On the instant it jangled. Pons stepped to the speaking tube and invited our visitor to come up, and in a few moments there was a tap on the door giving to our lodgings. I strode across the room and opened it.

Across the threshold stepped a short, stout, sturdily built gentleman of approximately sixty years of age, swarthy of skin, heavily bearded, and still darkhaired; he fixed his small glittering eyes on Pons, bowed curtly, and handed him an envelope. It was unsealed.

I crowded up to Pons and looked over his shoulder at the card he took from the envelope. Alexander Taber Rowan, K. C. B. Chiltern Manor. Pons turned the card over. In a shaky script someone had scrawled thereon! "For God's sake, come! I can't stand it much longer." I flashed a glance of inquiry at Pons, and saw that his eyes had lit up with the excitement of the chase.

"Late of His Majesty's Service, attached to the staff of the Viceroy of India," said Pons, returning the card to the envelope and dropping both to the table. He looked across the lamplight to where Sir Alexander's man stood, fingering his cap.

"I am Kennerly, sir."

"What is it?" asked Pons.

"It's the curse of the stone, Mr. Pons."

His voice was gruff but not discourteous. What he said apparently conveyed something to Pons, though it meant nothing to me, and I saw that at the moment at least Pons had no intention of enlightening me. He nodded.

"You were sent to bring us?"

"If possible."

"Good. We'll be with you in a few moments."

While Pons got into his rainproof, I saw him scrutinizing Kennerly with marked interest.

"A veteran of India yourself, I see," he said presently.

"Yes, sir."

"Of great personal service to the Maharajah of Indore."

"I saved his life, sir."

"Very likely in the encounter in which you lost your foot."

By this time Pons was ready; he turned to me, his eyes twinkling at the sight of my obvious efforts to observe the bases for his deductions and seeing only the telltale smoothness of the shoe which betrayed the lack of a foot. "Coming, Parker ?"

We descended the stairs after leaving a message for Mrs. Johnson, our landlady, and passed into the thick fog which lent to Pons and Kennerly a shadowy, almost intangible being. The carriage loomed abruptly out of the night. We entered it. Kennerly mounted before us; and soon we were travelling westward through London in the direction of the Chiltern Hills. Our pace was necessarily slow, but the horse seemed to proceed with an uncanny instinct and, as far as I could determine, no errors in direction were made.

Pons sat deep in thought, his visored cap low over his face, and I hesitated to disturb him : yet I rankled within at my own inability to follow his deductions, and finally I could contain myself no longer.

"Doubtless it is a most elementary matter, but how in the devil did you know this fellow is a veteran of India ?"

"Come, come Parker—it should be obvious. For one thing, his military bearing; for another, he is the trusted servant of the baronet. What more likely than that he was his orderly in service ? But, primarily, he wears a ring he could have got only in India."

"I can follow the observation about the lost foot easily enough, but what about his service to the Maharajah of Indore ?"

"The ring he wears bears the crest of the Maharajah. Such rings are not for sale. It follows therefore that he must have been given it by the Maharajah himself. Since such a ring is not given simply as a gift, for it is too personal, but rather as a mark of esteem, it is not at all a shot in the dark to assume that our visitor did the Maharajah a personal service of such vital importance that nothing short of the crested ring would satisfy the Maharajah's sense of gratitude."

"And the card ? I asked, determined that nothing should escape me. "What did you make of that ?"

"Only that our client is badly frightened, that his sending for me is done with the knowledge of no one else in the household save this man, that the matter is one in which he hesitates to seek police protection, very probably because of the attendant publicity, and that he has been drinking to keep up his nerve. From what his man has said, I take it that something has come up to remind him that the Eye of Siva which he acquired some thirty years ago during a campaign in the hill country of India was, after all, cursed, and that the fruits of this curse are now being visited upon him."

I took a deep breath and considered. "The script and what he writes betray some fright," I ventured.

"Capital ! Though obvious."

"But the other matters—?"

"He comes to us in preference to the police, and he comes at an hour which indicates secrecy; since he himself has nothing to fear from us, clearly he believes his family will disapprove of his sending for us. He therefore summons us at a time when he can present us to his household in fact, as a fait accompli. It is, further, not illadvised to assume that there are troubled waters there. Finally, there was the distinct odour of rum about his card."

It was in the early hours of the morning that we arrived at Chiltern Manor in the low rolling country immediately adjacent to the hills which gave the house its name. We had ridden out of the fog not far from the environs of London, and

The entrance gave way almost at once to a curious staircase. Kennerly's light illumined the way.

waning moon shone down, shedding its pale light upon the wooded country and fields through which we now rode. The estate lay behind a high old stone wall, almost totally concealed by a heavy growth of vines, and surrounded by many trees and bushes. Rowan's man drove through a gate in the side-wall and directly around to the carriage sheds, where he left horse and carriage standing to lead us into the house, which rose up from among trees, an old stone building not without Victorian magnificence, at this early morning hour dark and sombre save for a faint glimmer of yellow light from window on the second floor.

I could not help observing that we entered the house by a side entrance, and that Kennerly's movements were marked by a singular care, thus confirming Pons' surmise that Rowan had sent for us in secret; moreover, the entrance gave almost at once upon a narrow staircase, which clearly led up between the wall and a room below, almost as part of the wall as it were, for we were forced to proceed in single file by the small light of a pocket flash which Kennerly used to illumine the stairs.

CHAPTER—II

PONS' client waited in his own rooms. The pale light shed by the single lamp burning there presently disclosed him, an elderly man, deep in an upholstered chair, and wrapped in a steamer rug, as if for warmth. His chin rested upon his chest, and his sunken eyes looked at us from over his pince nez. A thin moustache and beard, both white, in singular contrast to Kennerly's black growth, and a fringe of white hair seen from under the black skullcap he wore, ornamented his thin, ascetic face, white within the darkness of his immediate environment.

"Ah, Mr. Pons!" he said in a cultured, well-modulated voice. "I had hoped Kennerly could bring you." He glanced interrogatively at me, and Pons introduced me as his assistant. "I am afraid my message may have seemed somewhat incoherent to you."

"Not at all," responded Pons. "In fact, it is perfectly clear that something has happened to make you believe there may after all be something more than legend to the curse on the Eye of Siva."

A wan smile touched the baronet's lips. "I am reassured. I made no mistake in sending for you."

"……It was moving steadily before me. Not a light, but a kind of spectral image — Siva! the destroyer."

"Let us hope that we may be able to justify your confidence," said Pons quietly. "However, if I remember rightly, the stone is now in the British Museum."

"It has been there for twenty-five years." He shrugged. "But apparently this has made no difference. I will not attempt to deny that I am badly frightened, Mr. Pons. Approximately two months ago, the first of these mysterious events took place. I thought initially that I was the subject of a practical joke in the worst possible taste. The occasion was the Naval Conference; since Chiltern Manor is not too far from London, friends of mine in the diplomatic service in Britain for the Conference called on me. At the end of one of those days, I found a card in the tray. It read, Puranas Mahadeva. I regret that at the moment the significance of this did not occur to me; I assumed that it had been left by some minor official whom I had met at Delhi and forgotten.

"That night, Mr. Pons," he went on after a short pause, his eyes glittering strangely now, and his breath coming a little faster, testifying to his excitement at the memory of the incident he was about to relate, "that night, as I was preparing to retire, I was summoned from my work by a tap on my door and I stepped into the hall. No one was there.

"Now, sir, since I am as familiar with this house by night as by day, I did not turn up the light. I stepped out into the hallway, and had begun to walk down towards the stairs when my attention was attracted to what appeared to be a spot of illumination low on the floor along the wall

at second glance, I saw that it was moving steadily before me. And then, sir, I observed that it was not a light at all—but a kind of spectral image."

Sir Alexander drew a long breath and continued:

"Mr. Pons, it was the image of Siva, the Destroyer ! Perfect in every detail, a miniature spectre! I was startled. I was not immediately disturbed; I felt I had experienced an illusion of some kind, and quickly turned on the lights. There was nothing in sight, nothing whatever.

"I examined the wall, the floor—nothing. I returned to my rooms somewhat shaken, thinking naturally of that old curse; an article not long before in the feature section of an American newspaper had brought all those old painful memories back; and it was then that it struck me with the force of a thunderclap what those words on the calling card stood for : Puranas is the title of Hindu scriptures; and Mahadeva is a less-widely known name for Siva ! I took out the card at once—or perhaps I had better say, sir, that I took out the one I thought was the card I wanted. Mr. Pons—there was nothing whatever on it; it was perfectly blank; there was nothing to show that a single letter of printing had ever been on it !"

"Ah," murmured Pons delightedly.

"That was the beginning of a series of events which I am unable to explain save as the malign evidence of the workings of that ancient curse ! The pattern has been repeated endlessly : the tap on the door, the strange apparition—nor has this been all; I have seen the spectre with increasing frequency on the top of the estate wall on the north and in other places where I would not have expected to come upon it."

The baronet sighed, "Moreover," he went on, "within the past few nights, events have taken a more serious turn; I have awakened to the sound of voices warning me to prepare for death; I have also heard the strange whistles the Sepoys used to give; I am ashamed to confess that I have had recourse to rum to steady my nerves. It is the firm conviction of the family that I am losing my mind, for no one else has seen any of these apparitions, and they have held out against me in summoning help from outside. no doubt for fear of any publicity which might attend having you here.

"But last night the mastiff which guards the north gate vanished without a sound; I have no speculation as to what may have happened to him. And now I am convinced that at last the curse on the stone has become active again."

"Why ?"

"You know the story of the stone, Mr. Pons. How the priests in that temple opposed the Maharajah—indeed, they made their temple a base of operations. We destroyed the temple, and the Eye of Siva was a prize of war; it is true that in the melee attendant upon the destruction of the temple, one of the guardian priests was slain. The newspapers will have it that it was this man who put a curse upon the stone, but the fact is that the only curse connected with it was a general and ancient curse upon anyone who desecrated the temple; it is really not attached to the stone at all

"However, as you know, the Maharajah died shortly thereafter, three of the soldiers accompanying me into the temple died within a year, and four months ago—the raison d'etre for that American newspaper article—Sir James McLeen, who commanded my right wing in that engagement, fell to his death under mysterious circumstances. These events, looked upon in the light of that ancient curse. naturally point to but one conclusion—to which I did not come until after I had begun to witness these manifestations; only then did the other events fall into their place in the pattern."

"You suggest that the design is to retrieve the Eye of Siva ?"

"Not alone that, but to punish those responsible for the destruction of that temple." Sir Alexander touched his lips with his tongue, nervously. "But I feel that you do not put much credence in the curse, Mr. Pons."

Pons smiled drily. "Let us say rather that I am at the moment concerned only with the problem of which aspect of the matter is cause, and which is effect. I take it you own more than one dog."

"Yes, of course."

"You have said you have witnessed the apparition of Siva on the estate wall. Was its appearance accompanied by any demonstration from the dogs ?"

"None."

"Does this suggest nothing to you ?"

"Only that whatever is out there is meant for me alone. The Hindus have many very strange beliefs, Mr. Pons, and stranger things than this have happened in India, without any explanation."

"I have some acquaintance with the lore and legends of India," replied Pons absently. "Have you ever seen the spectre of Siva in someone else's company ?"

"Yes, on one occasion my brother Ransom was with me. On another, my daughter's fiance, Geoffrey Saring. Neither of them was able to see anything. Yet the thing was as plain to me as you are, sitting there."

"Your man Kennerly has never seen it ?"

"No."

Pons sat for a few moments with his eyes closed, touching the lobe of his left ear thoughtfully with his thumb and forefinger. Presently he gazed at the apprehensive baronet once more. "I wish you would instruct Kennerly to answer any question I put to him."

"It shall be done."

"Further, I would like to have you show me approximately the space in the hallway covered by the apparition at such times as you have seen it."

Without a word the old man got up. Pulling his steamer rug around him, he walked a little unsteadily over to the door, threw it open, and stepped hesitantly into the hall. He turned up a light and pointed to the base board along the farther wall.

"Beginning there, Mr. Pons—and going for a distance of twenty to thirty feet—I cannot be sure which, but in any case it varies."

"At which end ?"

"It is usually at this end."

"Who occupies this floor besides yourself ?"

"My daughter's rooms are across the hall. Down the hall—Geoffrey Saring, next to him my brother Ransom, then my sister Megan's room; and then across, a guest room of some dimensions; Kennerly has got it ready for you and Dr. Parker."

Pons stood in the hall, hands clasped behind him, his cap back on his head, gazing thoughtfully

along the wall where it joined the floor, which, for a distance of approximately a foot from the wall, was not covered by carpet. He stood thus for perhaps three or four minutes; then he turned abruptly, as if dismissing the hall, and said that except for one thing, there was nothing further he could do tonight. And that one ? inquired the baronet.

"I want to have a talk with Kennerly, if you will send him to our room."

"Certainly." The baronet hesitated briefly; then a look of great anxiety crept into his eyes; he put one trembling hand on Pons' shoulder, and said, "I hope you will be able to explain this strange mystery, sir. I am close to the edge."

"We shall see," said Pons imperturbably.

CHAPTER—III

WE entered our room and found everything laid out for us with the skill and comprehension possessed only by someone who had served in the capacity of an orderly for many years. Pons threw himself into a chair without pausing to remove anything but his rainproof and his cap; he looked quizzically over at me, but his mouth was grim.

"This is devil's work, Parker."

"You attach no importance to the curse, then ?"

"I attach every importance to it, on the contrary; it is the most important single factor in the matter."

"Indeed ! You did not let Sir Alexander think so."

"There is time for that, Parker."

I was about to say more when Pons cautioned me to be silent, rising from his chair and moving with cat-like quiet towards the door.

"Kennerly," I whispered.

"Kennerly's slight limp is distinctive in his walk," replied Pons in an equally low voice. "It is not Kennerly."

There was a quick, rustling tap on our door. Pons threw it open.

A young woman stood there, her ash-blonde hair wild, one hand almost protectively ir the pocket of her dressing gown, the other holding it close about her neck. Her dark eyes darted from one to the other of us before she stepped into tre room, closed the door, and stood with her back against it, her mouth working a little, a frown heavy on her brow.

"It is Mr. Solar Pons, isn't it ?" she said, looking at Pons.

'At your service," replied Pons.

"I have seen your picture in the papers often enough," she said bitterly. "Or, Mr. Pons—surely you are not going to make my poor father's madness the subject of scandal ? I beg you to go away, to say nothing....."

"I am not in the habit of announcing myself to the press, Miss Rowan."

"I'm sorry. But it is a painful thing to witness the decay of a man like my father—quite apart from his being, after all, my father."

"You are convinced his mind is going ?"

"I wish I were not. But there is no other explanation. He has seen things neither Uncle Ransom nor Geoffrey saw when he was with them; it isn't the mere hallucinations alone, but the added fact that they prey upon his mind and fill him with fear. He has for some years suffered from a heart weakened by coronary trouble, and now that his mind has given way, the end is only a matter of time."

"Perhaps I may be able to relieve him," said Pons.

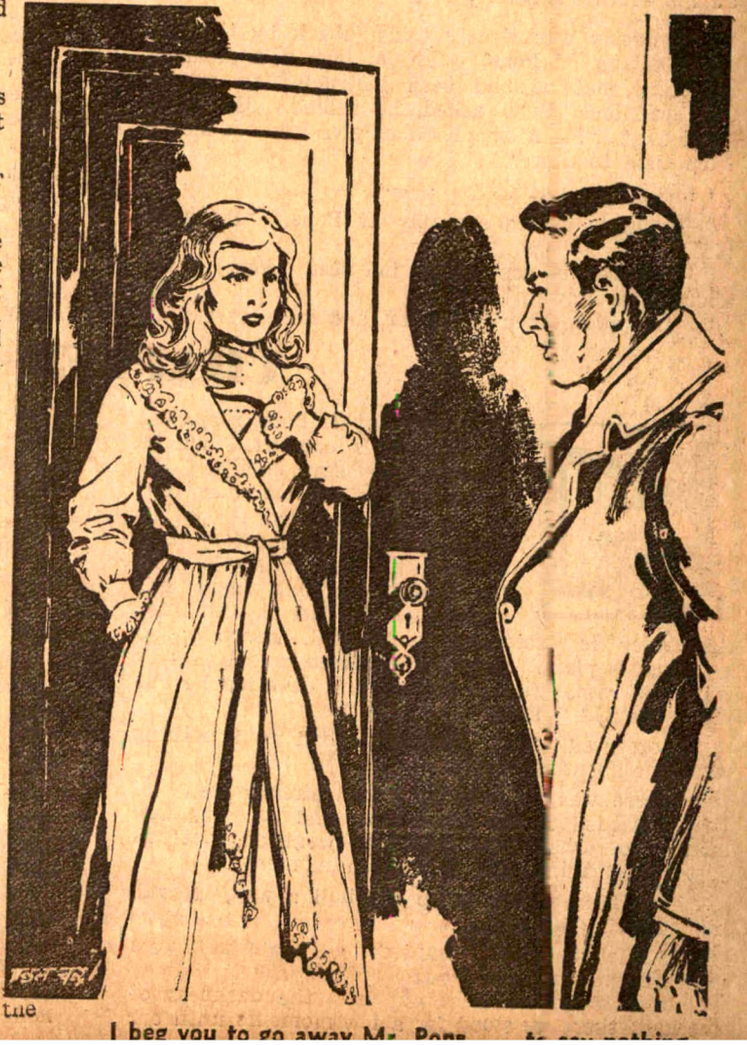
"If only you could !" she said earnestly. "But I'm afraid it is too late. I feel only that your being here will give him a false hope, which, when it is destroyed, will affect him all the more adversely."

"I understand that he suggested calling in outside help and that the members of his household opposed this."

"Yes, I did. So did my brother, who was visiting us at that time. So did my aunt. Only Geoffrey and Uncle Ransom seemed to think it a good idea, and I could see that my uncle was none too keen, for all that."

"Well, then, I promise you I shall not be here long."

Thus assured, Miss Rowan left us. Pons glanced at me curiously.



I beg you to go away Mr. Pons ... to say nothing

"Would you say she was sincere, Parker ?"

"Undoubtedly."

"So I thought."

"Perhaps, after all.....", I began.

Pons smiled. "Did Sir Alexander strike you as a man who was mentally deranged?"

"Oh, you cannot make such generalizations, Pons. He is certainly under great mental stress. But many mad men are perfectly normal to all but the experienced eye; my eye is hardly experienced to such a degree."

"Let us just ask Kennerly what he thinks," suggested Pons.

The sound of Kennerly's footsteps paused, he knocked on the door, and, in response to Pons' invitation, came in. Like Miss Rowan, he stood with his back against the door until bidden to come forward and sit down.

"I was told to answer some questions, sir," he said in a voice that was courteous without being servile, and toneless without being colourless.

"Why, Dr. Parker has a question to put to you first of all, Kennerly."

Pons turned to me, and thus prodded, I put the question : Did Kennerly think that Sir Alexander was losing his mind ?

Kennerly favoured me with a hostile, stony stare. "I do not think so," he said coldly.

Pons said nothing to this. "Now, then; Kennerly—to what extent does Ransom Rowan live on his brother's bounty ?"

Kennerly was clearly taken aback by the personal nature of Pons' question, but in a moment, reflecting that he had been instructed to answer any questions Pons asked, he rallied. He spoke cautiously. "Sir Alexander does give Ransom money from time to time."

"How does he spend it ?"

Kennerly looked squarely at Pons. "He gambles."

"Ransom is constantly in need, then. What about Miss Rowan ?"

"She adores her father sir, and he is very fond of her. But not so fond as to be blinded by her."

"Intimating that he stands in her way occasionally. How ?"

"He has not yet given his consent to her marriage."

"She hardly needs his consent, does she ?"

"Not necessarily. But Miss Winifred is that kind of girl, she will not do anything against her father's wish."

"He does not trust Mr. Saring ?"

"Sir Alexander is a hard man to please."

"And his son ?"

"Philip is wilful and determined to have his own way. Sir Alexander is difficult to get along with in many ways, though I have always managed to do my best for him, and have no reason whatever to complain."

"Philip wishes his own way about what ?"

"His inheritance, sir. He has devised some way of obtaining it before his father's death so that he will not have to pay so much tax to the Crown."

"And Sir Alexander's sister ?"

"Miss Megan is a very strong-willed woman."

"They do not get along ?"

"I think they get along as well as any sister and brother do, sir."

"You have seen none of these phenomena reported by Sir Alexander ?" inquired Pons then.

"Nothing whatever. But the dog is missing."

"Yes, the dog is missing. Sir Alexander says he did not make a sound."

Aye. So he thinks. But he did call once—it wasn't pretty, sir."

"Yes, it is plain that he was lured off by someone whom he had no reason to fear, and killed. He cried out when he was slain. That is what you want to say, is it not, Kennerly ?"

"It might be," he replied reluctantly.

"Come, come, Kennerly. We are both working towards the same end. But enough—you may go."

I could not help observing after he had gone, that Kennerly was not only reluctant to speak but singularly uncommunicative.

CHAPTER—IV

HE is very loyal, Pons remarked on Kennerly's conduct, "but he managed to say enough. Sir Alexander is no martinet, but he is difficult. On the other hand, his brother Ransom is a wastrel, his son Philip is none too honourable, his sister has aspects of the termagant. Sir Alexander is crotchety, distrustful, neurotic; so so much is plain. Only for Winifred does Kennerly have the same kind of respect and devotion he has for the old man."

I observed that Kennerly had said nothing whatever about Kennerly.

"There was no need to. I had already seen all that I needed to see about him; and he was well aware of that. Now then," he went on, "let us just step out into the hall for a moment."

"The light switch is up the hall a way," I said, remembering its place.

'If it were light I wanted, we could well wait until after dawn," said Pons cryptically.

Accordingly, we went out into the darkness of the hall; there we stood for a few moments until our eyes grew accustomed to the darkness. Then Pons walked up towards Sir Alexander's rooms, got down on his knees, and began to scrutinize the baseboard of the wall with great preoccupation.

"What in the world can you hope to see without a light?" I demanded in a whisper.

"I can see very well," replied Pons imperturbably.

I came down on my knees beside him. "What is it ?"

Here and there the wall-board and the floor showed obvious colour changes which, observed at this proximity, were curious and startling, for the effect of these strange streaks and marks was as if a faint illumination were given off into the darkness.

"Elementary, my dear Parker," said Pons, rising and walking slowly down the hall, only to sink to his knees again to crawl from one of the doors to another opening off the hall there.

I was nettled, but it was not until we had returned to our room that I asked Pons what he made of it.

"You know my methods, Parker. The whole problem is as plain as a pikestaff, and it only remains for us to obtain sufficient evidence to convince

Sir Alexander. I fancy that our presence will bring matters to a climax rapidly enough."

"You have seen something that has escaped me!" I cried.

Pons chuckled. "Perhaps you have not pursued the facts to their obvious conclusion. Or, even more likely, you have started out on a wrong premise. We shall see in good time. Now let us get a little sleep, for I dare say we have a busy day ahead of us."

Our day began before breakfast, when Pons woke me and suggested that we might walk out upon the gorse and bracken-grown rolling country surrounding the estate of Sir Alexander. Clouds lowered in the heavens but the way was pleasant enough despite the absence of the sun. It was soon clear,

"What are you doing here?" he demanded gruffly.

however, that Pons was not idling away time. We slipped out of the house and left the estate behind us by way of the north gate, from which point Pons began what initially appeared to be an aimless angling away, but proved ultimately to be only one of a series of concentric circles which he described with the utmost casualness, while he sought diligently for broken ground, so that it soon became obvious to me that he was on the track of the missing dog.

The country away from the north gate was fairly open, apart from the gorse and bracken which covered it, and a kind of heather with which I was unfamiliar in these latitudes, and it was not long before our peregrinations ended at the edge of an abandoned quarry in the foothills.

Gazing down into the dark water which filled a large part of the quarry, Pons said, "I have no doubt that the mastiff lies down there. In the absence of any place which might serve as a burial ground for the dog, and presuming the need to be rid of him as quickly as possible, this is the likeliest place; we may therefore assume with ample justification that this is the spot to which the dog was lured and slain. In all likelihood, too, the body was weighted, so that it will not rise."

We had hardly taken our leave from this spot when we were suddenly confronted by a burly individual dressed in hunting clothes and carrying a gun; he stepped out from behind a small gnarled tree down the slope (having also partly been hidden by a projecting wall of rock), and appeared before us with a decidedly menacing air, his eyes narrowed, his mouth turned down so that his face had a surly expression. Nevertheless, his resemblance to Sir Alexander was so marked, that his identity was no mystery.

"What are you doing here ?" he demanded gruffly.

"That is a question I should be more inclined to put to you than to answer, Mr. Ransom Rowan."

Rowan looked closely at Pons. Mr. Solar Pons, is it ! So Alec sent for you after all !"

"Against your advice ?'

Rowan shrugged and stood off to one side. "No difference to me what he does," he said curtly.

He eyed us sullenly and with unmistakable apprehension, but said nothing further to us as we walked past him.

"So that is the gambler," I said when we had passed out of earshot. "He looks like a man caught in the middle of his game and uncertain of the way the numbers are coming up."

"Yes, doesn't he ?" agreed Pons noncommittally.

At the north gate we had yet another encounter. This time we came up a young man on his knees beside the gate, who got up, abashed, and stood grinning before us — a husky young fellow of close upon thirty years of age, whose blue eyes regarded us with some chagrin. He introduced himself as Geoffrey Saring.

"Looking for footprints and such," he explained nonchalantly. "Don't believe myself the dog would simply have walked off."

"Surely it is a little too long after the event," observed Pons.

"Well, perhaps. I didn't think of it until now, after Winifred told me you were here."

"If you discovered anything, you might just let me know," said Pons drily. "I understand that you were with Sir Alexander on the occasion of one of his—shall we say, 'visions?'—and saw nothing."

"Yes. Mr Pons. A rather painful few moments, I must admit. I hope they will not be repeated. It was one evening about a month ago. I had just come downstairs to rejoin Winifred when I [illegible]

shout; I ran back up immediately. He stood there in the hall pointing to the floor along the wall and demanded of me whether I saw 'it.' There was nothing whatever there. Apparently, whatever it was vanished, for he said, "There—the infernal thing's gone'. Then he turned to me and asked whether I had seen anyone, or anything in the hall or on the stairs; I had not, and said so. He said someone had rapped on his door only a few moments before. That was all there was to it. He seemed gravely upset when I could not see whatever it was he saw."

"Do you remember where Sir Alexander's brother was at that time?"

"I believe he was in his room, but I do not know. He had a similar experience—except that he was in Sir Alexander's room at the time, and Sir Alexander thought he saw something moving along the estate wall. Ransom didn't see anything, either."

Pons' next question was disconcerting. "Have you been long away from the stage, Mr. Saring?"

Saring laughed pleasantly. "Surely it's not that obvious, Mr. Pons?"

"Your clothes are by Du Beune, who caters to the profession. Your hands give no evidence of manual or clerical work. It might be either the stage or the cinema."

"Bit parts, Mr. Pons, I've been off the stage for about a year. I met Winifred as a result of my stage work, and since it was, I believed, the basis for her father s disapproval of me, I abandoned it".

Pons smiled, wished him good hunting in his search for clues about the dog's disappearance, and went on into the house, only to be met just beyond the entrance by Miss Winifred Rowan, who gave us a glance of mute appeal. Behind her, Miss Megan Rowan, Sir Alexander's testy sister, looked upon us with poorly-concealed disdain and made it clear and emphatic in her entire manner that she thought us intruders who had taken advantage of a man who was mentally sick. Moreover, her replies to Pons' cursory questions left us in no doubt; she shared her niece's conviction that Sir Alexander was losing his mind.

CHAPTER–V

SIR Alexander himself, seen in the light of mid-morning, was not a heartening spectacle. His face was lined and haggard, not alone with age and sleeplessness, but with manifest fear. His hands trembled a little, but this morning the slight odour of rum which had permeated his rooms on the previous night was absent; this fortification, however, would not have been amiss. I paid him the closest attention during the conversation Pons and he carried on, and was struck by the curious way in which he looked over his shoulder every little while, as if he feared an attack from behind, and by the troubled manner in which his eyes wandered; so that I did not find it difficult to understand how his sister and his daughter could believe in his derangement.

After luncheon the sun came out, and Pons again expressed a desire to walk about the countryside. After all, he pointed out, we were too seldom away from London, and we ought to take the fullest possible advantage of a day in the country.

"A day," I cried. "There is no evidence that we won't be here a week."

"My dear Parker, how you belittle my poor talents! I fancy another twenty-four hours or so will see an end of this business".

"You have clearly seen more than I have," I said.

"On the contrary, everything presented to me has been presented to you also. But while you, and Sir Alexander as well, have proceeded along the obvious lines, I have chosen to follow a different course. Either Sir Alexander is the victim of a mental breakdown, or he is not. You have sought every evidence to prove that his is a mental case; I had on the contrary only to look about me discover every evidence that it is quite the contrary — he is a victim not of his own mind, but of someone else's".

"You speak as if you knew him."

"The identity of the culprit is so elementary that it is needless to discuss it. The modus operandi is the moot point. I fancy we shall soon witness a change of method. We are dealing with a clever, unscrupulous rogue, who does not lack for a tremendous egotism."

"You speak with such confidence that I am almost reluctant to point out that Sir Alexander does betray very definite signs of mental derangement."

"Undoubtedly."

"Are you changing your mind, then?"

"Certainly not, Sir Alexander was meant to betray such signs."

"Do you doubt the sincerity of Miss Winifred?"

"Not in the slightest. She is honestly concerned, and honestly convinced that her father's mind is failing. It was meant that she should be. It was meant that all of them in that house should be."

"What then is the motive for these events?"

"Why, surely it can be but one of two: either it is hoped that Sir Alexander's heart will give out as a result of fright, or that he will be adjudged mentally incompetent and the management of his affairs pass to someone else."

"His son!"

"I have not had the honour of reading Sir Alexander's will. You have a disappointingly professional mind, Parker. I would caution you to observe that there are other ends which may be as immediate as money."

"But in that case — what does the removal of the mastiff signify?"

"Come, come, Parker — surely it is evident that the mastiff had to be removed for two reasons: primarily because it was quite possible that, even though the dog knew the miscreant who was bringing about the 'vision' Sir Alexander saw on the north wall—recall that he emphasized last night that he saw the thing especially on the north wall — he might disturb the family sufficiently to attract attention to him; secondarily, because the strange absence of the dog could contribute still more to Sir Alexander's fright. It is all of a piece, and you, who know my methods, ought properly to have applied them."

"I have mistaken the point of beginning". I said soberly.

"Yes, the newspaper article was the point of

beginning — or perhaps even the coincidental death of Sir James McLeen four months ago. The curious events which have frightened Sir Alexander are not the effects of the curse by any means, nor is the curse their reason for being; no, the curse is simply being used, no more. Sir James McLeen's death, followed by the lurid newspaper article, gave rise to the diabolical plot of which Sir Alexander was picked to be victim. With any luck, we may be able to forestall the projected ending of this little melodrama."

Pons would say no more, but directly upon our return to the house, now shadowed by the late afternoon sun, he went up to Sir Alexander's room. The baronet looked up anxiously at our entrance; he had been playing chess with Kennerly, who got to his feet and would have left the room, had Pons not signalled to him to remain.

"I have only two more questions to ask Sir Alexander", said Pons.

"Yes?" asked the old man.

"On the occasions of your seeing this spectral miniature of Siva, was it ever still?"

"No, not that I recall. It always seemed to move, to float away from me."

Pons nodded with satisfaction. "Now then, try to think back, Sir Alexander. Can you remember ever hearing anything whatever on the occasion of your sight of this spectral image?"

The baronet slowly shook his head, his eyes puzzled.

"Nothing? Think, man; it is of the utmost importance."

Here Kennerly interjected himself. "Begging your pardon. Sir, but you did say that one night — you said —".

"Yes, that's right, Kennerly", said the baronet with more animation than he had shown at any time previously. "I did once or twice hear a sound I thought was like — well, like a clock being wound, only steadily, a kind of whirring sound."

"Capital!" exclaimed Pons. "Well, sir, I think we may say that we shall soon have this ghost laid to rest for you."

"I am not going mad then? I have actually seen things?"

"You have seen things you were meant to see, Sir Alexander. You will hear from me again before you retire tonight."

I was awakened from a doze into which I had fallen in the room's only easy chair by Pons' hand on my shoulder, and he whispered, "Come, Parker. The game is afoot". I started awake. Save for a small lamp beside our bed, the room was in darkness.

"What time is it?"

"Close to midnight. The house has settled down. Come."

He led the way silently into the hall, and in darkness we went down to the door of Sir Alexander's room, upon which Pons rapped quietly and called out in a low voice to identify himself. In a few moments the bolt was drawn, the door opened cautiously, then swung wide as Sir Alexander recognized us. Pons and I slipped into the room.

"What is it?" asked the old man uncertainly.

"We are effecting a change of rooms, Sir Alexander," said Pons composedly. "If I may, I want to borrow your dressing robe, your steamer rug, your skullcap. And that leaded cane I see over there; I dare say I may have a use for it. Thank you."

Pons offered no explanation; Sir Alexander asked for none. He took Pons' decision like a military man responding to orders, and with a few moments we had completed the exchange; Sir Alexander was ensconced in our old room, and we were in his.

"Do you now conceal yourself, Parker, behind that chest of drawers near the door," said Pons, while he took up Sir Alexander's position in the old man's chair; in the half-light, there was a remarkable resemblance between them, and a casual glimpse would not have detected the difference.

"What in the devil are we doing here?" I asked.

Waiting for the ghost of Siva. Unless I am badly mistaken, I think a major attempt will be made tonight to bring matters to a head. My talents may be modest, but there is no need of daring them too much — is that not the way a criminal might reason? Or a scoundrel at least, eh? Now, then, let us be still."

In a few moments the bolt was drawn, the door opened cautiously.....

CHAPTER–VI

THE midnight hour struck, and the minute hand crept slowly around towards one. The old house was quiet, and the only sounds to invade the room were the soft keening voices of a pair of owls, and the harsh booming of night-jars coasting down the sky. It was not yet one o'clock when I felt rather than heard Pons stir, and at once I became more alert, anxious to miss nothing. Was it a rustle I heard? Was it someone in the hall? In my eagerness I almost gave the show away by calling to ascertain if Pons had heard, but I caught myself in time.

A furtive tapping sounded on the door. I looked over at Pons, who shook his head silently. Once again the tap sounded, a little more peremptorily this time.

In a hoarse, quavering voice, Pons called out, "Who is it?"

Then he got up and shuffled over to the door, not, however, forgetting to carry with him, concealed in the folds of his dressing robe, the leaded cane which he had elected to use as a weapon.

The place where I stood offered me a view of the threshold; and I turned to face the doorway as Pons threw open the door. I do not know what Pons anticipated, but the reality was most unnerving and almost demoralizing; what would have happened to Sir Alexander if he had been confronted in this fashion by the spectacle that met our eyes, is difficult to guess. For what stood on the threshold and seemed to lean into the room, whistling eerily, was nothing less than a great glowing image of Siva, a terrifying vision filling the doorway. Only for a moment did it stand there; then it seemed to rise up and tower above Pons, who cringed before it as no doubt Sir Alexander might have cringed. A solitary threatening movement caused Pons to fall back; then the thing would have retreated, but Pons' backward movement was a falling away designed only to permit him to grasp and swing the leaded cane he carried.

Before the creature in the doorway could dodge, the cane swung around and crashed down against the side of its head with a horrible tearing sound, which I realized almost at once was the crushing and ripping of papier-mache. The creature lunged for Pons, but at the same time that I leapt forward in response to Pons' call, the cane landed once more, and this time reached its objective, for the thing slumped grotesquely and collapsed on the floor.

"Lights, Parker," said Pons, breathing fast as he stepped back.

I turned up the lights and saw that from beneath the cleverly-wrought likeness of Siva projected a pair of very human legs. Under the light, the glow had disappeared, and the papier-mache of the costume seemed almost drab. But on the instant I understood the secret of that horrifying glow.

"Phosphorus!" I exclaimed, looking over at Pons who was matter-of-factly removing Sir Alexander's dressing-robe and skullcap; the steamer rug had fallen from his shoulders when he had delivered the first blow.

"Yes, yes, of course," replied Pons impatiently. "Surely that was patent? You saw it yourself in the hall last night, though I have no way of knowing how you interpreted it. Now then, come along, before the others get here."

Already there were sounds of movement in the rooms adjoining the hall.

"Aren't you stopping to see.....?" I said to Pons retreating back.

"What need? My dear fellow, it is only too obvious that it is young Saring, Come along. We have yet to verify one aspect of the matter."

He darted from the room, down and across the hall, and into Saring's room, the door of which stood partly open. Here he stood for a moment in soundless concentration; then he went to the closet and began to examine Saring's luggage, where he quickly found what he sought — the tiny, phosphorescent image of Siva, the thin thread which had drawn it along the hall and the garden wall, and the electric contrivance and reel which served to draw the spectral miniature along the hall floor and into the room through the slightly open door, giving the illusion of having disappeared.

When we emerged from the room, Sir Alexander

Pons' backward movemen was a feint, permitting him to grasp and swing his heavily loaded cane.

was coming down the hall, Miss Winifred stood on her threshold, looking with horror across to her father's room, and Miss Megan had appeared.

"We have caught the scoundrel, Sir Alexander," said Pons gravely, and, taking the baronet's arm, he drew him into his rooms and closed the door behind him, admonishing me to give my attention to Miss Winifred, who had plainly recognized the clothing and legs projecting from beneath the elaborate costume worn by Geoffrey Saring in the furtherance of his diabolical scheme.

What took place behind the closed door of Sir Alexander's rooms, I did not know; but shortly after Pons emerged from the room, Kennerly appeared to drive us back to our lodgings in London. Pons said no word until we were on our way into the city, driving under that same moon, smaller still, which had spilled its wan light upon the earth only the previous night.

"You are silent, Parker; did Saring's unmasking surprise you?"

I admitted that it had astonished me.

"You had fixed upon Ransom, of course. Ransom was not without guilt, but he had nothing to do with it. The matter really turned upon the character of our client. The most reliable witnesses for him were his daughter and Kennerly. Kennerly admitted that Sir Alexander was 'difficult,' but, clearly enough for anyone to see, he intimated that the old man had his reasons. These were manifest. And obviously his distrust of Geoffrey Saring was not ill-founded, however slender may have been its reasons for existing.

"Furthermore, the entire matter rested upon one fundamental decision : Either Sir Alexander saw the things he described, or he did not. Everyone was quite willing to believe that he had not seen them, most particularly since both Ransom and Saring had reluctantly admitted they had seen nothing. I had no alternative but to act upon the assumption that Sir Alexander saw precisely what he described. Once I had formed this conviction, I had only to look for evidence. There was no lack of it. For one thing, the mysterious calling card was doubtless abstracted and replaced with a blank card in the interval between its receipt and its re-examination. For another, I detected despite some manifest attempt to eradicate it, evidence of phosphorus along the wall of the hall at the baseboard. Phosphorus had immediately suggested itself in the course of Sir Alexander's narrative. Finally, the phosphorus led to Saring's threshold and there stopped. While this was not conclusive in itself, taken in connection with two other inescapable factors, it was.

"The first of these quite clearly was the fact that both Ransom and Saring lied in denying they had seen anything. Both had seen the image quite well; each had his own reasons for denying sight of it. One because he was its author, the other because he saw no reason why he should spoil a game which would benefit him also. The second of these factors was the motive; this seemed quite manifestly to be an attempt to have Sir Alexander declared mentally incompetent, and only secondarily to bring about his death. Now, Ransom would not particularly benefit by having his brother declared mentally incompetent; he would benefit only by his death. It was he who gambled on Saring's game. It was Saring who would benefit — an actor without a stage, a young man without an occupation, a fortune-hunter, in short, whose marriage was being opposed with what must have seemed to him particularly galling baselessness; for once the old man's mind was suspect, his opposition to his daughter's marriage would be suspect, too. A diabolical plan, Parker, but it might have worked. Its mechanics were well wrought, but simple, too.

"For instance, you did not suspect Saring primarily because his manner was engaging, and because he told us so disarmingly about the way in which he had been called back upstairs by our client to witness the spectral image moving down the hall. It did not occur to you that it was quite within the bounds of possibility for Saring to have tripped his machine, tapped on Sir Alexander's door as he passed, and hurried downstairs before the baronet got to the door to open it. The plan was so simple that you would have rejected it even if I had suggested it. And you were deceived by his by-play at the gate, where instead of looking for clues to the dog's disappearance, he was examining the ground lest he had left anything for me to discover."

"Yet he was one of the most firm in suggesting that Sir Alexander call you in," I objected.

"His scheme called for as much self-confidence as my investigations". He laughed. "We have had a good day and a long day of it, Parker. An interesting matter but one which might well have been fatal. Fortunately for Sir Alexander's frightened determination, it was not. What a pity young Saring did not keep special talents for the stage!"

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Usha

By MARGUERITE DARNTON

A heart-warming tale of a simple woman who learnt to conquer the darkest fear visiting upon a woman's soul at the psychological hour with the matronly help and guidance of another understanding woman, and face life squarely.

IT was a beautiful evening, and Gopal Babu stood on the veranda drinking in the splendour of the sunset. This was the time that he loved best of all, when, the day's duties over, his hunger satisfied with a meal that would spell perfection to even the most exacting appetite, he revelled in the feeling that his life was successful in every aspect. His business was flourishing, he had a most devoted wife whose skill in running his household was unsurpassed, and he had two handsome sons whose careers were successfully settled. His daughter, Lalita, a gentle and lovely girl, was the very young matron of the new maternity hospital.

This hospital was the pride of the district, and it was through his own daughter's hard work that sufficient funds had been donated to found it. For six months it had been organised by its enthusiastic founder, and already two hundred and fifty babies had been brought into the world in much happier circumstances than they would have done without the hospital.

Yes, he was a happy man, and he fully appreciated his good fortune.

The soft warm air, the fragrance of beautiful blossoms, the happy droning of busy insects, and the myriads of colours from the setting sun, filled him with a great sense of well-being. He moved slowly down the steps into the garden, unhurried, and loving the rapidly darkening world.

Many minutes passed in thoughtful speculation, and when he reached the gate he opened it almost without knowing that he did so, stepping out upon the road that led down to the river. He had taken but three steps when he stumbled against something on the ground. It was resistant but soft, and suspiciously like a crumpled human being. He knelt down, putting out his hand to feel what it was, and one hand touched a head of long soft hair. A girl!

With the swift motion of one whose mind worked clearly and instinctively in an emergency, he gathered up the small light body which felt so frail and thin in his arms. There was no sign of consciousness in the girl but she was certainly breathing, and in a few moments he had her in the house and laid her carefully down upon a couch. His wife had immediately come at his urgent call and her heart was at once filled with the pity that can only be felt by a woman who is a mother. The girl, who looked beautiful although obviously ill, could hardly be more than eighteen. The small features could have been carefully carved from ivory, so pale and still were they, and the hands, now so inactive — were small and delicate. Her pale blue sari looked as though it had been worn unchanged for several weeks, and her feet had apparently done much walking over rough ground recently.

Soon the girl was covered with blankets and a messenger was despatched to the hospital to fetch Lalita.

Lalita arrived with astonishing speed, and with an even more astonishing efficiency she soon had the poor girl back to consciousness and made comfortable in bed.

When the stranger's eyes had opened Gopal Babu and his family thought that they had never

efore seen eyes which betrayed such sorrow or such isappointment at opening upon the world again.

On awakening, Reba, — for that was her ame — realised that she was in the hands of trangers and she was terrified, but Lalita took he thin little hands in hers so tenderly that all ear subsided, leaving a feeling of peace and re- ef. The beautiful Child of The Night sank back nto the pillows completely exhausted.

Lalita was prepared for this moment, and by he bedside was a neat tray holding a glass of warm- d milk. She passed one arm round Reba's shoul- ers, and, raising her gently lifted the glass to er lips, murmuring, "Drink some of this little ne, and you will feel a little better."

Reba drank slowly, and then Lalita drew her o her own heart, holding her there for a short vhile with sisterly affection, then laid her back to est.

Gopal Babu and his wife watched the touching cene and were glad that their daughter showed this greatest of all human quali- ies — compassion. They knew that her work at the nospital required compassion, but they had not seen it like his before, and as they left he room there were tears of oth pity and joy glistening n their eyes.

After a night of anxious watching Lalita realised that he little one needed great care if she was to recover from such desperate exhaus- tion. No questions were asked, and the good family only showed that they want- ed to see the girl restored to health.

For a week Reba's pro- gress was very slow, but under Lalita's pa- tient and loving care she began to respond more quickly, and after two weeks she was able to leave her room to sit on the veranda in the sun. Her pale ivory-like face began to glow and to take on the typical beauty which is the heritage of an Indian girl. Her steps became less faltering, until she could walk unaided in the lovely garden.

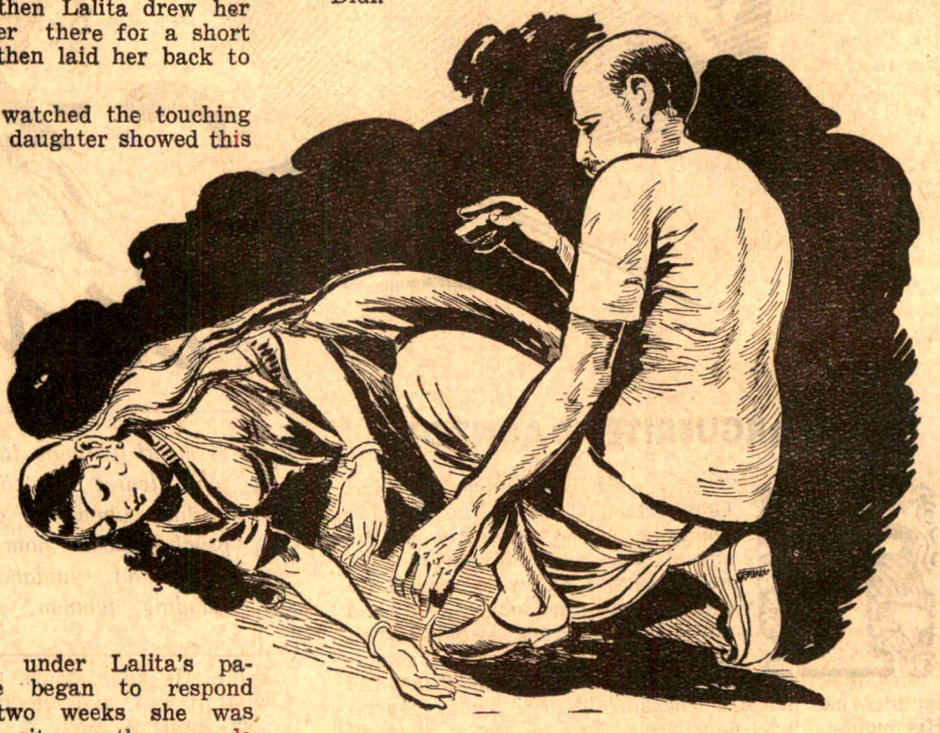
One evening, on just such a night as she had been found by Gopal Babu, she was sitting with Lalita. She watched her Didi's face as she con- centrated on some sewing that she was doing.

"Didi! ..... no one could ever be so kind as you have been, and although my heart has been so full of gratitude yet I have been unable to speak until this moment. You must have wondered often who I am and why I am here....." Reba blushed as she stammered out these words, and it was obvious that she still found it difficult to speak about herself, but Lalita bent towards her, and putting a hand on her arm, gently said — "Little Sister, I have noticed all the time you have been with me that you have some great sorrow. Do not worry if you cannot speak of this, but if it will help you to share it with a sister who has learnt to love you well then do so. Only do it when your heart tells you that you must. Until then my father and my mother accept you as their own child, sent by Providence for care and protection."

The rest of the time passed in silence, not an uneasy embarrassed silence, but the easy silence which can only exist where there are bonds of love.

A few more days passed, and then Lalita ap- proached Reba, saying, "Little Sister, would you like to come with me and help at the hospital? It is a very joyful work and it will bring you peace of mind to give help to others who need you as much as you also need a friend."

And Reba, who was feeling almost normal again, with very little to do during the day, welcomed the idea of going to the hospital with her beloved Didi.



He knelt down putting out his hand to feel what it was.

CHAPTER II

A NEW START

The following day the two girls set off together for the hospital. Lalita was happy because of Reba's readiness to take an active job, but Reba was now feeling very nervous because she had never worked with people before. However, her Didi had promised that she would only introduce her to the heart of hospital life very gradually, and she had great faith in her Didi.

It was a wonderful morning, and the hospital was not very far away from home. On arrival Reba found that the front door led into an entrance hall at one side of which was Lalita's private room and at the other side a cloakroom. Directly opposite the front entrance was a door leading into the hospital's one ward. At least six tiny babies were airing their lungs lustily, filling the whole place with their noise, while two nurses were taking in tea to the mothers.

"Come into my room, Little Sister," said Lalita. "Our hospital is not very big, but it is a real bless-

ing to the villages round here, and we are very proud of the facilities which we have. The ward, which you will see soon, has ten beds. At its far end we have a room at either side, one a labour room where the babies are born, and the other a medical room where we keep our supplies and which I use for several other purposes. We have a well of our own at the back of the hospital and quite a good sewage disposal system. I have two nurses to help me and of course we are always very busy. At the moment there are nine mothers and babies, with one empty bed, but usually we are quite full and cannot take all the cases which should have our attention. I have sometimes had to take a very urgent case into my own room".

Lalita took up the reports which were left on her desk for inspection every morning. Until now, apart from her nervousness Reba had felt only gladness that she would have something to fill her days, but as she listened to the hospital sounds around her she suddenly felt afraid. Back into her mind came flooding all the stories that the older girls of her village had told her, — stories of birth so grim that she recoiled from the memory. She had never been present at the birth of a baby, nor had she ever wanted to, and yet here she was in the very place where assisting at births was the task of every day. She would have turned and fled from that place but for the thought that Didi might be hurt at such a display of emotion.

While she was trying to calm these disturbing thoughts Lalita spoke again, and the sound of that gentle loving voice acted like a ray of sunshine to the clouded mind.

"Come along with me now into the ward and see my patients".

She took Reba's arm and led her to the door of the ward, whispering as she pushed it open, "We all feel rather scared at the first glimpse of hospital, but very soon we grow to love it when we realise the terrible need of sick people. Of course, in a maternity hospital there is not much real illness, and the joy on a mother's face when you first put her new baby into her arms is one of the loveliest things in the world."

As Lalita finished speaking Reba saw the two rows of neat beds. The mothers were feeding their babies, and the sight of them filled her with a new emotion that she had never felt before. Although she did not immediately recognise this new feeling for what it really was, Lalita, who was watching her closely and could read the expression in her eyes, knew that she was experiencing that strange longing which fills every woman's heart when she sees a newly born baby — the desire to possess her very own child.

"I shall put you in charge of the babies," said Lalita to Reba, in a sudden flash of inspiration, "you will enjoy attending to them."

This idea worked wonders, for Reba's eyes shone with delight, and her former fears melted away into the background. She was longing to pick up one of the small bundles of humanity and fondle it, and this was an undreamed-of opportunity.

They passed slowly down the ward, Lalita giving a cheerful word and a warm smile to each patient in turn. At the lower end of the ward were the two side rooms. The one on the right, which they entered first, was the labour room. It was brightly painted, with a lively sterilizer steaming in one corner, cupboards whose glass fronts displayed shining instruments, and two operating tables. Above each table was suspended a large magnificent and efficient-looking light which could be altered to different levels according to the need.

"These lights," explained Lalita, "were given to the hospital by my father who also provides the dynamo to keep them going. The sterilizer was given by the people of three villages who sacrificed a great deal to get it for us."

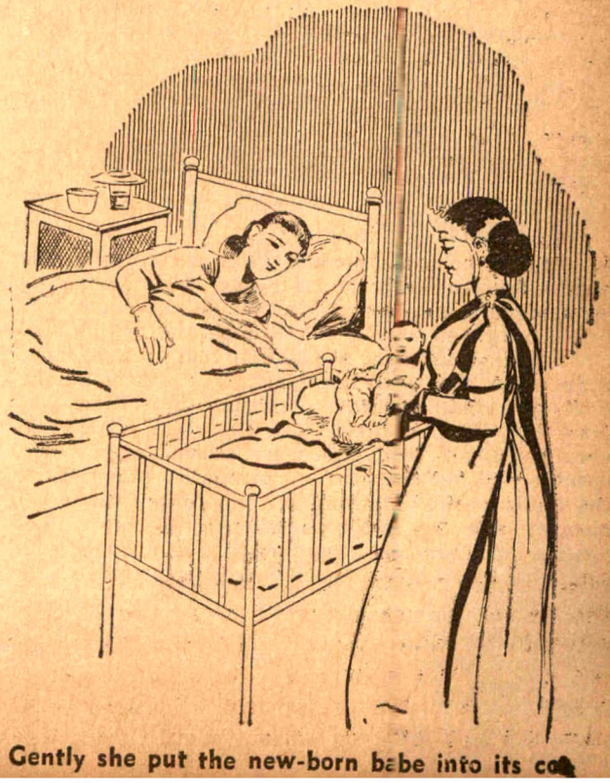
Reba felt a little afraid of this room and was relieved when Lalita took her across to the medical room. Here she had expected to see only cupboards and drawers for the hospital's medical supplies, and she was amazed to find that besides these things it contained a blackboard and several rows of forms. On the walls were many diagrams that Reba could not understand in this first glance round the room. Lalita, noticing the amazement and the questioning look, laughed, then observed, "You are wondering why we have so much seating accommodation in such a tiny hospital, and why there is a blackboard for two nurses and myself? These things you will find out very soon, but not until you know a little more about our hospital and our patients".

Once more in Lalita's room, Reba felt that she was going to be happy here in spite of her fears of childbirth.

In a short while she had changed into the white hospital uniform, and she was surprised to find that even putting on this dress, which symbolised a profession of service, made her feel somehow different.

She was a girl of great common sense and she realised how full Lalita's time must be, so, having already been told what her duties would be, she slipped shyly once more into the ward. All the babies were fed and were still with their mothers, so her first task would be, to put each baby into its cot which stood beside its mother's bed

Approaching the first bed, she carefully lifted the tiny baby from its mother's arms and held it very tenderly in her own. She was aware of the great look of pride and pleasure on the mother's face. Gently she put the baby into its cot and then made the mother comfortable, shaking her pillows and straigh-



Gently she put the new-born babe into its co

ening her bed clothes. This, her first small act of service, was to be the first small spark to start the consuming fire which would change her whole life. Eagerly she went throughout the ward until each mother and each baby had been attended to, then went back to Lalita's room excited and exhilarated. Her confidence had grown tremendously and she had resolved to learn whatever she could during this period of God-sent opportunity.

CHAPTER III

REFLECTIONS

As she sat there Reba felt, for the first time in weeks, that she could dare to open her mind and let all her suppressed thoughts try to sort themselves out into some sort of order. The feeling of being placed in her present position with Lalita's family by a friendly Providence instead of a malicious Fate was giving her courage to look at the heart-rending problems which had influenced her life.

Her thoughts went sadly and longingly back to the little village where she was born. In her early years she had been one of a very large family. There were too many small mouths to feed, so that none of them ever felt the joyous satisfaction of a good meal.

She thought of the tiny ones who had died in their first baby beauty which had promised to flower into lovely girlhood or boyhood.

She remembered her father lying ill—how ill no one knew at the time — refusing to take even milk because his wife needed it to nourish another tiny life within her.

Although it was a poor household it was bound together by love, and when her father died, leaving her mother a grief-stricken widow, a great shadow was cast over the family. Neighbours who had not enough for themselves gave each a little to the struggling mother until her confinement should be safely over.

But grief and trouble were more than her poor mother could bear. When her labour began, two months before its time, an old woman of the village who delighted in such emergencies was sent for. It seemed many hours before they were told that a sister had been born but was not strong enough to live, and that their mother was talking in such a way that no one could understand her. She did not live another whole day.

At this point Reba almost lost her control. The loss of her mother and father and the breaking up of the family were a tragedy that no one could ever feel if they had not lived through the experience themselves. The younger children had fretted for a while after kindly villagers had taken them among their own families, finally settling into their new lives, but Reba, a little older than the others and very sensitive, had become thinner and paler, spending all her time for many months sitting alone by the river-side, allowing no one to penetrate her sorrow. She also had been taken by a poor village family, and her foster mother had given her love and care which were amazing from a stranger.

During this unhappy period of her life she grew up with this other large family, sharing everything as though she were a daughter of the house, and yet she was as lonely as if she had no company.

As she sat each day watching the great river flowing peacefully down from the mountains on its way to the ocean she wondered why life could not flow like that from birth to death, why people should be born to suffer hunger, poverty, misery, and bereavement of those most dear to them.

But suddenly she put both hands over her face and sobbed as though her heart were breaking.

One day as she was wandering forlornly to her place by the river she was quite unaware that a boy was following her, as she sat down, carefully folding her feet within her sari, he too sat down upon the trunk of a fallen tree. He watched the girl attentively. She sat so still, with her eyes fixed on the water, but suddenly she put both hands over her face and sobbed as though her heart were breaking. His first instinct was to flee in bewilderment lest he should be found in an embarrassing situation, but instantly he was filled with a great pity for his young sister. Neither he, Amal, nor any other of his family, had seen Reba give way to any emotion while she was with them. Her pathetic little face had wrung pity from their hearts but nothing that they could do made her look any happier.

Amal, two years older than Reba, had tried very hard to befriend her and it was his sense of brotherly protection which had prompted him today to find out where she spent her lonely hours.

In a few seconds he was at her side, one arm round her shoulders, waiting for the torrent of grief to stop. Her whole body was shaking violently, but slowly the sobs subsided. She had never had an older brother, and Amal's natural act of comfort and affection filled her with an unexpected calm and relief.

When some time had passed he drew her to her

feet, put one arm through hers, and led her along the river path.

Slowly they walked along, just an ordinary boy and girl at the beginning of a new friendship, but drawn close together by human distress.

He took her home, and somehow home seemed different. She was more aware of the love in the faces of the rest of the family and aware also of the place that was hers in that house. She ran into the arms of her "mother" and clung to her as though she would never let her go.

From that day life was happier for all. There were no more lonely vigils by the river, for where she went so also did Amal go. Sometimes they roamed the woods together. They both loved Nature and revelled in such things as a beautiful sunset or in watching the filmy clouds sail gently over the hills.

Amal worked hard at his lessons for he was a studious and ambitious boy who wanted to take up a profession. He had a keen and lively mind which had already been discovered and appreciated by a relative in a distant village. This relative, an uncle, was not poor like Amal's parents for he had no family, and he had promised to take Amal when the time should come to educate him and fit him for a better life.

Amal found great delight in teaching Reba whom he found to be an apt pupil.

Time passed by until at last Amal was summoned to his uncle's home.

On the eve of his departure he and Reba went to their favourite beauty spot. From one side of the river was revealed a vast expanse of mountains rolling away into the distance, and nestling at the foot of the mountains was a Buddhist shrine, a symbol to them of peace and goodness.

Reba got up to look more closely at the shrine. She stood at the brink of the river, and as she did so Amal noticed for the first time, as a gentle breeze blew her sari around her, that she was no longer the slight figure of a girl but that she had developed into a beautiful and shapely young woman. A shaft of a new emotion shot through his whole being and he was filled with a strangely painful tenderness for her. The pain and tenderness became an intense longing to touch her. He rose to his feet and moved swiftly to her side, but he had to check the impulse to touch; he did not dare to give way to this new desire.

As he stood near her she turned to speak to him, but the look in his eyes, so strange and tense, produced a sympathetic throbbing in her heart. What had happened to him? — what was now happening to her?

Their eyes were held in an unwavering look. She wanted to go forward to him, to let him enclose her in his arms, to give, — give what? Within her this feeling of giving, of yielding something precious and sacred, was the strongest of all the surge of emotions that enveloped her being.

Until now they had been boy and girl. Now they were man and woman, and they were quite unprepared for the strange experience. They were standing upon the threshold of an entirely new world and were shaken to the foundations of their souls.

She looked away, and her eyes fell upon the distant shrine. His eyes followed hers, and to those two young people came a benevolent peace to calm the turbulence within them, as though thoughts from the Great Buddha were radiating kindly understanding and wise guidance.

They walked silently homewards hand in hand.

News from Amal did not come very often, but it was always good news. He was making excellent progress and had decided that he would become a teacher. His parents were a little disappointed at this decision because they wanted him to use his ability in a more remunerative way, but they realised that he did not make decisions lightly and therefore he must feel this to be his duty.

Three years went by and Reba and Amal did not meet, but one morning Amal's mother asked Reba to speak with her in private. She had had word from Amal who asked his mother's permission to marry Reba. After several days of serious consideration she had decided in favour of the marriage, and therefore merely wanted Reba's consent to press forward with the arrangements.

Reba was taken by surprise because the idea that this should happen had never occurred to her. She knew that it was her duty to agree, and she also knew that her heart held something much greater than duty for Amal.

Simply and shyly she gave her consent, telling Amal's mother that this event would bestow a great honour upon her in making her more truly a daughter to her and her husband.

Soon she had a letter from Amal herself saying how happy he was in looking forward to a future in which they would be together in the most intimate and most blessed of all relationships. He said also that the days were going too slowly for his impatient desire to be home again after such a long exile.

This letter she placed close to her heart which glowed again with the warmth of feeling that had begun three years ago at the river's edge. The paper itself seemed to be alive with the soft touch of the beloved person who had written on it.

As the weeks went by she became accustomed to the thought that soon she would be married, but whereas a girl of better means would only look forward with nervous anticipation of the event and realise that when the initiation was over she would soon settle to the new life, Reba began to fear it.

The fear was born of her tragic experiences, and of the knowledge that marriage may mean bringing more children into the world than a small salary could adequately provide for. She knew with certainty that she loved Amal, that she yearned for him with body and soul, but she was desparately afraid that her great anxiety would prevent her from giving herself to him unhesitatingly and joyfully. This inner struggle would surely be felt by him, he would feel unloved and hurt. The idea of hurting him was the worst fear of all.

Week after week she worried about these things until she became victim of a ghastly nightmare. When sleep came to her she dreamt of millions of unborn children stretching out their hands for life and health and all things beautiful. An angel-like figure beckoned them along a valley called Birth and showed them fair visions where the valley opened out into the world. When they emerged into that world the angel figure transformed into an evil-looking monster, large thunder clouds gathered in the sky, the sun was hidden behind a dense cloud of

locusts which descended upon the land stripping it of all goodness. The children turned, screaming, to go back along the valley, but rocks had fallen in the entrance. Some children already lay crushed and dead, the others lay down moaning, to await the tortures of hunger in a barren land.

Reba would awaken here, tossing from side to side in anguish, feeling feverish and exhausted, not daring to go to sleep again. There seemed to be no escape from this dream, it tormented her sleep and it filled her waking hours with dread. The peace of mind was completely gone and she did not know where to turn for comfort.

Each day brought Amal's return and her marriage nearer, and each day her mind became more clouded with fears. She had to feign an interest in the plans that his parents were making, but the pretence added greater strain to her already demented condition.

When the family were all settled down one night she could not sleep, in fact she dared not sleep, and she felt that she could bear things no longer. She could not now think clearly but was filled with wild and desperate thoughts. She must leave the house before preparations for the marriage went any further. Perhaps she could reach one of the large cities in a day or two and somehow manage to make her own living, for she had been well taught by Amal and had learnt much. Amal would be very hurt when he learnt that she had left home, but at least he would not know of her miseries and would perhaps quickly recover from the shock.

So thinking she crept quietly from the room, gathered up a little food to take with her, and slipped out of the house. Soon the village was left behind her. She could not remember very clearly what had happened between then and her awakening after Gopal Babu had found her, but she did feel that there had been fear, hunger, fatigue, loneliness. It is strange, she thought, how the human mind occasionally blots out the memory of some extreme suffering, and that was indeed what her own had done during those days of wandering.

From all these memories she suddenly realised that she was still sitting in Lalita's room, but she also realised that she was seeing everything in better perspective. Didi's care and company had restored her sanity and much of her power of control. Perhaps the rest of her life was destined to be spent here at the hospital, although no one could yet forecast that.

One thing that she could not yet do was to think of Amal. He would be at home now, wondering.... .....but here she had to check herself for she was beginning to tremble, a lump had grown suddenly in her throat, and her eyes had filled with tears,

She stood up, grasped the edge of the table hard, and waited for a few seconds until she had collected herself together again. Then slowly and with determination, she walked to the door of the ward, where she knew there was plenty to occupy her mind, opened it and went in. The first battle had been won.

CHAPTER IV

REVELATION

The whole of that first day was a busy one. Reba found that when her first shyness had disappeared and she could go among the patients freely, attending to their many needs, she was filled with a strange contentment that she had never felt before. The patients did not know that she had no experience of nursing, that she had never even been in a hospital until today, and they accepted her as a trusted friend and helper. It was this acceptance, this trust, which made her feel the joy and the obligations of her position. When she picked up a small baby to wash it and change it the mother regarded her as a sort of guardian angel, with no doubts about her doing the job properly.

Lalita moved forward to welcome them.

There was no time to think of her own problems again here where service to other people was the whole aim of life.

In the late afternoon she was sharing a few well-earned minutes of rest and a pot of tea with Lalita and the other two nurses, Anu and Mira, when they heard the approaching sound of wheels. A bullock cart was coming in the direction of the hospital. Of course it might just be passing that way, but Lalita was ever ready for an emergency and she moved to the window to see if the cart would turn onto the hospital path. It did.

"A new patient is arriving," she observed to her companions, "Anu will work with me and Mira will see that everything is ready in the ward."

The two girls left the room, and Lalita, turning to Reba, smiled and said, "I shall have much to do now and may not be able to accompany you home, so I would like you to go now while it is still light. for you have not yet done the journey alone. Mira will do your duties in the ward."

She looked happy as she spoke, and as they walked together to the door Reba thought that she herself could feel a little of this happiness. It must be wonderful to feel that one could face this very human task with knowledge and confidence.

On reaching the door they found that the cart had already stopped outside. An elderly woman was helping a young girl down from the cart, and Lalita moved forward to welcome them with such an ease

that Reba would love to have. The girl looked almost too young to be a mother as she moved forward slowly and clumsily, supporting herself on the arms of her companion and Lalita.

Reba stepped to one side with her sweet shy smile whilst these three entered the hospital. Lalita had suggested that she should go home now, but somehow she did not wish to leave the place which had given her a new strength, new hope and new longings, offering her a completely new life.

The arrival of a new patient stirred in her again those fears of childbirth, those memories of hungry children who had been better if they had never been born, but there also lurked a healthy desire to know what really happened when a baby was born. And ruling all these thoughts was a greater one—that if she was to learn what would help her, and perhaps others through her, she must have courage, she must steel herself to any situation. This was the time to face it all, while the excitement and the joy of this strange day were still at work in her mind.

Slipping back into Lalita's room she put on once more her uniform. Lalita came in at this point to write out a record card for the new patient. She was surprised to see Reba, but before she could speak Reba said very earnestly, "Didi, I would like to help if you would let me". These simple words touched Lalita's heart, for she guessed that they had needed great courage. "Of course, Little Sister," she replied, "I shall be pleased to have your help. Come with me to the labour room. The baby will be born soon, and Anu already has the mother prepared for the birth. Anu is a gentle and efficient nurse who needs no orders but knows instinctively what to do."

Quickly Lalita wrote down the necessary details and then beckoned Reba to accompany her to the labour room. At the door of this room Reba's knees began to feel weak and shaky, her steps faltered, and for a few seconds she actually felt sick, but she overcame it and managed to force herself into the room, appearing as calm as she could.

The young mother was lying on one of the tables, covered with a light blanket, and Anu setting out various things on a trolley.

Lalita took Reba over to the patient and said, "This is Lily's first baby and she will soon have it safely in her arms, she knew early this morning that it would be born today but her village is three miles away and her mother-in-law had difficulty in getting the cart to bring her here".

Reba noticed that every few minutes Lily's features became drawn together and she clenched her small hands tightly as though in pain, but each time this happened Lalita placed a hand on her forhead and spoke to her in a gentle soothing tone, telling her to relax completely and imagine that she was going to sleep at any moment. This had a miraculous effect on the girl, and gradually the tension on her face became less and less, the only sign that the strong contractions were still taking place was a rather intense look in her eyes.

Reba still felt shaky, but she was calmer now. She had followed Lalita's directions and scrubbed her hands and arms with disinfectant, for, as Lalita had told her, absolute cleanliness was the most important thing for anyone helping at the birth of a baby. Nothing should come near the mother which had not been boiled or disinfected.

Soon Lily said that the contractions had changed, that they were now much stronger, and each time they happened she seemed rather frightened.

"You can now help the baby to be born quickly," said Lalita to Lily. "As soon as you feel the pain starting take a very deep breath, hold it, and then push down hard."

The moment that Reba dreaded most of all had come. Lalita removed the blanket that covered Lily. Reba felt so embarrassed both for herself and Lily that she wanted to turn away, but that quality of determination which she had now gained helped her to remain unflinchingly where she was.

Anu came immediately to the table and washed the mother with fresh swabs of cotton wool, soaked in disinfectant, throwing each one away as it was used.

Reba was really afraid now, but in a few minutes she was so interested that every vestige of fear was chased away. A tiny fragment of black head had appeared, and she was quite lost in the mystery of what would happen next.

Bit by bit more of the head appeared, and then Lalita's voice brought her back to earth again.

"It is at this stage that a careful nurse can help the head to be born without tearing the muscles round the opening of the birth passage."

As she said this she placed her hand gently but firmly over the muscles behind the appearing head, holding it there steadily each time the head was born a little further. The most wonderful thing was about to happen.

Lalita had told Lily that with the next pain she must not push down at all. Instead of taking a deep breath she must take very small quick breaths so that there would not be any pushing. Patiently, and with the utmost care, Lalita eased the stretched muscles until the baby's head was completely born.

Again Anu was ready. Now she wiped each of the baby's eyes with a piece of cotton wool soaked in boracic lotion.

After the birth of the head the rest of the body seemed to be born very quickly, Lalita's deft fingers easing first one shoulder and then the other.

The baby was placed on a clean towel. By this time fear fled so far away that Reba was able to observe every detail. The cord which was fastened to the baby's navel was still fastened within the mother at this other end and it was beating like a pulse.

The baby's first cry pierced the silent room, and it cried healthily and lustily as its lungs drew in the unaccustomed air.

Gradually the pulsing cord became still. Anu tied two pieces of something that looked like fine string tightly round the cord and then with a pair of sharp scissors cut it right through between these two pieces.

Lalita asked Reba to wrap the baby in its towel and put it into the cot which had been made ready for it. She and Anu still had to deliver the afterbirth.

Reba wrapped the towel round the tiny shining slippery baby, put it into the cot to rest for a while, and stood watching this small creature whose birth had been a thrilling experience. Having witnessed this greatest of all Nature's achievements, and having seen what birth was really like when in careful hands she felt relieved and elated. It was nothing to be afraid of and she realised that one of the greatest things that could be done for women would be to

teach them before marriage all about the birth of a baby.

While she stood thinking about these things time slipped by unnoticed and she suddenly realised that Lalita, Anu, and Mira had moved Lily into her bed in the ward.

Then Anu came to give the baby its first bath. Reba automatically followed to watch this. She wanted to see every step so that she could manage it herself if she had to.

Baby clothes and two clean towels were arranged neatly on a small clothes-horse. The bath was ready and a low stool stood near it.

Reba realised as she watched Anu skilfully washing the baby that here was something that she also would like to do, and she was quite thrilled when Anu handed the newly washed baby to her and asked her to take it to Lily.

Because Reba had been present at its birth she felt a special bond of affection for the baby, and when she put it into Lily's arms the miracle and the joy of motherhood again overwhelmed her. With her whole heart she prayed that she may be allowed to stay for some time as part of the life and work of the hospital.

In the evening when the two girls walked home together Reba could hardly believe that only twelve hours ago she had first walked that road. Since then she seemed to have been in the hospital for aeons of time, as though these few hours had linked up her present existence with a knowledge and experience far back in the mists of memory which was struggling to reach consciousness and tell her that now she had found part of her real self which had been hidden by material circumstances.

She slept well, and the next morning she awoke with a joyful anticipation of the day ahead.

CHAPTER V

CONFIDENCES

Lalita knew as the days went by that Reba was very happy in the hospital. Patients came and also went away, and always Reba took her place in the labour room, patiently watching Lalita and Anu delivering babies, learning all she could, and awaiting the time when she would dare to do it herself. The mothers loved this lovely girl who tended their babies so well.

One morning on arrival at the hospital Lalita and Reba found that there were not only two new patients but a very distressed woman who begged Lalita to go back with her to her village, Sunapur, about a mile from the hospital, where her daughter had been in labour all through the night and was unfit to travel to the hospital.

Although Lalita appeared calm Reba knew that those three cases together must be a terrible problem. The poor woman's account of her daughter's labour showed that help was very necessary there, but both Lalita and Anu would be needed at the hospital. Lalita said that perhaps with Reba's help she could manage at the hospital and let Anu go to Sunapur.

Almost without thinking Reba broke in upon Lalita's words—"Didi,—I will go. These village people are like my own people, I would love to help them and I know that I can do it." And in her mind was

Soon they arrived at a poor hut where a young girl was lying upon a mattress.

an exultant feeling that she could help a young mother who may have been left to the mercy of any ignorant woman if she had not lived so near to the hospital. She also thought of her own mother.....

Lalita was astonished, but she knew Reba very well and was certain that she would not have spoken unless she was sure of herself.

"Go then, Little Sister, and may good fortune attend your work. I shall follow as soon as I can if you do not return."

Very quickly a basket was packed and Reba was ready to go. Lalita pressed her hand as she was passing through the main door and said, "You have a great heart." These words seemed to Reba like fresh rainfall on the parched earth.

She walked rapidly along with her companion and the excitement of the occasion made the mile seem quite short.

Soon they arrived at a poor hut where a young girl lay upon a mattress. She was moaning and clasping the hands of her sister, who sat by her side on the floor. Her eyes were wide with terror and they rested on Reba, in her white sari, dumbly appealing for help and relief.

Reba's observant glance had noticed that there was plenty of boiling water ready and that the hut although very poor was very clean.

She moved over to the bed and had soon examined her patient. There was no sign of the baby and she saw that every muscle in the poor girl's body was tense. Lalita had explained to her that this muscular tenseness, which occurred in a woman who was frightened because she did not know what was happening to her, could delay the birth of the baby for

many hours and cause almost unbearable pain. So the first thing to do would be to relax all the muscles.

Quietly she gave instructions to the mother and sister showing them the things in her basket, and turned once more to her patient, Aruna, speaking slowly and gently to her. "My little friend, your baby can be here very soon if you will trust me and help me. You are frightened because you feel something that you could never imagine before, because part of your body which has never worked is now very active. There is no need to fear these things. Your baby has been safely kept within a wall of muscle and this muscle is now pushing it to its new life outside. If you can imagine that you are going to sleep, to a deep peaceful sleep, every muscle in your body will go soft and relaxed, and this very important one can do its work quickly and easily."

Her soft low voice went on, telling Aruna to "sleep, ...sleep....sleep peacefully. All pain will go way, and your baby will be born as naturally as your heart is beating. Sleep on, knowing that you will soon hear your own baby's first cry, telling you that it is now here for you to love and care for...."

And as she spoke Reba saw that miracle take place which she had now so often seen under Lalita's patient care. Aruna's young body gradually relaxed, the frightened gasps quietened, the spasms of pain on her face ceased, as she gazed trustingly into Reba's confident and friendly eyes.

Soon now Reba would be able to deliver the baby. Mother and sister followed her instructions with anxious care, and at last the moment came when they saw a new boy born into their family.

Their thanks and admiration were nearly too much for Reba and she knew that if she were alone she would have cried after the strain of this first big responsibility, but fortunately there was much to keep her busy.

On the way back to the hospital she felt proud of her achievement and excited at the knowledge that she really could help other people in a way that was so urgent. This realisation made her heart beat more quickly. She wanted so much to know whether her life was sorting itself out into some happy order.

She was greeted with congratulations by everyone, but it was Lalita's praise which meant more than anything else in the world, for in a short time Lalita seemed to have become her guiding star.

They finished work early that evening, and after dinner, sitting in the light of the rising moon, under sweet scented trees, Reba suddenly felt that she must tell Lalita all about herself. She began hesitantly, but soon the words came pouring out to her sympathetic listener. It was a relief to talk to someone who loved her and would understand the workings of her mind.

Lalita put an arm round her in the same compassionate way that she had done on that first night which now seemed so far away.

"My poor Little Sister, my heart aches for you and I would like to help you. I feel so sad that all these things should have happened to you, but at least I can be happy that Providence should overtake you at my door.

"Little Sister, you have told me much from your secret heart, and I shall tell you things from mine.

"For three years now I have cherished an ambition to work for the women of our beloved India. Gradually our statesmen and all our great thinkers are raising our poor country from the dust. There is a great awakening in the East. After many years of slavery and tribulation we are free to design our own destiny. But there is still too much for these leaders to do if they are to put us quickly onto a road where we are economically safe and where all our people shall have enough to eat and to live decently. As the standard of living increases people will live more happily and more freely, and there will be more children, until after some time there will again be too many people to look after.

"But in my studies I have learnt that there are ways in which men and women can live full and happy married lives together and yet only have as many children as they can afford to bring up well. Millions of our people do not know of these things and even if they did they may be suspicious of them. Social workers are going out into the villages to try to teach the people there such things. Even this is not enough.

"I have a plan, a dream, whereby with the help of our Government or some charitable donor I could reach out to all the corners of India in a fairly short time.

"You have noticed my charts and diagrams at the hospital but you do not yet know what they are for.

"Every month I gather all the young girls from some village or other and there in the medical room I tell them all about themselves, about the special parts inside that are made for the growth and birth of babies, about what happens when man and wife love one another, how babies are born, how to help other people's babies to be born in an emergency, and also how to prevent babies from being conceived if they are not wanted.

"Many of these girls come back to the hospital to have their babies — and what a difference all this knowledge makes at such a time! Oh!—I wish that every woman could have the happiness and confidence that such knowledge gives! What a difference it would also make to her husband and to all her family!

"If only I could have a large house of my own, in some city instead of a village, where I could give public lectures regularly but where also every State could send women to take a residential training so that they could go back to work among their own people, then I would really be able to reach those far corners of India! Perhaps it will happen some day, but I hope that it will materialise while I am still young and active. This is a task which should be done for women by women and I am certain that there are hundreds of them in India who would take up this task with them if I could only have the chance to train them."

So saying, Lalita sank into a deep reverie, and Reba was lost in the thoughts that had just been disclosed to her. Here she was, not only at the doorway to knowledge that would help her alone, but right on the threshold of something which, if developed, could help the whole of India, perhaps even the whole of Asia.

Lalita's words reminded her of many things that Amal had told her, - of how he believed that the East was waking from an age-long sleep, was throbbing with a new kind of life that would grow and revolutionise the whole world. He had told her how their own country, as well as their other peace-loving neighbours, had been fully exploited by military strength, but that their very sufferings had brought out a tremendous fighting power. This was a different kind of fighting, though, it was a fight not to subjugate peoples less fortunate than themselves but a fight for right against wrong, a fight to bring weaker peoples level with their stronger brethren, to use aright for health and happiness all that this world can offer. Many times he had spoken of spiritual things, saying that this great awakening power would be stronger than the new atomic science because the Eastern peoples held an even balance between the spiritual and the material worlds.

Amal was an idealist and a dreamer, but his

judgement was always sound. He had an unshakable faith in his own people and the success of their efforts to revitalise and equip the whole country. He knew their ability for hard work and for seeing life in correct perspective instead of in the light of selfish gain.

Amal wanted to do something worthy in this life, something to better other lives in India, and something towards earning the respect for India which was gradually dawning on the rest of the world.

If people like their own great leaders, and others like Lalita and Amal, had all the opportunities which they desired, then a nation of happy well-balanced people would soon take an even quicker lead in world affairs and bring the much needed light to an ever-darkening world.

Reba knew that Amal was right in believing that only a nation which was built on such foundations would make its way to the head of the human march towards happiness and fulfilment.

The two girls sat long into the evening rapt in thought, the one with a certainty of her destiny to lift the burdens of women, the other dedicating herself to work for all the things that she had learnt from the two people whom she loved so dearly.

In a few weeks Reba had become mature in every way and again she was overcome by the thought — was it only chance that had forced her along this road ? — or was there something else, some *'karma'* that her soul had collected in its succession of lives and must now fulfil ?

The next few weeks proved Reba's ability as a nurse and her aptitude as a pupil. She took a fully active part in the labour ward and was a real credit to her teacher. She no longer showed hesitation or nervousness and no task was too difficult for her. Lalita had taught her all that she needed to know about the most fascinating aspect of human existing — creation.

Not only was she glad to know these things for herself but she realised how necessary it was for all men and women to know equally as much as she did.

The more she thought of Lalita's ambition the more sure was she that it could be done with support from the right people. It would be a very happy country where the sizes of families were perfectly controlled and where both men and women understood one another perfectly.

On several occasions she coped with a birth herself, and always she had the same triumphant feeling that she had when she safely delivered Aruna's baby.

One day Lalita called her, saying, "Little Sister, I must leave the hospital for a few days, but I know that while I am gone it will be in capable hands. You, Anu, and Mira are a wonderful team. The work will be heavier for you all because even one pair of hands makes a great difference, but it will not be for long."

Reba could hardly imagine the hospital without Lalita, even for a few days, for she was the backbone of its whole system, but she knew that such things must inevitably happen. Not even Lalita could work without an occasional break.

When Lalita had gone Reba missed her companionship terribly. During the long hours of work in the hospital there was too much to do to be very troubled, but at night the world seemed very empty.

However, the kindness of Lalita's mother and father did much to alleviate her sadness and the days went very quickly.

The day of Lalita's homecoming was an unusually long one. Four babies were born at the hospital, and it was a very tired Reba who much later than usual made her way home. In spite of her tiredness her feet seemed winged for she knew that Lalita would be there. The nearer she got to

She ran into his outstretched arms & stayed enfolded there.

the house the quicker she walked, and finally she broke into a run until she reached the gate.

She slipped open the catch and hurried along the path. In spite of her haste she slackened her pace a little to admire the beauty of the garden.

As she passed by a group of tamarisk bushes she was suddenly startled to a standstill, and her heart gave a great leap, for in the silent night she imagined that she heard her name spoken softly but clearly by a voice that she had not heard for a long time. Her imagination was playing tricks, she must be more tired than she thought.

Then again it came—"Reba . . ."

"Oh, Amal ! Is it a voice from the dead?", cried Reba, and as she spoke she saw a figure just emerging from behind the tamarisk bushes. It seemed to be really Amal !

Reba dared not move lest the beloved phantom should vanish as a wisp of mist. She stood staring at it as it approached and she suddenly knew that this was no phantom but Amal himself.

Reba's thoughts raced on and in an instant she knew that Lalita had brought him, and that therefore he would know everything.

Never before had they embraced one another, but this reunion was so wonderful that she ran into his outstretched arms and stayed enfolded there for she knew not how long. She felt safe there and hap-

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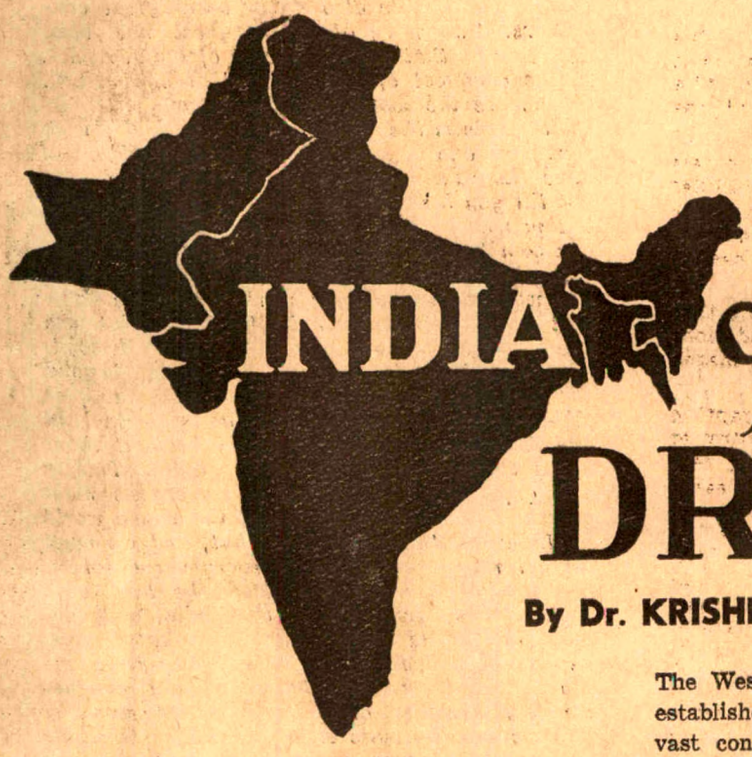

INDIA of their DREAMS

By Dr. KRISHNA LAL SHRIDHARANI

EACH one of us has his dreams. Each one of us has his vision of what he should be, of what he should become. Little men have little dreams and great men have great dreams. Little men dream, perhaps, about themselves and their friends and their relatives. Great men dream of their country and of the world.

What is India today is to a great extent the result of the dreams that the great sons of Mother India dreamt about their country's future. It is in the visions of the makers of modern India that we find the seeds of India after independence. This is the day and the hour to remember the dreams of those who gave their all to make us what we are today. These dreams are the yardsticks by which we can measure our progress. We can ask ourselves: Have we fulfilled the dreams of our great leaders and teachers of the past? Is the present-day India the reflection of the images that the makers of modern India had conceived of their motherland?

In the threshold of the modern period in India's history stands the towering figure of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. He is described by many people in many ways. Some have called him the Father of the Indian Renaissance; some have called him the Father of Modern India; others have described him as the Father of the Free Press in India.

IMPACT OF EAST AND WEST

What was the condition of India during Raja Ram Mohan Roy's life, between 1772 and 1833? What was the state of India's hoary civilization? The Westerners had not only invaded India but established themselves as the strong rulers of this vast continent. Children of the Industrial Revolution that they were, they brought with them Western science and Western ideas of administration. The culture of India was reeling under their strong impact. Many thinking Indians were being drawn to the conclusion that there was something wrong with their own culture, and unless and until India imitated the ways of the West she had no future.

It was at this psychological moment that Raja Ram Mohan Roy rose to restore the self-confidence of his countrymen. While emphasising the necessity of learning Western science and arts, he made his countrymen aware of their own unsurpassed achievements of the past. He saw India rising like a giant after a long slumber. Here is his confident invocation:

> *"Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing itself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking its invincible locks. Methinks I see it as an eagle muing its mighty youth and kindling its undazzled eyes at the full midday beam, purging and unscaling its long-abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance."*

The world has wondered about India's ability to graduate so rapidly from the school of rabid

nationalism to the University of Internationalism. f India's struggle for freedom was never conducted on too narrow a line, that too was largely due to he fountainhead of our inspiration, Raja Ram Mohan Roy. It is the birthmark that he gave to our nationalism that has enabled us to become international ists on the morrow of Independence. It was ne who pleaded for free exchange of ideas and nformation between nations. Free India's enthusiastic participation in the United Nations was, so to say, forecast by him. He said :

" It is now generally admitted that not only religion, but unbiassed common-sense, as well as the accurate deductions of scientific research, lead to the conclusion that all mankind is one great family, of which the numerous nations and tribes existing are only various branches. Hence enlightened men in all countries must feel a wish to encourage and facilitate human intercourse in every manner, by removing as far as possible all impediments to it, in order to promote the reciprocal advantage and enjoyment of the whole human race."

RAJA'S REFORMS AND IDEAS

The proud inheritor of India's hoary heritage hat he was, he was none the less a stout-hearted reformer. His name has been associated with the abolition of *Sati*. He was the first great Indian to ight against the encroachments on freedom of the Press made by the British rulers. If we have today n India the freest Press in Asia, it is largely due o the traditions established by Raja Ram Mohan Roy. It was he who said :

" That 'the more a people are kept in darkness, their rulers will derive the greater advantage from them'....is but a short-sighted policy. Whereas a people naturally disposed to peace and ease, when placed under a good government from which they experience just and liberal treatment, must become more attached to it."

INDIA PUT ON WORLD MAP

From the Father of Indian Recovery we pass on to the Father of Indian Resurgence. From the nan who mapped Indian Nationalism we go to the nan who put India on the world map. Swami Vivekananda not only inspired his countrymen at home, but he took India's message across the seas. If Columbus discovered America for Europe, it was Swami Vivekananda who discovered America for India. Conversely, the New World discovered India through Swami Vivekananda. What became Free India's ambassadorial and diplomatic traditions were initiated by Swami Vivekananda. He wanted to break India's psychological shell of isolation, so that her sons and daughters can reach out to the wide world. If Raja Ram Mohan Roy spoke as an awakener, Swami Vivekananda spoke as a spiritual conqueror. Here is his clarion call issued from Madras around 1897 :

" There have been great conquering races in the world. We also have been great conquerors. The story of our conquest has been described by that noble Emperor of India, Asoka, as the conquest of religion and of spirituality. Once more the world must be conquered by India. This is the dream of my life, and I wish that each one of you, who hear me to-day will have the same dream in your minds, and stop not till you have realised the dream. They will tell you every day that we had better look to our own homes first, and then go to work outside. But I will tell you in plain language that you work best when you work for others. The best work that you ever did for yourselves was when you worked for others, trying to disseminate your ideas in foreign languages, beyond the seas. One-fourth of the effect that has been produced in this country by my going to England and America would not have been brought about had I confined my ideas only to India. This is the great ideal before us, and everyone must be ready for,—the conquest of the whole world by India,—nothing less than that, and we must all get ready for it, strain every nerve for it. Let foreigners come and flood the land with their armies, never mind. Up, India, and conquer the world with your spirituality! Aye, as has been declared on this soil first, love must conquer hatred, hatred cannot conquer itself. Materialism and all its miseries can never be conquered by materialism. Armies when they attempt to conquer armies only multiply and make brutes of humanity. Spirituality must conquer the West. Slowly they are finding out that what they want is spirituality to preserve them as nations. They are waiting for it, they are eager for it. Where is the supply to come from? Where are the men ready to go out to every country in the world with the messages of the great sages of India? Where are the men who are ready to sacrifice everything so that this message shall reach every corner of the world ?"

BENGAL THE VANGUARD

Bengal was the vanguard of the Indian renaissance. Bengal has given a glittering array of poets and patriots who have brightened the pages of the history of modern India. The rebirth of India was many sided, and so no well-defined frontiers were observed between different aspects of life. The exuberance of the hearts of great politicians spilt over into poetry, and the intuition and the visions of great poets cascaded themselves into politics. The most inspired and eloquent image of free India has come from Poet Rabindranath Tagore. What should be the mind of Free India ? Here are the immortal words of Poet Rabindranath Tagore :

" Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;
Where words come out from the depth of truth;
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action;
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake."

Tagore was not content with merely describing the mind of a Free India. He was interested in describing the frontiers of a Free India's mind. His dream of a Free India's mind was that it should have no frontiers. If Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru exhorts India today to leave "a puppet's world" and to operate on the vast canvass of the world, if he preaches to the world today freedom from fear, he acts and speaks like a spiritual heir of Poet Rabindranath Tagore, who sang :

"Freedom from fear is the freedom I claim for you, my Motherland!—fear, the phantom demon, shaped by your own distorted dreams;
Freedom from the burden of ages, bending your head, breaking your back, blinding your eyes to the beckoning call of the future;
Freedom from shackles of slumber wherewith you fasten yourself to night's stillness, mistrusting the star that speaks of truth's adventurous path;
Freedom from the anarchy of a destiny, whose sails are weakly yielded to blind uncertain winds, and the helm to a hand ever rigid and cold as Death;
Freedom from the insult of dwelling in a puppet's world, where movements are started through brainless wires, repeated through mindless habits; where figures wait with patient obedience for a master of show to be stirred into a moment's mimicry of life."

FLOWER-OFFERING TO MOTHER

Dwijendra Lal Roy, the eminent dramatist of Bengal, drew upon the exploits of Rajasthani heroes and heroines to saturate the country with pure nationalism. Dwijendra Lal's picture of India is graphic, bold and is as spiritual as that of the picture drawn by the Poet of Bande Mataram. As an example of pure adulation of the past, natural to nationalist poets all over the world, here is a flower-offering from Dwijendra Lal Roy to Mother India :

My India, my India, where men first saw the light
Those art the birth place of glory, Mother,
Where Asia comes on pilgrimage.
Mother of the Earth, who didst teach the Upanishads and philosophy,
Knowledge those gavest and art, love of Labour and Religion's lore.

My India, my India, who dares pity thee?
From thee was born the call of action.
Thou didst cherish Faith and Thought.
Art not there the India where sages sang
The timeless Vedic hymns profound
Are not we their kin?

FATHER OF THE NATION

And now we come to the greatest son of Mother India since the Buddha. Mahatma Gandhi is universally hailed as the Father of the Nation. Other great men have been hailed as the Fathers of particular aspects of the Indian resurgence. Gandhiji, on the other hand, is the National Father. The man who moulded the free Indian nation much more powerfully than anybody else, the man who died so that India may live, was an artist of discernment in the line of Rama. He was a practical idealist. The most uncompromising man with respect to morality and principles, he was an artist of life who believed in a step by step evolution. He was second to none in his internationalism; in fact he was a moment in eternal verities. And yet he knew that there are several stepping-stones to internationalism, and nationalism is one such stepping-stones to internationalism. He had an instinct for Asia's moods and temper. He knew that the type of nationalism that he was preaching could never be malignant and isolationist. Here are his inspired utterances :

"You want co-operation between nations for the salvaging of civilization. I want it too, but co-operation pre-supposes free nations worthy of co-operation. If I am to help in creating or restoring peace and goodwill and resist disturbances thereof, I must have the ability to do so and I cannot do so unless my country has come to its own. At the present moment, the very movement for freedom in India is India's contribution to peace. For so long as India is a subject nation, not only is she a danger to peace, but also England which exploits India. Other nations may tolerate to-day England's imperialist policy and her exploitation of other nations, but they certainly do not appreciate it; and they would gladly help in the prevention of England becoming a greater and greater menace every day. Of course you will say that India free can become a menace herself. But let us

assume that she will behave herself with her doctrine of non-violence, if she achieves her freedom through it and for all her bitter experiences of being a victim of exploitation."

COMMON MAN'S PLACE

One of the characteristics of the Indian civilization is that it has thrown up exceptionally great men, unsurpassed in their lustre, from time to time, although the quality of the average man it has bred has been of a low order. Indian civilization has been illumined by a string of towering personalities, its grass-roots have remained weak. If this is a characteristic of India's ancient civilization, the very opposite is the characteristic of the culture of modern India. A quest for the common man started with Raja Ram Mohan Roy, with the beginning of the Indian Renaissance. On the onward march of modern India, the cult of personality is gradually being submerged by the search for high averages. It is of 'Daridra-Narayan' that Gandhiji spoke all the time. It is for the little man, for the Harijan that he spent his life. To him India was villages; to him India meant the poor man; to him India meant the Harijan. Here is Gandhiji's dream of India:

"The Swaraj of my dream is the poor man's Swaraj. The necessaries of life should be enjoyed by you in common with those enjoyed by the princes and the monied men. But that does not mean that you should have palaces like theirs. They are not necessary for happiness. You or I would be lost in them. But, you ought to get all the ordinary amenities of life that a rich man enjoys. I have not the slightest doubt that Swaraj is not "Purna" Swaraj until these amenities are guaranteed to you under it."

SWARAJYA IDEA CONCEIVED

Gandhiji and Lokmanya Tilak were complementary. If Gandhiji awakened the masses of India his task was made easier by Lokmanya Tilak, who awakened the middle-classes of India. The redoubtable scholar was also a great strategist. To him freedom for India meant the freedom to industrialise India and to strengthen India. He said that "our life and our Dharma are in vain in the absence of Swarajya." He was the coiner of the word 'Swarajya' or self-rule. He was the man who knew the value of power, because power enables people to do good things. He said:

"If we do not get Swarajya, there will be no industrial progress, if we do not get Swarajya there will be no possibility of having any kind of education useful to the nation, either primary or higher. If we do get Swarajya it is not merely to advance female education or to secure industrial reform or social reform. All these are parts of Swarajya. Power is wanted first."

PAST TO SERVE PRESENT

The thread of reviving ancient Indian culture runs through the entire national movement. Yet no great maker of Modern India has ever preached the retention of the dead with the living, of the dated with that which is of current value. Great spiritual teachers like Shri Aurobindo Ghosh have advocated the revaluation of ancient values in the terms of modern times. The past has no meaning unless it can serve the present and illumine the future. Nationalist movements can become reactionary, can take the form of revivalism, unless there are teachers who know the past but who value the future. Here is the message of Shri Aurobindo:

"Aggressive defence implies a new creation from this inner and commanding vision and while it demands a bringing of what we have to a more expressive force of form, it must allow also an effective assimilation of whatever is useful to our new life and can be made harmonious with our spirit. Battle, shock and struggle themselves are no vain destruction; they are a violent cover for Time's great interchanges. Even the most successful victor receives much from the vanquished and if sometimes he appropriates it, as often it takes him prisoner. The Western attack is not confined to a breaking down of the forms of Eastern culture; there is at the same time a large, subtle and silent appropriation of much that is valuable in the East for the enrichment of Occidental culture. Therefore to bring forward the glories of our past and scatter on Europe and America as much of its treasures as they will receive, will not save us. That liberality will enrich and strengthen our cultural assailants, but for us it will only serve to give a self-confidence which will be useless and even misleading if it is not made a force of will for a greater creation. What we have to do is to front the attack with new and more powerful formations which will not only throw it back, but even, where that is possible and helpful to the race, carry the war into the assailant's country. At the same time we must take by a strong creative assimilation whatever answers to our own needs and responds to the Indian spirit. Imitation, a rough and haphazard borrowing of the assailant's engines and methods may be temporarily useful, but by itself it is only another way of submitting to conquest. A stark appropriation is not sufficient; successful assimilation to the Indian spirit is the needed movement. A mastering and helpful assimilation of new stuff into an eternal body has always been in the past a peculiar power of the genius of India."

SOUTH'S MESSAGE

The kite-shaped India is one, from Kashmir to Cape Comorin, from Assam to Saurashtra. The con-

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VARDDHAMANA MAHAVIRA AND HIS RELIGION

By Dr. B. C. LAW,

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AMONG the twenty-four *Tirthankaras* (1) Mahavira was the last. He was called *Varddhamana* or 'prosperous one', because with his birth the wealth, fame and merit of the family increased. He was the son of Kshatriya Siddhartha otherwise named as Sreyamsa and Yasamsa and Kshatriyani Trisala also known as Videhadatta and Priyakarini of the Vasistha gotra. His mother was a sister to Cetaka of Videha. His parents, who belonged to the Jnatri Kshatriyas, were lay worshipper's of Parsva.

Mahavira was born in the town of Kundanagara, a suburb of Vaisali and an important seat of the Jnatrikas. He was therefore called Vesalie or *Vaisalika*, a citizen of Vaisali. He was senior in age to the Buddha; the former predeceased the latter by a few years. The greater part of his life coincides with that of the Buddha. He was known as *Jnatriputra* or the scion of the Jnatri clan, and *Sasananayaka* or the head of the order. He is described in Jain literature as a supreme personality who was acknowledged as a great Brahmana, a great guardian, a great guide, a great preacher, a great pilot, and a great recluse. He was undoubtedly a supremely gifted Kshatriya teacher and leader of thought, who gathered unto him many men and women and was honoured and worshipped by innumerable lay disciples. He was the head of an order, of a following, the teacher of a school, well-known and of repute as a sophist, revered by the people, a man of experience who had long been a recluse, old and well-stricken in years. He lived restrained as regards all water, restrained as regards all evils, all evils he washed away, and he lived suffused with a sense of evil held at bay.

HIS WAY OF LIFE

In his thirteenth year Mahavira married Yasoda, a Kshatriya lady, who belonged to the Kaundinya gotra and had by her a daughter named Anavadya (Anojja) or Priyadarsana. Anavadya was married to

Mahavira, the last Tirthankara of the Jains.

Yamali, a Kshatriya. In his thirtieth year Mahavira lost his parents. Afterwards with the permission of his elder brother he fulfilled his promise of going out to establish a universal religion of love and amity. After 12 years of penance and meditation he attained omniscience at the age of forty-two and lived thereafter for thirty years to preach his religion in Northern India. For a year and a month since he renounced the world Mahavira did not leave off his robe. Then he gave up his robe and became unclothed. Even while he used robe he used it only in winter. More than four months many living beings gathered on his body, crawled about it and caused pain. He shunned the company of female sex and all householders. He wandered about disregarding all sights, not being attracted by any worldly amusement. For more than a couple of years he went without using cold water. He realised singleness, guarded his body, obtained intuition and became calm. He carefully avoided doing injury to the meanest form of life. He used to eat only clean food. He did not use another man's robe, nor did he eat out of another man's vessel. He observed moderation in eating and drinking. He meditated day and night, undisturbed, unperturbed, exerting himself strenuously. He never cared for sleep for the sake of pleasure. He slept only a little, free from cares and desires.

He calmly endured all hardships. Well-controlled he bore all dreadful calamities and different kinds of feeling and he wandered about speaking but little. In his journey he paid no heed to the abusive language of the rustics, being perfectly enlightened. Whether wounded or not he did not desire medical treatment. In the cold season he meditated in the

(1) They were the preparers of the right path, also called the "Jinas", who possessed perfect knowledge or "kevalajnana" and proclaimed anew the religion which sank into corruption. They were sophists, revered by the people, men of experience. They may be called prophets or founders of schools. Cf. "Dialogues of the Buddha," II, 66.

shade. In summer he exposed himself to the heat. He lived on rough food. He sustained himself eight months using three kinds of food : rice, pounded jujube and jujube (Zizyphess jujuba, lamk). Sometimes he did not drink half a month or even for a month. Sometimes he ate stale food. He committed no sin himself nor did he induce others to do so nor did he consent to the sin of others. He meditated persevering in some posture without the smallest motion. He meditated in mental concentration on the things, above, below, and beside. He meditated free from sin and desire, being unattached to sounds and colours, and never acted carelessly. Like a hero at the head of a battle he proceeded on the road to deliverance. Understanding the truth and restraining the impulses for the purification of the soul he finally liberated himself from the bondage of this world.

"KEVALA" ACQUIRED

He acquired the highest knowledge and intuition called *Kevala* (Pali *aparisesa*) which is Infinite, supreme, unobstructed, unimpeded, complete, and full. He was then lost in deep meditation in a squatting position with joined heels, exposing himself to the heat of the sun after fasting two days and a half even without drinking water. At the age of forty-two Mahavira became a *Jina* (conqueror) and *Arhat* (saint), a *Kevalin*, omniscient, all seeing, and all knowing. He knew and saw all conditions of the worlds of gods, men and demons.

During thirty years of his career as a teacher he spent four rainy seasons in Vaisali and Vanijagrama (1), fourteen in Rajagriha and Nalanda, six in Mithila, two in Bhadrika (2), one in Alabhika (3), one in Pranitabhumi (4), one in Sravasti (5) and one in the town of Pava (6) which was his last rainy season. The *Kalpasutra* mentions the places where he spent 42 rainy seasons since he renounced the life of a householder. At Pava in King Hastipala's office of the writers Mahavira died, went off, quitted the world cutting asunder the ties of birth, decay, and death.

Mahavira in his lifetime had an excellent community of 14,000 recluses with Indrabhuti at their head, 36,000 female recluses with Candana at their head, many lay disciples with Sankhasataka at their head, and innumerable female disciples with Sulasa and Revati at their head. Among the immediate followers of Mahavira eleven became distinguished as *ganadharas* (apostles having large followers) guiding and instructing nine separate groups of Jain recluses placed under them.

Mahavira made no distinction between men and men or between men and women. He had not enjoined one set of rules for male recluses and another for female, one set of rules for male lay disciples and another for female. In his wanderings he was accompanied by male and female recluses.

He encouraged his followers to study the *Purvas* or the sacred books and to develop their power of reasoning and arguing. He lived 30 years as a householder, more than full 12 years in a state inferior to perfection, something less than 30 years as a *Kevalin* having unlimited knowledge and vision, 42 years as a recluse, and 72 years on the whole. He died at the age of seventy-two.

The Jains place the event of Mahavira's *nirvana* in B.C. 527. Mahavira predeceased the Buddha by five or six, seven or eight, or even fourteen or fifteen years and he passed as a *Jina* (conqueror) before the Buddha. Accepting 527 B.C. as the date of Mahavira's *Kevalship* one has to compute the date of his birth as B.C. 570 and that of his death as B.C. 498 or B.C. 500.

GREAT TEACHER

Mahavira was one of the greatest teachers of mankind. He was one of those teachers through whom the problem of the perfection of men came to be recognized as the highest problem before progressive humanity. He did not preach to others what he had not practised himself. The goal set before mankind was the blissfulness of the entire being. This happy state is to be attained through patience, forbearance, self-denial, forgiveness, humanity, compassion, and consideration, in short, sufferings and sacrifice, love and kindness. Mahavira's great message to mankind is that birth is nothing, that caste is nothing and that *karma* is everything and on the destruction of *karma* the future happiness depends.

Ahimsa or non-harming is the first principle of higher life, which Mahavira inculcated in his disciples and followers. Its visible effect was sought to be shown how even such brute creation as the beasts and birds, reptiles and fishes, happily responded to the non-harming and compassionate attitude of men.

"KARMA" ANALYSED

In Jainism *Karma* may be worked off by austerity, service rendered to ascetics, to the poor, the helpless and the suffering by giving them food, water, shelter, or clothing. *Karma* is nothing but a complexity of a very subtle matter which is super-sensuous and which pervades the whole world. The Jains believe it to be the result of actions arising out of four sources—(1) The first source of *Karma* is attachment to wordly things such as food, raiment, dwelling place, and women, etc.; (2) *Karma* is produced by uniting

(1) Vanijagrama, a suberb of Vaisali (modern Besarh in the Muzaffarpur Dist.)

(2) Bhadrika, an important place in the kingdom of Anga (Bhagalpur Dist. probably including Monghyr)

(3) Alabhika, same as Alavi, identified with Nawal in Unao Dist. U.P.

(4) Pranitabhumi — a place in Vajrabhumi, a division of Radha.

(5) Sravasti — Sahet Mahet on the south bank of the river Rapti.

(6) Pava — a halting station on the high road from Vaisali to Kusinara (Kasia village in the Gorakhpur Dist.) and Kapilavastu (ancient Lumbini garden, the traditional scene of Sakyamuni's birth. Vide Law, "Historical Geography of Ancient India", pp. 89-90 as regards its location).

one's own body, mind, and speech, to worldly things: (3) *Karma* is engendered by giving the rein to anger, pride, deceit or greed; and (4) false belief is a fruitful source of *Karma*. The Jains divide *Karma* according to its nature, duration, essence, and content. It is intimately bound up with the soul. The Jains have eight kinds of *Karma*:—The first kind hides knowledge from us; the second kind prevents us from seeing the true faith; the third kind causes us to experience either the sweetness of happiness or bitterness of misery; the fourth kind bemuses all the human faculties. It results from worldly attachments and indulgence of the passions. The fifth kind determines the length of time which a living being must spend in the form with which his *karma* has endowed him; the sixth *karma* decides which of the four states or conditions shall be our particular *gati*. The seventh kind is *gotra karma* which determines a man's life, his occupation, his abode, his marriage, his religious observances, and even his food. The eighth and last kind of *karma* always stands as an obstacle.

According to Mahavira the doctrine of action is distinguished from the doctrine of non-action, scepticism and formalism, precisely in the words of the Buddha. To arrive at a correct understanding of the doctrinal significance of *karma* in Jainism it is necessary not only to see how it has been distinguished from non-action, scepticism and formalism, but also from other types of *karma*. *Karma* is the deed of the soul. It is a material forming a subtle bond of extremely refined *karmic* matter which keeps the soul confined to its place of origin or the natural abode of full knowledge and everlasting peace. According to Mahavira the painful condition of the self is brought about by one's own action; pleasure and pain are also brought about by one's own action. Individually a man is born, individually he dies, individually he falls, and individually he rises. Passions, consciousness, intellect, perceptions and impressions belong to the individual exclusively. All living beings owe their present form of existence to their own *Karma*. The sinners cannot annihilate works by new works, the pious annihilate their works by abstention from works. *Karma* consists of acts, intentional and unintentional, that produce effects on the nature of soul which is susceptible to the influences of *Karma*. The categories of merit and demerit comprehend all acts which keep the soul bound to the circle of births and deaths. *Nirjara* consists in the wearing out of accumulated effects of Karma on the soul by the practice of austerities.

There are four kinds of destructive *Karma* which retain the soul in mundane existence e.g., knowledge-obscuring *karma*, faith-obscuring *karma*, *karma* obstructing the progress of the soul, and *karma* deluding the soul. *Karma* plays an important part in Jain Metaphysics. Jainism as a practical religion teaches us to purge ourselves of impurities arising from *karma*.

SOUL IN JAINISM

In Jainism everybody has an individual soul. This soul exists as long as the body exists, but after death the soul and the body are no more. There are no souls which are born again. The souls and substances do not undergo any change. They are liable to changes due to changes in circumstances. The plurality of soul is a point in Jainism which is the same as in the Samkhya system. Both the systems necessitate a careful consideration of the cosmical, biological, embryological, physical mental and moral positions of the living individuals of the world as a whole. These constitute the scientific background of the two systems of thought. These also constitute the scientific background of Vedanta and Buddhism. The Jain belief is a belief in the transmigration of soul, a point in which it differs from the Buddhist conception of rebirth without any transmigration of soul from embodiment to embodiment. The soul in Jainism as in most of the Indian systems, is the factor which polarizes the field of matter and brings about the organic combination of the elements of existence. The Jains do not deny the existence of soul as an external substance with consciousness as its fundamental attribute. The soul is eternal by its very nature. It is one of the six substances. It is susceptible to the influence of *karma* which consists of acts that produce effect on the nature of soul.

Knowledge, faith, and virtue signify the comprehensiveness of Jainism as taught by Mahavira. Knowledge means right knowledge; faith, right faith; and virtue, right conduct. These three constitute the path to *moksa* or salvation. Knowledge as represented in the Jaina canon is rather religious vision, intuition or wisdom than knowledge in a metaphysical sense.

KNOWLEDGE—FIVE KINDS

In Jainism there are five kinds of knowledge. Of them *Kevala* is the highest or unlimited knowledge. The right faith consists in an insight into the meaning of truths as proclaimed and taught, a mental perception of the existence of the system as propounded, a personal conviction as to the greatness and goodness of the teacher and a ready acceptance of certain articles of faith for one's own guidance.

A man of knowledge is a man of faith and a man of faith is a man of action. Virtue consists in right conduct, but there is no right conduct without right belief, and no right belief without the right perception of truth. Right knowledge, faith, and conduct constitute the path of Jainism leading to the destruction of *karma* and to the attainment of perfection. Faith is produced by nature, instruction, command, study of the *sutras*, suggestion, comprehension of the meaning of the sacred lore, complete course of study, religious exercise, brief exposition and reality. According to the Buddhists faith is nothing but trust in the Buddha, Doctrine *(Dharma)* and Order *(Sangha)*.

The knowledge, which is co-extensive with the object rather than knowledge which is supernatural, is known in Jainism as *Avadhi* knowledge. *Avadhi* means that which is limited by the object, that which is sufficient to survey the field of observation. It is the knowledge of the distant non-sensible in time or space possessed by divine and internal souls. The Buddhist *Antavantajnana* is evidently the same term as Jain *Avadhijnana*.

PEACE ULTIMATE OBJECT

The ultimate object of Jainism is *nirvana* which consists in peace. *Nirvana* is another name of *moksa* or liberation, *mukti* or deliverance. Liberation can be realised by a man in the highest condition of aloofness and transcendentality of himself. *Nirvana* means freedom from pain or perfection; it is the

safe, happy and quiet place which the great sages reach. It is the eternal place but it is difficult of approach. It is liberation from old age, disease, and death in short, all that constitutes a painful existence for the self. *Moksa,* which is a pleasant thing, is arrived at through a comfortable life.

In Jainism *parinirvana* is the last fruit or final consummation of the highest perfection attained by man or attainable in human life. It is the same term as *nirvana* or *moksa* meaning final liberation that comes to pass on the complete waning out or exhaustion of the accumulated strength or force of *Karma. Moksa* is the essential point in the teachings of Mahavira, which is generally understood as emancipation. It may also mean final deliverance or liberation from the fetters of worldly life and total annihilation or extinction of human passion.

Merit and demerit (*punya* and *papa*) are equally reprehensible for the aspirant after the highest stage of saintship and *nirvana.*

Samvara is the principle of self-control by which the influx of sins is checked. The category of *samvara* comprehends the whole sphere of right conduct. It is an aspect of *tapa* or austerity. Some hold that it is the gradual cessation of the influx into the soul along with the development of knowledge.

Lesya is a term signifying colour in Jainism. It is said to be that by means of which the soul is tinted with merit and demerit. It arises from the vibrations due to the activity of body, mind, speech or passions. The *lesyas* are different conditions produced in the soul by the influence of different *karma.* They are dependent on the *karma* which influences the soul. They are named in the following order: Black, blue, grey, red, yellow and white. The Buddhist idea of contamination of mind by the influx of impurities from outside illustrated by the simile of a piece of cloth dyed blue, red, yellow or the like would seem to have some bearing on the Jain doctrine of the six *lesyas* or soul types.

Kayotsarga is an ascetic mode of atoning for the excess in sinful indulgences. It implies the idea of particular bodily postures to be adopted in keeping oneself unmoved on a suitable spot. It is a Jain mode of *dhyana* practice. He who practises this mode is required to keep his body, mind, and speech, under perfect restraint.

The first great vow of the Jains is abstinence from life-slaughter. The second great vow is the avoidance of falsehood. The third great vow is the avoidance of theft. The next great vow is the avoidance of sensual pleasures and the last great vow is the freedom from possessions. These great moral vows of the Jains are also found in Buddhism.

MEANS OF SELF-CONTROL

There are five *Samitis* and three *Guptis* in Jainism which constitute the eight means of self-control. They are also known as eight articles of Jain creed. The *Samitis* are the following :—(1) Going by paths trodden by men, carts, etc. and looking carefully so as not to cause death to living beings; (2) Using sweet, gentle and righteous speech; (3) receiving alms in a manner to avoid 42 faults; (4) receiving and keeping things necessary for religious exercises; and (5) performing the operation of nature in an unfrequented place.

Gupti means protection, defence, guard, watchfulness. There are three *guptis* in Jainism: (1) preventing mind from sensual pleasure by engaging it in contemplation, study, etc; (2) preventing the tongue from saying bad things by taking the vow of silence; and (3) putting the body in an immovable posture.

Syadvada in Jainism consists of certain *nayas,* which are points of view or principles, with reference to which certain judgements are arrived at or arrangements made. The number of *nayas* came to be finally fixed as seven. The *syad* mode was the real way of escape from the position of the dogmatist and that of the sceptic from both of which Mahavira recoiled.

FETTERS & HATRED CAST ASIDE

A Jain monk should cast aside all fetters and all hatred. He should not commit sins in thoughts, words, and acts. A true monk is one who does not care for his life, who abandons every delusion, who always practises austerities, and avoids contact with wicked men and women. He practises self-discipline, meditates on his soul, and does not hurt anybody. He is wise, hardy and calm. He should be steadfast, righteous, content, restrained and attentive to his duties. He should be impartial towards all beings in this world and should be careful to speak truth. He should keep the severe vow of chastity and practise mental and bodily penances. An ascetic will by means of simplicity enter the path of *nirvana.*

Jainism has many distinctive features of its own, and historically it occupies a place midway between Brahmanism on the one hand and Buddhism on the other. It cherishes a theory of soul as an active principle in contradistinction to the Vedanta or Samkhya doctrine of soul as a passive principle. Buddhism repudiates it. The Jain notion of *karma* is rather physical while the Buddhist idea of the same is psycho-ethical. In Jainism rebirth takes place by way of transmigration of soul. Buddhism rejects the theory of transmigration. In Jainism as in Buddhism the bodily functions cease in the process of *yoga* after the vocal, and the mental after the physical. The different kinds of knowledge attained through *yoga* are substantially the same in both the religions. Like the Samkhya doctrine Jainism stands for a dualistic conception of soul and matter and in this respect it differs from the Vedantic pantheism. The Jain dualism may be interpreted as a pluralistic doctrine like the realism of Vaisesika system by which it was influenced. Jainism maintains a hylozoistic notion of nature in which all compound things are different forms of life in varying stages of evolution. The Jain mode of life is ascetic or stoic. The path to happiness and progress lies through self-denial, self-abnegation, and self-mortification. All the rules of conduct and religious practices are therefore designed to that very end.

INDIA OF THEIR DREAMS

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tribution of South India to the national struggle, to the administration of free India, is indeed admirable. Its intellectual contribution is even greater. But along with great intellectuals, the South has produced poets who knew the pulse of the people. Here is a poem from Bharati, who is as eloquent as Gandhiji's prose. The subject is such as Gandhiji himself would have chosen; it is the meaning of freedom to the poor, to the Pariah.

"Freedom, freedom, freedom !
To the Pariahs, to the Tiyas, to the Pulayas, freedom!
To the Paravas, to the Kuravas, to the Maravas, freedom!
Come, let us labour all,
Sparing naught and hurting none,
Walking in the way of Truth and Light.
There shall be none of low degree,
and none shall be oppressed.
Born in India, all are of noble birth.
Wealth and learning—may they flourish,
With joy of mind, let us live.
Perish ignorance,
In man and woman, alike,
No more of subordination.
In every walk of life equality.
Man and woman shall equal be
In this land of ours.
Freedom, freedom, freedom!
To the Pariahs, to the Tiyas, to the Pulayas, freedom,
To the Paravas, the Kuravas, the Maravas, freedom."

PRESENT LEADERSHIP

The stalwarts that we have invoked so far are all gone. The mighty oaks have fallen. But Mother India's capacity to give birth to gifted sons still continues even as the standard of her less fortunate children is rising. In any galaxy of the makers of modern India, the name of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru would shine. He is not only a translator of the dreams of the modern masters who preceded him; he is a dreamer himself and a maker of India. His vision of India, of Bharat Mata, is painted in the primary colours and on a continental canvas :

"Often as I wandered from meeting to meeting, I spoke to my audience of this India of ours, of Hindustan and of Bharata, the old Sanskrit name derived from the mythical founder of the race. I seldom did so in the cities, for there the audiences were more sophisticated and wanted stronger fare. But to the peasant, with his limited outlook, I spoke of this great country for whose freedom we were struggling, of how each part differed from the other and yet was India, of common problems of the peasants from north to south and east to west, of the Swaraj, the self-rule that could only be for all and every part and not for some. I told them of my journeying from the Khyber Pass in the far north-west to Kanya Kumari or Cape Comorin in the distant south, and how everywhere the peasants put me identical questions, for their troubles were the same—poverty, debt, vested interests, landlord, moneylender, heavy rents and taxes, police harassment, and all these wrapped up in the structure that the foreign government had imposed upon us— and relief must also come for all. I tried to make them think of India as a whole, and even to some little extent of this wide world of which we were a part. I brought in the struggle in China, in Spain, in Abyssinia, in central Europe, in Egypt and the countries of western Asia. I told them of the wonderful changes in the Soviet Union and of the great progress made in America. The task was not easy; yet it was not so difficult as I had imagined, for our ancient epics and myth and legend, which they knew so well, had made them familiar with the conception of their country, and some there were always who had travelled far and wide to the great places of pilgrimage situated at the four corners of India. Or there were old soldiers who had served in foreign parts in World War I or other expeditions. Even my references to foreign countries were brought home to them by the consequences of the great depression of the thirties.

Sometimes as I reached a gathering, a great roar of welcome would greet me : Bharat Mata ki Jai — Victory to Mother India ! I would ask them unexpectedly what they meant by that cry, who was this Bharat Mata, Mother India, whose victory they wanted ? My question would amuse them and surprise them, and then, not knowing exactly what to answer, they would look at each other and at me. I persisted in my questioning. At last a vigorous Jat, wedded to the soil from immemorial generations, would say that it was the dharti, the good earth of India, that they meant. What earth ? Their particular village patch, or all the patches in the district or province or in the whole of India ? And so question and answer went on, till they would ask me impatiently to tell them all about it. I would endeavour to do so and explain that India was all this that they had thought, but it was much more. The mountains and the rivers of India, and the forests and the broad fields, which gave us food, were all dear to us, but what counted ultimately were the people of India, people like them and me, who were spread out all over this vast land. Bharat Mata, Mother India, was essentially these millions of people,

(Continued From Previous Page)

and victory to her meant victory to the people. You are parts of this Bharat Mata, I told them, you are in a manner yourselves Bharat Mata, and as this idea slowly soaked into their brains, their eyes would light up as if they had made a great discovery".

POET'S MAJESTIC DREAM

We end as we began. We began with the start of the Indian renaissance in Bengal, and we round-up with it. Bankim Chandra gave an immortal novel of national struggle, 'Ananda Math'. In it was a song, Vande Mataram, which has thrilled and inspired India ever since. In this song, one of our two national anthems, is the poet's geography of India. In this song also is the poet's majestic dream of India. Let us recite together.

I bow to thee, Mother,
richly-watered, richly-fruited,
cool with the winds of the south,
dark with the crops of the harvests,
the Mother !

Her nights rejoicing in the glory of
the moonlight,
her lands clothed beautifully with
her trees in flowering bloom,
sweet of laughter, sweet of speech,
the Mother, giver of boons, giver of bliss !

Terrible with the clamorous shout of
seventy million throats,
and the sharpness of swords raised
in twice seventy million hands,

Who sayeth to thee, Mother, that
thou art weak
Holder of multitudinous strength,
I bow to her who saves,
to her who drives from her the
armies of her foemen,
the Mother !

Thou art knowledge, thou art conduct,
thou our heart, thou our soul,
for thou art the life in our body.

In the arm thou art might, O Mother,
in the heart, O Mother, thou art love and faith,
it is thy image we raise in every temple.
For thou art Durga holding her ten
weapons of war,
Kamala at play in the lotuses
and Speech, the goddess, giver of all lore,
to thee I bow !

I bow to thee, goddess of wealth,
pure and peerless,
richly-watered, richly-fruited,
the Mother !

I bow to thee, Mother,
dark-hued, candid,
sweetly smiling, jewelled and adorned,
the holder of wealth, the lady of plenty,
the Mother !

USHA

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py — and oh ! how her own love was beating in her breast !

Neither of them spoke during this exquisite ecstasy, and then Amal was first to speak. "My dearest one ! — these weeks since you disappeared have been agonising, especially as I knew that you had nothing and had no one to go to. I hoped every day that you would return to us, and I would have hoped that all my life if good fortune had not brought Didi to me."

"Do not try to explain anything, for I know all, and I do not wish you to relieve one instant of all that you have endured. My most sincere wish is to compensate in every way that a human being can do for all your terrible experiences."

Reba was grateful that she did not have to speak, and slowly she became calm and peaceful.

Amal's firm hold relaxed and they walked together to the house. There Lalita's mother had prepared a meal of celebration, that at last their little foundling was happy again, and the whole family wished great joy to Reba and Amal.

Reba looked radiant in her happiness, and in her heart was an ever greater warmth and love for Lalita who had so graciously guided her to this moment.

After dinner it was suggested that Reba should take Amal round the garden. This she did, and told him all that had happened to her in this home. She told him of Lalita's ambition and of her own desire to help Didi in her great work.

Amal was very enthusiastic in his praise of Lalita and his gratitude to her, and when he heard what she wanted to do he drew Reba close to him and whispered —

"We shall be able to give her her heart's desire as a token of our gratitude for all that she has done for us."

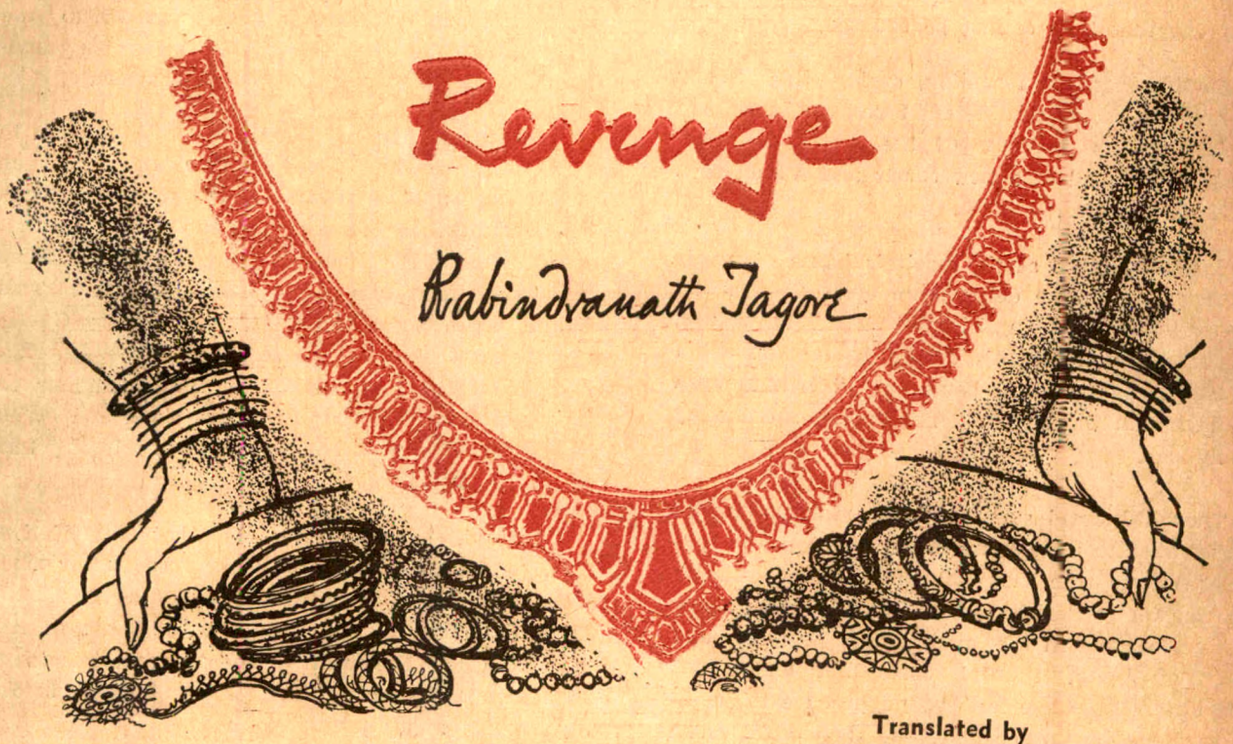
Reba gasped, and wondered what was coming next. He went on, "My uncle is a very old man and he has handed over to me all his property in the city and most of his wealth. We shall care for him. He is a man who dearly loves to serve his country in any way that he can and if through him Didi can start her instruction centre he will be a very happy man."

This news thrilled Reba. She could now see all the threads joining up together. Didi would have her instruction centre and India would be served in a wonderful way, an old and lonely man would be the happy donor and would have someone to care for him, Anu would run the hospital and would love doing it. Reba and Amal would have each other, and Reba would be able to help Lalita with her work.

"Amal, this is a wonderful evening for all of us. Let us go and tell Didi now. Tomorrow we shall go back to Gobindapur and see your parents. After that — we all start a new life."

Revenge

Rabindranath Tagore



Translated by
SHEILA CHATTERJEE

INDRANI, granddaughter of the previous Dewan of Mukunda Babu's family, and wife of their present manager, was present at an inauspicious moment in the house of the Babus on the occasion of their grandson's wedding reception.

This will become clearer if the history of events previous to that is told in brief.

Mukunda Babu was then dead and so was his Dewan Gaurikanto. Following the call of time neither of them was then physically present in their old places. But when they were alive, the tie between them was very strong. When the orphan Gaurikanto had no other means of livelihood Mukundalal gave him the charge of looking after his small estate trusting him by the look of his face only. In time it was proved that Mukundalal had made no mistake. As ants build up ant-hills, as one desirous of heaven gradually collects merit, likewise with tireless care Gaurikanto began to increase Mukundalal's properties little by little and day by day. At last when he cleverly bought the Taraf Bankagari at an amazinigly low price and added it to Mukundalal's estates, from then Mukunda Babu's family became established in the honoured class of top-ranking zamindars. With the advancement of the master the servant's condition also improved. Little by little his brick-built house, landed properties and the ceremonial worship of deities began to expand. And he too who at one time had belonged to the class of mere Tahsildars came to be known to the public as Dewanji.

It is this which is the past history. At present there was an adopted son of Mukunda Babu, his name being Binode Bihari. And Gaurikanto's well educated grandson-in-law, Ambikacharan, worked as their manager. Dewanji did not trust his own son Ramakanto. Therefore when he retired on account of old age he appointed the grandson-in-law, Ambikacharan, to his own post, bypassing his son.

The work of management continued quite well. Things were going on almost as in previous times. Only in one respect a little difference had taken place — the relationship between employer and employee was now that of business only, not of the heart. In olden times money had been cheap and hearts too were rather cheap. Now by general consent wastage of the contents of the heart had almost come to a stop. There was scarcity even in the share of close relations. From where would outsiders get any?

In the mean time Dewanji's grand-daughter, Indrani, arrived in the house of the Babus at the invitation to the feast in connection with the grandson's marriage reception.

The world is the chemical laboratory of the inquisitive god of fate. Here by placing together a

number of human beings of different temperaments and by their permutations and combinations so many colourful unheard of histories are created every day that they cannot be counted.

At this marriage reception, during this happy occasion two people of different types met, and soon in the tireless weaving of the net of life there appeared a thread of a new colour and a knot of a new kind was tied.

Indrani arrived at the master's house towards afternoon after some delay when everyone else had finished eating. When Binode's wife, Nayantara, asked the reason for this delay, Indrani offered a few explanations such as being busy with housework and ill health but they did not appear satisfactory to any one.

Though Indrani suppressed the real reason still no one failed to understand it. The reason was that though it was true that Mukunda Babu's family were masters and rich people, Gaurikanto was far superior to them in the matter of pedigree and purity of blood. Indrani could not forget that superiority. Therefore lest she might have to eat at the master's house, she had gone there after much delay. Her intention being understood, a lot of pressure was put on her to eat but Indrani was not a girl to be defeated, she could not be persuaded by any means to eat.

Once there was a bigger commotion than this over pride of aristocracy when Gaurikanto and Mukunda Babu were alive. That incident may be mentioned here.

Indrani was very beautiful. In our language the comparison of a beautiful woman with stationary lightning is famous. That comparison does not apply in most cases, but it did in respect of Indrani. By her natural strength Indrani seemed to have kept easily shackled within her a strong force and fierce radiance with a seriousness which nothing could ruffle. Lightning seemed to stand still for ever in her eyes and face and all over her. Its natural restlessness was forbidden here.

Seeing this beautiful girl Mukunda Babu had proposed to Gaurikanto her marriage with his adopted son. Gaurikanto yielded to no one in his devotion to his master. He could sacrifice his life for his master. And no matter how much his condition had improved and however much indulgence the head of the house showed him, treating him as a friend, he never forgot the respect due to his master even by mistake, even in his dreams. In the presence of his master or even when he was only mentioned, he seemed to bend down in respect, but nothing could make him agree to this proposal of marriage. He used to pay back the debt due to his master's affection down to the fraction of a coin but why should he give up what was due to the aristocracy of his birth? He could not give his granddaughter in marrigae to Mukundalal's son.

Mukundalal had not liked this pride of birth in his servant. He had hoped that by this proposal, recognition would be shown to his devoted employee. When Gaurikanto did not take the matter in that light, Mukundalal stopped speaking to him for some days and caused him much mental suffering. This unkind behaviour of his master drove into Gaurikanto's heart like a sharp death-dealing stake. Yet in spite of that he married his granddaughter to a poor orphan Kulin boy of purest blood and began to educate him with his own money, bringing him up in his home.

Indrani, granddaughter of that grandfather proud of his lineage, did not take food at her master's house. It is needless to say that sweet friendliness did not well up at this in the heart of her master's wife, Nayantara. Then several imaginary slights on Indrani's part began to appear before Nayantara's angry prejudiced eyes.

Firstly Indrani had come extremely well dressed wearing many ornaments. What necessity was there for her to show herself on the same level with her masters by so much display of wealth in the master's house?

Secondly there was Indrani's pride of her beauty. There was no doubt that Indrani had beauty, and it might be needless and even improper for one in a low position to have such excessive beauty, but her pride was wholly imagined by Nayantara. No one can be blamed for beauty. So if beauty is to be decried then one is forced to bring in the question of pride.

Thirdly Indrani's arrogance, which is colloquially known as snobbery. Indrani had a natural seriousness. She could not be friendly except with those who were very dear or well known to her. Besides, it was also not in her nature to talk noisily in a familiar way on her own initiative, or to go forward to have her finger in every pie.

Nayantara began gradually to get incensed on account of many causes like this, with or without basis. And on unnecessary pretexts she began to introduce or address Indrani again and again as "Our manager's wife" or "Our Dewan's granddaughter". She gave instructions to one of her favourite cheeky maids, who accordingly nestled against Indrani and in the manner of a friend

began to comment on her ornaments handling them. Praising her collar and armlets she asked, "Are these of gilt, dear?"

With a very serious face Indrani said, "No, they are of brass".

Addressing Indrani, Nayantara said, "Oh you there, what are you doing standing there alone? Take these foodstuffs to the palanquin from Hatkhola". A maid of the house was present nearby.

Indrani looked only for a moment at Nayantara's face with the wide open gaze of her eyes darkened by the shadow of immense eye-lashes, and next moment silently picking up the earthen containers of sweetmeats she went downstairs to the palanquin from Hatkhola.

The person who had received this gift of sweetmeats became much embarrassed and said, "Why do you take the trouble, dear? Why not hand them over to that maid?"

Indrani did not agree to it and said, "What trouble is there in this? "

The other one said, "Then please let me carry them".

Indrani said, "No, I will take these along".

Saying this, as Annapurna, the goddess of plenty, with a benign serene face might have in overflowing affection distributed food with her own hands to her devotees, — with the same immovable serene sweetness she went and placed the sweetmeats within the palanquin. And at that meeting of two minutes the rich housewife of Hatkhola became extremely eager to establish a lifelong friendship with this scant spoken softly smiling Indrani.

In this manner however many arrows of insult Nayantara showered on Indrani with the skilled cruelty of her feminine nature, Indrani did not allow any of them to pierce her body. Striking against the hard armour of her untarnished natural strength all of them broke to pieces of themselves. Seeing her unruffled seriousness Nayantara's anger began to rise still higher. And realising this, at one time Indrani slipped away unseen by others and went home without taking leave of any body.

II

Those who bear calmly are hurt more deeply. Though Indrani had repulsed the blows of insult with extreme indifference still they had gone and struck her heart.

As there had been a proposal of marriage between Indrani and Binode Bihari, so at one time there was talk of Nayantara's marriage with a distantly related impoverished cousin of Indrani's, called Bamacharan. That Bamacharan was now a petty employee in Binode's office. Indrani could still remember that in her childhood one day Nayantara's father came to their house with Nayan and entreated Gaurikanto very much for the marriage of his daughter to Bamacharan. On that occasion all the women of Gaurikanto's house were astonished and

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amused at the extraordinary talkativeness of the little girl, Nayantara, and before that precocious worldliness of hers, shy scant spoken Indrani had thought herself to be entirely helpless and ignorant. Gaurikanto was very pleased by the non-stop talking of this girl and by her appearance. But as there was a slight defect in the purity of her pedigree he did not agree to her marriage with Bamacharan. In the end it was due to his choice and endeavour that Nayantara was married to Binode who was not a Kulin.

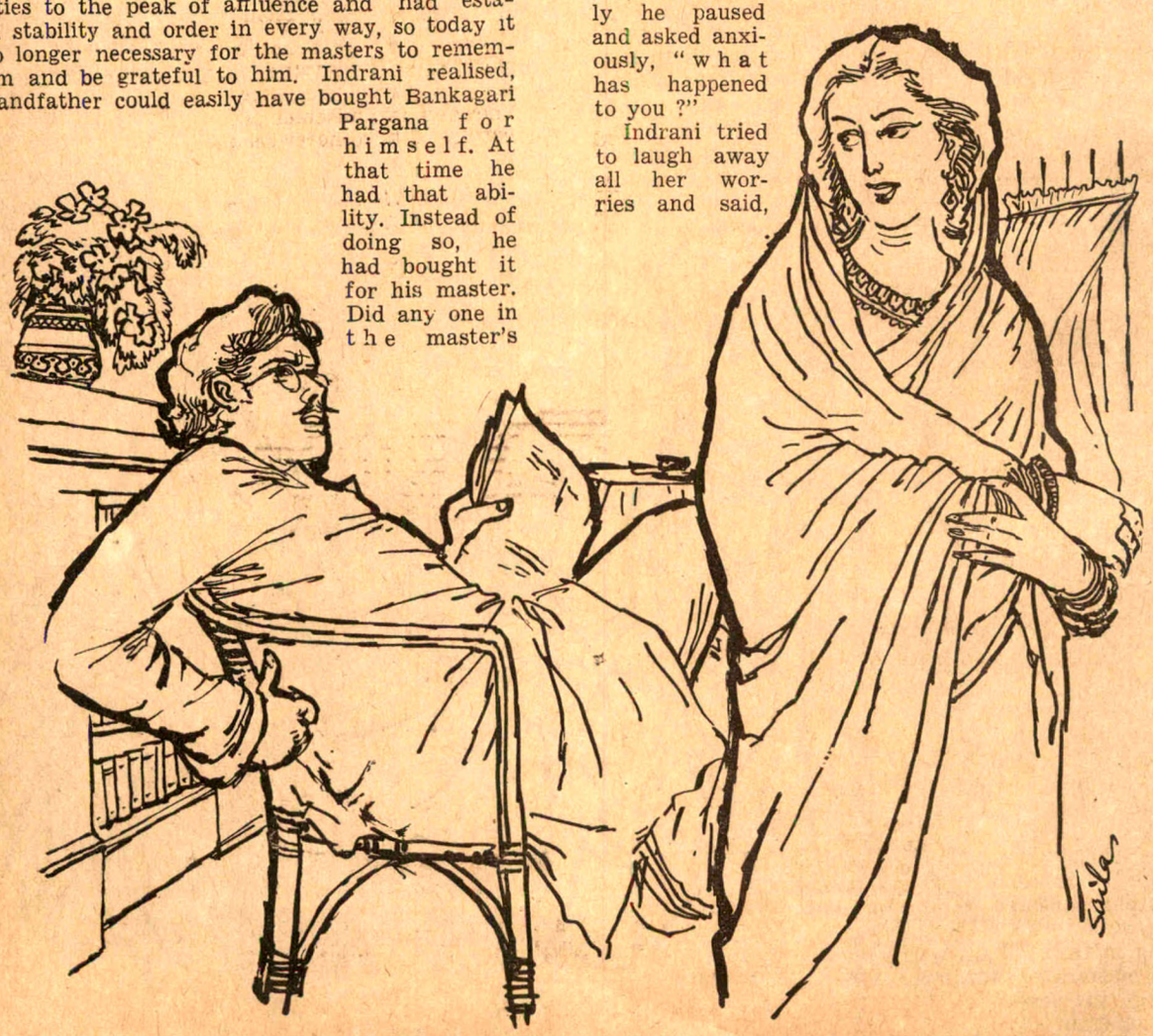
Indrani found no consolation from recalling all this. On the contrary her insults began to hurt all the more. She remembered the story of Sukracharya's daughter, Devayani, and Sarmistha described in the epic Mahabharata. The right thing would be only if Indrani could do as Devayani had crushed the pride of her master's daughter and made her into her slave. There was a time when her grandfather, Gaurikanto, was essential to Mukunda Babu's family as Sukracharya, the preceptor of the Daityas had been to the Daityas. If he had then so wished he could have humbled Mukunda Babu. But as it was he who had raised Mukundalal's properties to the peak of affluence and had established stability and order in every way, so today it was no longer necessary for the masters to remember him and be grateful to him. Indrani realised, her grandfather could easily have bought Bankagari Pargana for himself. At that time he had that ability. Instead of doing so, he had bought it for his master. Did any one in the master's family remember that this was a sort of gift? "You have today acquired the right to insult us through that pride of wealth and position which we have given you." Indrani's heart became bitter at this thought.

Returning home she found that having attended the invitation at his master's house and afterwards finishing his work in the zamindari office her husband was reading a newspaper in seclusion, resting in a chair in his bedroom.

Many believe that often the natures of husbands and wives are alike. The reason for it is this that if by chance we see anywhere a likeness in the natures of a husband and his wife we think it so fit and proper that we expect this rule to hold in most cases. However in the present case there actually was a certain similarity on one or two points between Ambikacharan and Indrani. Ambikacharan was not a good mixer. He went out only to work. On returning home after completing his own work and having made others work to the full he seemed to enter into an invincible fort to protect himself from the attack of unrelated persons. Outside there existed he and his work, within his home there were he and his Indrani. In this way was his whole life arranged.

When spreading the brilliance of her glittering attire, well dressed Indrani entered within the room, Ambikacharan was about to say something in jest to her, but suddenly he paused and asked anxiously, "what has happened to you ?"

Indrani tried to laugh away all her worries and said,



"What has happened to you?" Indrani tried to laugh away her worries and said, "What should happen? Recently I have met my jewel of a husband."

"What should happen ? Recently I have met my jewel of a husband".

Throwing the newspaper down on the floor Ambika said, "That is not news to me. What happened before that?"

Taking off her ornaments one by one Indrani said, "Before that I received a welcome from the mistress".

Ambika asked, "Of what sort was the welcome?"

Coming near her husband Indrani sat down on the arm of his chair and encircling his neck replied, "Not exactly like what I receive from you".

Then Indrani related everything one by one. She had thought that she would not mention these unpleasant matters to her husband, but that resolution could not be kept, and Indrani had never been able to keep other similar vows either. However restrained and reserved Indrani was before outsiders, when with her husband in like degree she cast off the natural checks of her nature. There she could not hide a trace even of herself.

Hearing everything Ambikacharan became furiously angry. He said, "I will resign from work at once". Immediately he was about to write a strong letter to Binode Babu.

Indrani then got down from the arm of the chair and sitting at her husband's feet on the mat-covered floor, she placed her arms in his lap and said, "There is no need for such hurry. Let the letter be put off for today. Decide tomorrow morning whatever is to be done".

Becoming excited Ambika said, "No, it is not right to delay it at all".

Indrani had blossomed like a single lotus from the lotus stalk of her grandfather's heart. As she had drawn the juice of affection from his heart so had she unconsciously accepted many thoughts stored in her grandfather's heart. Though she had not entirely inherited the reverence and unshakable regard which Gaurikanto had for his master's family, still the idea had become deep-rooted in her mind that it was their duty to lay down their lives for the good of their master's family. Her well educated husband could have, if he had so desired, practised law or accepted some other honourable work, but following the strong tradition of his wife's heart he looked contentedly after Binode's estates with undivided attention. Though hurt by insult, Indrani could not reconcile herself by any means to the idea that her husband would give up working for Binode Bihari.

Then taking recourse to logic Indrani said in a soft sweet voice, "But Binode Babu is not guilty in any way. He does not know anything of this. Why should you hurry to quarrel with him because you are angry with his wife ?"

Hearing this, Ambika Babu laughed out aloud. His own resolution appeared very amusing to him. He said, "There is something in that. But whether they are masters or not I am never going to send you to their house again".

This slight wind blew away the clouds for that day, the home became cheerful and Indrani forgot all the insults of the world outside at the special endearments of her husband.

III

Placing the entire charge of the zamindari administration on Ambikacharan, Binode Bihari did not supervise it at all. As some husband looks on the wife at home with an eye of neglect on account of extreme security and entire dependence, Binode had a disregard like that for his own zamindari. The income of the zamindari was so definite, so fixed, that it did not seem to be an income at all. One was accustomed to it. So it had no attraction.

Binode had the wish to go by a short underground passage within one night into the store house of Midas. Therefore on the advice of various people he tried his hand secretly at many dubious business ventures. Sometimes it would be decided that he would take a lease of all the Babla trees in the country and manufacture bullock cart wheels; sometimes he considered extracting honey from all the honeycombs of the Sunderbans; again sometimes it was proposed to send a man to the western provinces and take a lease of the forests there in order to get a monopoly of the trade in myrobalan. Binode knew in his mind that if any one heard of all this, one would laugh. So he did not want to mention anything to any one. He was somewhat specially shy of Ambikacharan. He shrank in his heart in fear that Ambika might think he was about to waste so much money. He behaved before Ambika as if Ambika was the zamindar and he only got a little yearly salary for sitting idle.

From the day after the invitation Nayantara began to din into her husband's ears, "You don't look after anything yourself. Whatever little Ambika gives, you accept gratefully and no one knows what mischief is meanwhile taking place within. I have never seen with my eyes since coming

Nayantara began to din into her husband's ears, "You don't look after anything yourself. Whatever little Ambika gives, you accept gratefully".

to your home such ornaments as your manager's wife came wearing. From where does she get all this jewellery? And on the strength of what has her pride increased so much?" etc. etc. Nayantara went on describing the ornaments with much exaggeration. And she fabricated liberally also of what Indrani had said to her maid.

Binode was a weak-minded man. On one hand he could not exist without depending on others, on the other he believed whatever suspicions were whispered by any one in his ears. In a moment he became firmly convinced in his mind that his manager was dishonest. Specially as he himself did not see to the administration, he began to be haunted by many sorts of imaginary fears. Yet he did not know how to detect the manager's theft. He had not the courage to say anything to him openly. He was much perplexed.

All the other officers were jealous at Ambikacharan's sole domination. Specially jealous, more than all others, towards Ambika was Bamacharan, that distantly related nephew of Gaurikanto, whom he had given employment. Due to relationship etc. he thought himself to be Ambikacharan's equal and firmly believed that in spite of being his relation Ambika did not give him a high post out of sheer jealousy. It was his opinion that if one got a job the ability to perform it would come of itself. He considered especially the manager's duties to be very light. He used to say, 'Nowadays the position of the manager of an office is similar to that of the flag which used in old days to fly on top of a chariot. The poor horse works itself to death and Mr. Banner only sways proudly with the chariot'.

Before this Binode did not keep himself informed about the work of administration. Only when in connextion with his business activities a lot of money was suddenly required, he used to send for the treasurer in secret and ask him how much money there was then in the office treasury. When the treasurer mentioned the amount, he used after a bit of hesitation to ask for that money, as if it was some one else's. The treasurer would give him the money after taking his signature. After that for some days Binode remained embarrassed before Ambika Babu. He felt at ease only if he did not have to meet him at all.

Ambikacharan was sometimes in trouble on account of this, because after giving the zamindar his share, land revenue payable at the headquarters or money for payment of the salaries of the clerical staff was often kept in deposit in the treasury. If that money was improperly spent much difficulty had to be experienced. But after taking the money Binode went about hiding in such a manner like a thief that no chance was found to talk to him about it. It was no use writing to him either, because the man had only a thin veneer of surface shame of meeting a person face to face, he had no other sense of shame. For this he feared only physical meetings with one.

Gradually when Binode went exceeding all limits Ambikacharan became disgusted and kept the key of the iron safe with himself. Binode's taking money secretly was entirely stopped. Yet the man was of such a weak nature that though he was the master he could not openly exert his power in any way in the matter. But Ambikacharan's efforts were useless. The money of one who is befriended by the goddess of misfortune cannot be kept locked by the key of an iron safe. On the contrary the result was harm instead of good. But all that will be said later on.

At the stern rule of Ambikacharan, Binode had become very much annoyed at heart. When at this time Nayantara generated suspicions in his mind he became somewhat happy. Secretly he called for the lowest employees one by one and began to make enquiries. Then Bamacharan became his chief spy.

In Gaurikanto's time Dewanji did not hesitate to lay hands on the lands of neighbouring zamindars by force. He had robbed many people of much land like this. But Ambikacharan never acted that way. And when a litigation was about to begin he tried his best to come to a settlement by arbitration. It was to this that Bamacharan drew his master's attention. He explained clearly that Ambikacharan must have taken bribes from the other side to settle cases out of court, causing loss to his master. Bamacharan himself believed likewise. He would rather die than believe that anyone who had power in his hands could remain without taking bribes.

In this way, secretly blown on by many mouths, the flame of Binode's suspicions began to rise higher and higher but he did not dare adopt any open measures. Firstly there was his surface shame, secondly there was the fear lest Ambikacharan who knew all about his affairs might harm him in some way.

At last burning with disgust at this cowardice of her husband, Nayantara sent for Ambika one day without Binode's knowledge and from behind the curtains she said, "You will not be employed any more. Hand over charge to Bamacharan and go away."

Ambikacharan had already understood from signs that a movement had been started against him before Binode. So he was not much surprised at Nayantara's words. At once he went to Binode Bihari and asked, "Do you wish to relieve me from my work?"

Becoming much agitated Binode said, "No, certainly not."

Ambikacharan again asked, "Have you had any reason to doubt me?""

Binode said extremely embarrassed, "No, not at all."

Without mentioning the incident with Nayantara at all Ambikacharan came away to office. At home too he did not tell Indrani anything. Some time went on in this way.

Then Ambikacharan went down with influenza. The illness was not serious but on account of weakness he could not go to office for several days.

The payment of land revenue at the district headquarters was due at that time and there was much pressure of other work besides. So one morning leaving his sick bed Ambikacharan suddenly appeared in his office. That day no one had been expecting him and all began to say, "Please go home. Do not work in such a weak state of health."

Ambikacharan airily dismissed the subject of his own illness and sat down at his desk. The clerks all seemed to become a little agitated and suddenly applied themselves to their own work with excessive concentration.

Ambikacharan opened his desk and saw that there was not a single paper within. He asked

every one. "What is this?" Every one seemed to have fallen from the skies. No one could decide whether they had been taken away by a thief or a ghost.

Bamacharan said, "Well sirs, give up this pretence. You all know that the master himself called for the papers and took them away."

White with suppressed anger, Ambika asked, "Why?"

While writing on his papers Bamacharan said, "How can we say that?"

Taking advantage of Ambikacharan's absence Binode had a new key made at Bamacharan's instigation and opening the manager's private desk had taken away all his papers to examine them.

Cunning Bamacharan did not conceal that. The idea that being insulted Ambikacharan might resign from his post was not unwelcome to him.

Turning the key in his desk Ambikacharan went with trembling body in search of Binode. Binode sent word that he had a headache. Going home from there he suddenly lay down in bed through weakness. Indrani hurriedly ran to him and seemed to hold him covered up with her entire heart. Gradually Indrani heard everything.

The motionless lightning did not remain stationary anymore. Her bosom began to swell. Open forked lightning began to radiate intense fierce bitterness from the corners of her dilated eyes dark like clouds. Such an insult to such a husband! This the reward of such faithfulness!

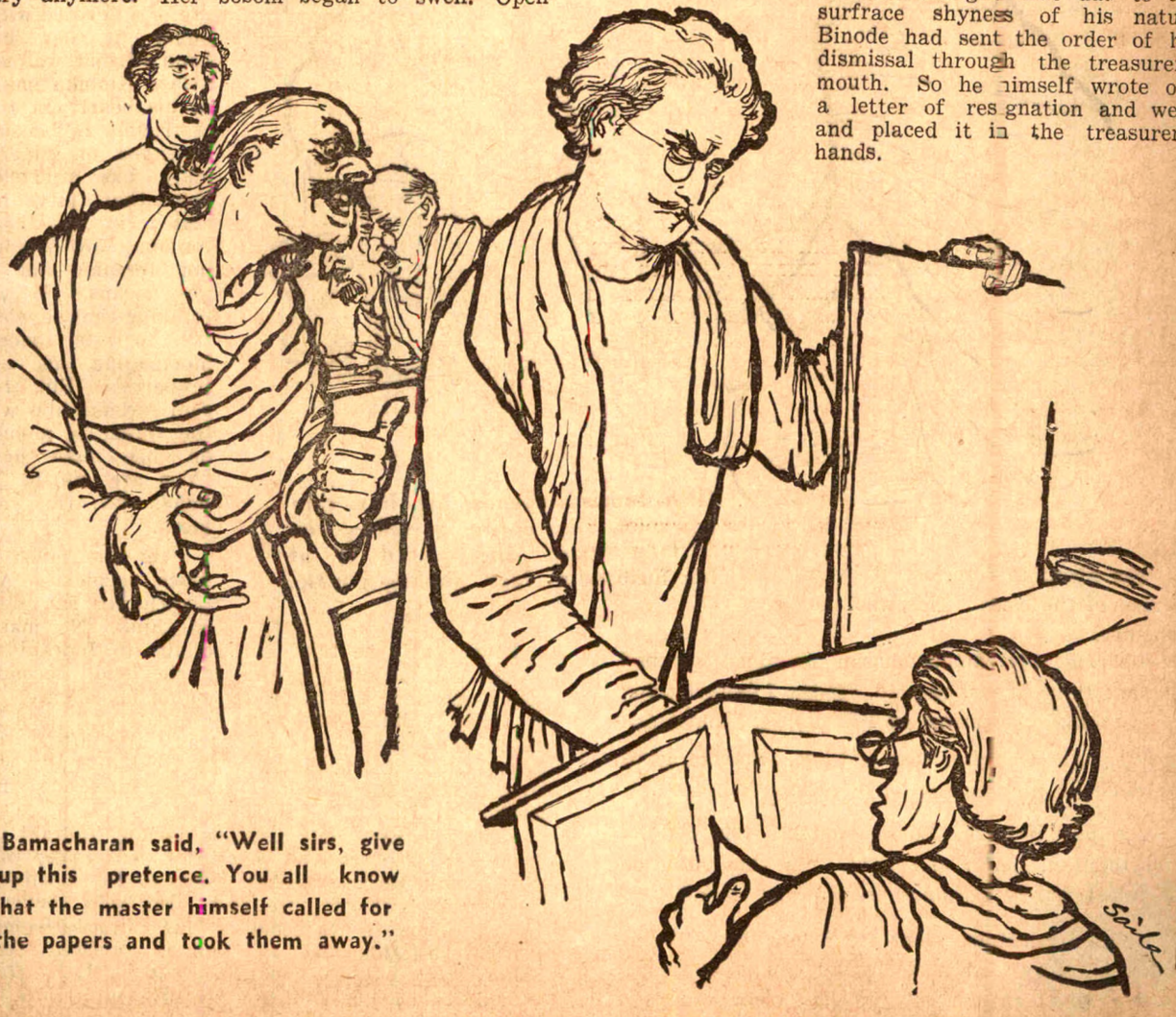
Seeing the intense silent heat of Indrani's anger Ambika's temper cooled down. He held her hand and said as if protecting a sinner from the wrath of the gods, "Binode is weak-minded. His heart has been turned through listening to the words of various people."

Then encircling her husband's neck with both arms, Indrani drew him close to her breast with emotion and suddenly tears began to shower down dimming her angry burning eyes. Away from the entire injustice of the world, from all its insult, drawing him close in her arms she seemed to wish to instal the god of her heart within the temple of her own heart.

It was decided that Ambikacharan would resign at once. That day no one objected anymore to it. But Indrani's heart did not find any consolation at this insignificant revenge. When the suspicious master was himself about to dismiss Ambika, what punishment would he inflict by giving up his work? As soon as he decided to resign Ambika's anger left him. But in the midst of all her duties and leisure Indrani's anger went on blazing within her heart.

APPENDIX

At this time the servant came and announced that the treasurer of the Babu's house had come. Ambika thought that due to the surfrace shyness of his nature Binode had sent the order of his dismissal through the treasurer's mouth. So he himself wrote out a letter of resignation and went and placed it in the treasurer's hands.



Bamacharan said, "Well sirs, give up this pretence. You all know that the master himself called for the papers and took them away."

Without asking anything about it the treasurer said, "Everything is lost."

Ambika asked, "What has happened?"

In reply to that he heard that from the time when due to Ambikacharan's carefulness Binode could not get money out of the treasury, he had begun to borrow secretly large sums of money from many places. As after launching one business after another he lost and was cheated, his determination increased all the more. He tried to make good his losses by newer and newer impossible means and in the end had sunk into his neck in debt. When Ambikacharan was ill, utilizing that opportunity Binode had drawn all the money from the treasury. The Bankagari Pargana had been mortgaged to a neighbouring zamindar from a long time past; up till now he had not made any demands for money and allowed a large sum of interest to accumulate. Now finding an opportune moment he was about to foreclose it by a degree of the court. This was the calamity.

Then Indrani opened her iron safe and piled her entire jewellery on a large tray. She placed it at her husband's feet smiling a little.

Hearing this, Ambikacharan remained stunned for some time. At last he said, "Today I cannot think out anything. Tomorrow we will discuss about this."

When the treasurer rose to leave, Ambika asked for and took back his letter of resignation.

Coming within the house Ambika told Indrani everything in detail and said, "In this situation of Binode surely I cannot give up my work."

Indrani remained silent for a long time like a statue of stone. At last forcibly suppressing the warring doubts of her heart she sighed and said, "No, now you cannot give it up."

Then began the search, "Where is money?", "Where is money?" Money in sufficient quantities could not be had from anywhere. Ambika advised Binode to collect the ornaments from within his house. Binode had made the attempt before this for the needs of his business ventures but had never been successful. Now with much entreaty, much weeping and humbling of himself, he begged for the ornaments. Nayantara was adamant and did not give them. She thought that everything was about to crumble down from all around her, these jewels were now her last refuge. And to these she clung with extreme anxiety, staking her life for them if need be.

When money could not be had from any source, a radiance of intense happiness descended on Indrani's frown of revenge. Pressing her husband's hands she said, "You have done your duty. Now give in, let what is to happen take place."

Seeing that the fire of a devoted wife's anger at her husband's insult was still ablaze Ambika smiled in his heart. In time of trouble Binode had depended on him so much like a helpless boy that pity had arisen in his heart for him. Now he could not forsake him by any means. He was thinking that he would try to raise money mortgaging his own properties. But Indrani forbade him with the threat of a curse on her own head, "You are not to lay hands on this any more."

In the midst of much perplexity Ambikacharan sat down to think. No matter how gently he tried to explain to Indrani she would not let him speak. In the end, becoming depressed and serious he sat on in his silence.

Then Indrani opened her iron safe and piled her entire jewellery on a large tray and lifting that heavy laden tray somehow with great difficulty with both hands, she placed it at her husband's feet smiling a little.

Grandfather's only precious darling, Indrani had from her birth received year after year many valuable ornaments as presents. Most of the savings of her frugal husband's life had also been converted into jewellery in the store of this childless woman. Bringing all this gold as well as precious stones before her husband, Indrani said, "With these ornaments of mine I will save the gift my grandfather

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CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IN SECOND FIVE-YEAR PLAN

By A. N. KERR

HERE are no statistics about construction activity in India. Excepting highways and cement industries, we do not get any employment figures in the construction industry in our country. The only reason appears to be that, unlike other advanced countries of the world, this industry is denied due status as compared to engineers, doctors, lawyers and other businessmen in our country.

It may be noted that since the last war, this industry has been taken up as a career by young engineers including even those who have foreign training and experience. They are very sure about the treatment they have received from their brother engineers and other citizens.

Until a few years ago construction industry belonged to some few rich persons only who engaged competent *mistries* and did many large works. Now this industry has developed and advanced considerably on modern progressive lines, and this is as it should be. It is a pity that we have no statistics about construction industry activities in India. Yet I can affirm that this industry employs 1.1 million persons per day in India and taking an average rate per person of Rs. 2|8|- per day, a sum of about two and a half million rupees is spent per day as daily wages. It is now proposed to spend double this amount per day in our Second Five-Year Plan.

ITS VITAL ROLE

Our Government has declared that the aim of its policy is to create a "socialistic pattern of society." This phrase is really very difficult to define. It means that society shall have equal opportunities for all and there shall be no gap between the rich and the poor.

Our present Government has before it three main issues, viz. food, shelter, and clothing for every one. If we consider these three big branches of development, we have to agree that in every one of them the construction industry has to play a vital role. Let us take, for instance, the item of "food". It is to start from more water, and more water means building of dams, canals, fertilizers, etc. These have to be executed solely by the construction industry. If you consider shelter, here again it means large housing schemes throughout India, and, if we consider clothing, it means more factories and therefore more power, and power has to start from multi-purpose dams etc. Hence we can see that the construction industry plays and also has to play the vital part in the execution of the Second Five-Year Plan.

Our Government successfully completed the First Five-Year Plan costing 1,500 million pounds, and 50 per cent of which was spent on the construction industry. This industry has played the most important part in the execution of our last Five-Year Plan.

The Second Five-Year Plan is about to start. It will cost about 3,000 million pounds, and likely to spend half of this on the construction industry.

HOUSING PROGRAMME

In the matter of housing, our Welfare State is paying special attention to provicing houses for the low-income groups. There are 54 million houses in rural areas, of which a large number require reconditioning. In urban areas 3,400 units have been completed by the Central Government, though it is a small beginning indeed. Loans are freely given to Housing Societies to provide 40,000 units. The Second Five-Year Plan will spend about 120 million rupees on Housing and the balance will be spent in other projects.

My information on the Second Five-Year Plan, as far as housing is concerned, shows that as against a total provision of Rs. 38.5 crores in the First Five-Year Plan, the Second Five-Year Plan has allotted Rs. 120 crores to be distributed as follows :—

(1)	Subsidised Industrial Housing.	— 45 crores.
(2)	Low-Income Group Housing.	— 40 „
(3)	Rural Housing.	— 10 „
(4)	Slum clearance and Sweeper's House.	— 20 „
(5)	Middle-Income Group Housing.	— 3 „
(6)	Plantation Housing.	— 2 „
	Total :	120 Crores.

In addition to the above, there are housing schemes for workers in coal and mica industries.

During the First Five-Year Plan about 103 million urban houses are estimated to have been constructed —600,000 units in the private sector and the remaining through various Governments and public authorities. The corresponding estimate for the Second Five-Year Plan is 1.0 million units of which 800,000 units may be constructed by the private sector. This report expresses profound dissatisfaction at the fact that employers had considerably failed to utilise the subsidised industrial housing scheme for their workers. The plan now proposes that private employers, Government authorities and local bodies should all make the fullest use of the scheme, not only for building houses, but also for developing land for building purposes as the scheme has been recently modified at the conference held at Simla in June, 1955. It is hoped that as a result of this modification, the scheme will become more popular and that private employers and co-operative societies of industrial

workers will take greater advantage of it than what they have done in the past.

A correct picture of the scheme, the sanction issued during the current year (till 31st July, 1956), the number of tenements sanctioned for construction by different authorities, and the loans and subsidies involved are given below:—

	Number of tenements.	Subsidies of amount in lakhs.	Amount of Loans in lakhs.
State Government	66,520	9,74	1027
Employers	10,921	73	98
Co-operative Societies	1,318	9	17
	78,759	10,56	11,42

Of the 78,759 tenements sanctioned, over 35,000 have been completed the remaining being under construction.

I think, the Government's attention should be drawn to the question of agreement between the Government and the party praying for loan. It is very doubtful that the employers, private authorities, and local bodies will avail themselves of this opportunity during the Second Five-Year Plan. The only reason for the failure of the First Five-Year Plan is that the rules regarding the agreement form and the mortgage deeds etc. were too rigid for securing loan and subsidy. Further liberalisation of the rules framed under the provision of the agreement with regard to interest, payment of subsidy, repayment of loan, mode of payment, and other inequitable bindings is necessary in order to make the scheme successful in the Second Five-Year Plan.

In order to recruit the technical hands in the country, our Government has started technical training course in the construction industry all over India, to meet the personnel requirements for the Second Five-Year Plan. All this must take time. What could not be achieved in 200 years, cannot be achieved in one or two Five-Year Plans.

STABILISATION QUESTION

This industry has maintained good men as permanent hands and they are taken from place to place, but for unskilled temporary men it is impossible to absorb them after the work is over. In India the employer himself in this industry is not stable. Therefore, what can they do with the employees after the job is completed ? Moreover, most of the labourers leave the employer without notice. They themselves do not wish to be stable as they have to work on their own farm land for certain period of the year.

Today the Government has become the biggest purchaser in the construction industry. The industry has been greatly handicapped by one-sided conditions of Government contracts. The employers in the industry want them to be fair and equitable to both sides. Our Government is now trying to meet their point of view at joint meetings and discussions, but the action taken is slow, halting and wanting. This has resulted in the cost of construction being higher than otherwise and for which they are obliged to pay high rates of income-tax.

This industry also suffers for shortage of steel and cement, as well as of machinery and technical personnel. In spite of huge development programmes—in our country, the transport is still the bottleneck of this industry.

According to my estimation the Second Five-Year Plan will have to face a big deficit budget and I strongly feel that it will strain the resources of the country to the utmost and we cannot possibly have a Third Five-Year Plan. So what will happen to this industry and all these highly-trained technical hands at the end of Second Five-Year Plan ?

Though the industry will provide 2.2 million persons per day and take up 50% of the work under the Second Five-Year Plan, i.e. the major portion of our National Programme, yet the question remains how long this industry will suffer on its way to stabilization in our country. Why should not the Government take immediate action to stabilise the construction industry, as in other progressive countries, in their Second Five-Year Plan ?

"REVENGE"

(Continued from Page 104)

made, and again make a gift of it to the master's family."

Saying this she closed her eyes wet with tears and imagined that the shiningly fair old grandfather of hers with his sparse white hair, straightforward handsome face and serene gentle affectionate smile ablaze with intelligence, was present here at this moment and placing his cool loving hand on her bowed head was reciting benedication in silence.

Bankagari Pargana was bought over again. Then breaking her vow Indrani bereft of ornaments went again to Nayantara's inner house on invitations; there remained no longer any pain of insult in her heart.

Dewan—Chief administrative officer of a big zamindari estate.

Babu—Originally a title of honour conferred on Hindu noblemen. Later, a squire, the chief landed proprietor in a district or portion of a district. Hence a person belonging to the landed gentry. (The meaning has further deteriorated of late).

Taraf—Part or whole of a Pargana, which is a tract of country comprising many villages. Generally named after the chief village or the person who first brings the area under proper management.

Tahsildar—(In Bengal) a petty officer who goes from house to house collecting rents from the tenants of a landed estate.

Dewanji—Dewan-ji (an honorific suffix).

Kulin—Belonging to an unmixed line originally noted for the character, education etc. of its members. Now it is purely arbitrary, having been fixed in the twelfth century by King Ballala Sen for all time.

Sukracharya—Preceptor of the Daityas, who was invaluable to them because of his ability to revive the dead. The Daityas were perpetually fighting the Devas who killed large number of members of the former. Sukracharya promptly brought them back to life. He was much higher by birth than his employer, the King of the Daityas, and his daughter Devayani who was of a jealous nature made the fullest use of her privileged position by insisting on Sarmistha, daughter of the King, accompanying her as a slave girl when she married Yayati, King of India.

Daityas—An order of semi-celestial beings who were descended from the same ancestor as the Devas, the gods who lived in paradise and perpetually at war with them.

Pargana—See "Taraf" above.

Zamindari—Landed estate paying revenue directly into the Collectorate.

Babla—Thorny tree producing very tough timber used in making ploughs and cartwheels. (Acacia arabica.)

Sundarbans—The vast marshy forest tract at the head of the Bay of Bengal.

CHARU CHANDRA DUTTA, I.C.S.

By BIRENDRA KISHORE ROY CHOUDHURY

LATE Charu Chandra Dutt was one of the most illustrious sons of Bengal whose personality and genius were of manifold character and who had a highly developed soul. His father, the late Kalikadas Dutt, was the Dewan of Cooch Behar State. He was responsible for marvellous improvement of the State. He was very particular about the education of his worthy son, Charu Chandra. After graduating from the Presidency College Charu Chandra proceeded to England to compete for the Civil Service examination. His university career here in Calcutta was brilliant for which he was elected to the States Scholarship to enable him to prosecute his studies in England. As a brilliant student of his college he could attract some of his class-fellows round about him who were equally brilliant. They all won name and fame. Mention may be made of some of them, all of whom are now departed, viz., Justice Dwarka Nath Mitter, Justice Charu Chandra Ghose, Sir Brojendra Lal Mitter, Prof. Bhandarkar and Prof. Jnan Saran Chakrabarti. They were all Charu Chandra's very intimate friends. The exceptional qualities of his head and heart attracted to him friends of the highest type.

Having been admitted in the Indian Civil Service he was posted in the Presidency of Bombay. He had not served long when a new era dawned in Bengal. The historic Swadeshi movement was initiated in Bengal to raise the nation against the then partition of the province. A born patriot as Charu Chandra was, the movement evoked in his heart a strong urge for the freedom of the country and he jumped into it though with extreme tact. Although a member of the coveted Civil Service, Charu Chandra's love for his motherland inspired him at this momentous occasion to serve her in his own way.

In this patriotic movement, my father Sri Brojendra Kishore Roy Choudhury, late Raja Subodh Chandra Mullick and late Maharaja Surjya Kanta Acharyya and other land holders played distinguished parts. Charu Chandra married a sister of Raja Subodh Chandra and in this connection an intimate friendship developed between him and my father, who had also a very cordial and brotherly relation with Raja.

SWADESHI AND BENGALEES

As a result of the Swadeshi movement when the Bengalees were thinking of educating their children on purely national lines there was established a National University with the monetary support of Raja Subodh Chandra and the Maharaja of Mymensingh and my father Sri Brojendra Kishore R Choudhury. A very happy augury it was that just this moment Sri Aurobindo came to Calcutta straig from Baroda with a view to play his part in th mighty movement for liberation. The builders of t University, men of keen insight as they were, to no time to recognise in Sri Aurobindo, the lead and seer of the time. They made him the Princi of the National College already established and in talled him as the head of that great institutio From this time Charu Chandra began to take act part in the movement though his approach to th was of a peculiar character which was unavoidab considering the position he held as a member of t Civil Service.

Sri Aurobindo at this time as the head of t National University inspired the young Bengal know their Swadharma, but at the same time he w giving lead to a movement of liberation of India constitutional agitation as well as revolutiona means. The juvenile heroes of his time imbued wi the spirit of supreme self-sacrifice used to take the baptism of fire in the sanctuary of Bhawani Mand with the ardent devotion for the Divine Mother m nifested as the Mother-country. Sri Aurobindo hi self initiated this movement. The scene of the in tiation ceremonies and the secret vows of sel sacrifice taken by the patriotic youth attract Charu Chandra to Sri Aurobindo. When youngm like Barindra Kumar Ghosh, Profulla Chaki, Khud ram Bose, Kanailal Dutt and a host of othe touched the feet of Sri Aurobindo and took vows liberating their motherland from the bondage of a alien ruler, Charu Chandra used to watch the whol ceremony in secret and at last took the same vo as others did.

When the national upheaval was at its to most height how many days Charu Chandra a my father had passed in private conferences wi Sri Aurobindo at the princely residence of Raja S bodh Mullick! In those conferences Sri Aurobin was the central figure. But he attended the mee ings almost as a silent spectator absorbed in de thoughts. At the time of taking any decision his op nion counted supreme.

ALIPORE JAIL LIFE : NEW PHENOMENON

Next came the episode of Alipore Bomb Ca trial at the close of which curtain dropped on th then revolutionary movement. After the end of th case Sri Aurobindo was freed from the sanctuary the jail as he called it. Charu Chandra, who ha all along been under police vigilance now got free from it.

In the jail life of Sri Aurobindo a new phen

menon took place. In the prison-cell of the Alipore Jail Sri Aurobindo saw Purushottama face to face. The result of this communion was that Sri Aurobindo isolated himself to some extent from politics in response to a mandate from the Supreme Divine to devote himself to the resurgence of the spiritual truth lying hidden for aeons and aeons in the heart of India. From this time he delved himself to the Sadhana of the Supreme Divine and completely surrendered himself to the Purushottama and the Divine Mother. Meanwhile Charu Chandra went back to his original post under the Government in Western India.

When the curtain dropped on the revolutionary age the old chapter of the life of Bengal came to a close and with it the political activities of the then leading men went underground. Charu Chandra, too, had to turn over a new leaf. He was now a changed man, a dutiful, honest and upright familyman, a single-minded devotee for a better world. He abjured politics to create an opportunity to gain mastery of Eastern and Western Culture. He read scriptures of almost all kinds and in his leisure he dived deep into the study of music, painting etc. to gain first hand knowledge of these subjects. In the revolutionary period those who accepted Sri Aurobindo as their preceptor, friend and leader were all physically separated from him. Among his followers there were men who could not understand the meaning of his migration to Pondicherry and absorption to the deep Sadhana in seclusion.

But a faith was deep-rooted in the mind of the seer that the independence of India was decreed by the Providence and that no other force would be able to resist it. But how India would be able to make the best use of that independence was to him an anathema still. What position India would occupy in the world in post-independent days was a thought poignant in his mind. He arrived at the decision that real solution of this problem will only come through Sadhana and nothing else. That is why Sri Aurobindo immersed himself in the Sadhana to reach the goal. As a result of that deep Sadhana in seclusion his own countrymen and the world at large saw the production of his immortal "Savitri," the "Life Divine," the "Synthesis of Yoga" and the "Essays on the Gita" enough to satisfy the souls of the intellectuals as well as those who had spiritual aspirations. "The Ideal of Human Unity" and "The Human Cycle" showed his ideals for the future humanity. "Future Poetry" and the "Collected Poems" were meant for litterateurs and the artists. His seclusion, was, in a sense, a boon for the country and the humanity.

ASSOCIATION WITH TAGORE

When Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das returned after having a *'darshan'* of Sri Aurobindo his impression was that Sri Aurobindo was a living image of Buddha immersed in meditation. Meanwhile, in spite of his official duties, Charu Chandra was pursuing the path of knowledge and culture. So long he was in Bombay he made the best use of his time by acquiring masterly knowledge of various languages, oriental and occidental. His knowledge of science, philosophy and theosophy and also in fine arts were well known. When in 1930 he came back to Calcutta, pensioned off, his literary and philosophical persuits never left him. His literary production known as "Sekaler Katha" was a very interesting piece of his literary efforts. Kabiguru Rabindranath Tagore had a genuine affection for him and out of regard for his gifts in various departments of learning he installed him to the position of the Vice-Presidentship of the Visva-Vharati. His intimate connection with the great Poet continued for many years.

During his stay in Western India he began to keep much more company with the saintly people than before. The late Hirendra Nath Dutt, brother-in-law of late Raja Subodh Mullick was his close relation and a colleague of his Sadhana also. Hirendra Nath was the life and soul of the Bengal Theosophical Society, a man of profound learning with extra-ordinary occult knowledge, a leading man of the country and a bright jewel in the galaxy of wise men.

With the advancement of years, Charu Chandra had decisive progress in the path of Sadhana and he felt a strong urge to be nearer to Sri Aurobindo, the prince of the Yogis, the friend of his early manhood and the presiding deity of his heart. Nevertheless he used to complain about the disappearance of Sri Aurobindo from his homeland and exclusively devoting himself to Yoga. But his views underwent a change after his stay for some time in the Prabartak Asram. There he perceived that Sri Aurobindo did not mean Sadhana to be only a meditation of God, it enjoined Karma too in the service of the Divine and hence it is both static and dynamic. This system in which the Prabartak Sangha is run gave him much satisfaction. The Sangha-Guru, Sri Motilal Roy, told him, "Charu Babu, how far Sri Aurobindo may be away from us physically ? Everything here that you see is surcharged with his spiritual inspiration and influences." Charu Chandra's next movement was to have a 'darshan' of Sri Aurobindo. He reached Pondicherry and was face to face with Sri Ma and Sri Aurobindo. He marked halos of light round their faces which gave expressions of their Divine influences.

INITIATION & MARCH TOWARDS GOAL

After his initiation to Sri Aurobindo's yoga of self-surrender he came back to Calcutta. But his frequent visits to Pondicherry for the first few years after his initiation made him feel that he was making a headlong march towards the goal.

From 1940 Charu Chandra completely accepted the Sadhana of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. In 1941 Sri Anil Baran Roy of Sri Aurobindo Asram, with a view to popularise the philosophy and culture of Sri Aurobindo, to give proper publicity to the interpretations of Sri Aurobindo's English works in Bengali and also to give facilities to the public to be acquainted with the writings of Sri Aurobindo suggested the opening of a library in Calcutta. The idea was much appreciated by Charu Chandra. He gave a plan of starting of a library and reading room. When it was made known to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother they gave permission to open it with their blessings.

Thus Sri Aurobindo Pathamandir was started, Charu Chandra was made the permanent president of it. Sri Kshitish Chandra Dutt and myself were appointed Secretary and Treasurer respectively. On the day of the opening ceremony Justice Manmatha Nath Mukherjee took the presidential chair and Charu Chandra read Sri Aurobindo's Uttarpara speech for the occasion. Later on, he summarised in plain and lucid Bengali Sri Aurobindo's "Life Divine" and the "Human Cycle" to make them intelli-

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WOMANHOOD—THAT WAS INDIAN

By TUSHAR KANTI GHOSH, W.B.C.S.

THE cynic Schopenhauer and the master Aristotle have given judgment on women; but judgments sometimes are declared false, even though delivered by redoubtable persons. Women are not today proved to be unfinished men, as was expected by Aristotle. Nor are they the last thing civilised by man, as was said by Meredith. And, who believes Schopenhauer today if he says: "Instead of calling them beautiful there would be more warrant for describing women as the unaesthetic sex....The most distinguished intellects among the whole sex have never given to the world any work of permanent value in any sphere"? ("Essays on Women," p. 79).

We have, however, tried to think otherwise—for in this part of the world where women have lived through some five thousand years, we have discovered a different story. True, our history, like others, has many contrived corridors; but still it is what Croche says the past-that-is-present-Womanhood that was Indian is still in the blood of the Indian women—it is as fresh as a wound in our life.

I shall take a rapid view of our history from the early ages upto the beginning of that neo-Vedantic revival in Ramakrishna-Sarada Devi. This period is more obscure in our history and a perusal of this period will reveal the nature of the womanhood that was Indian.

"The position of women in any society," said Dr. Radhakrishnan, "is a true index of its cultural and spiritual level." Our cultural and spiritual life can be evaluated from this standpoint. If we refer to history we shall discover a galaxy of women shining over the religious life of India—beginning from that hoary past of the Vedic period when human beings in some other parts of the world were still quadrupeds.

VEDIC REPRESENTATIVES

Our starting point is the Vedic period. Naturally, the account we possess about the period is meagre. But that little account enables us to understand the essence of Indian Womanhood in the context of religious life. In the Rig-Veda, we come across the names of several women seers, such as Apala, Ghosha, Godha, Lopamudra, Shashwati, Romasha etc. They have composed hymns, which give a true picture of their minds. We learn that most of them either suffer from some ugly diseases or are forsaken by their husbands. Apala suffered from skin disease which made her skin hairless; Ghosha had white leprosy. Lopamudra pined for the company for her ascetic husband, Agastya. Those suffering from diseases pray to the gods that they may be cured and accepted by their husbands. They are subsequently cured off, and find the fulfilment of womanhood in the company of their husbands. In one verse, we find Shashwati expressing extreme joy when her husband recovered his lo manhood. Lopamudra served her husband for lon but is disappointed at his unworldly indifference an makes an impassioned appeal for his love and com pany : thus says Lopamudra —

The ancient sages who attained truth
And talked of truth with the very Gods,
They did beget children, but did not break
their penance;
Therefore, should the wives be approached
By their husbands.

It appears that in this period, the ideal of womanhood consisted in serving the husband untiringly and faithfully, and finally, in having children as a mark of benediction from the husband. Women in this period shared the religious life of their husbands only as a secondary counterpart of their husbands, and we know of no contribution of women in this period (i.e. as expressed in the Vedas) apart from their capacity as wives primarily.

A perfect development of the mind of the women in the wider aspects of human life and beyond it can be found in the Upanishadic era. The names of Maitreyi and Gargi stand out in bold relief. They are a class by themselves. The philosophical discourses between Yajnavalkya and Gargi are not only a unique contribution to the spiritual realisation of the deeper meanings of the values of life; they are particularly interesting in the context of the opinions expressed by the great philosophers including Aristotle and Schopenhauer about women. Maitreyi's answer to her husband Yajnavalkya when asked by him to accept his bequeathed property,—that if by a thing one cannot be immortal there is no necessity of it—has been the quintessence of Indian attitude to philosophy and religion and to everything else on this universe.

EAGERNESS TO KNOW TRUTH

Thus, as between the Vedic and the Upanishadic literature women of the latter show a greater awareness of the life divine, and a more sincere eagerness to know the truth. The Vedic women are only the parts of the life of their husbands, and attain significance only because of their husbands. Thus speaking of the Vedic women, Dr. S. K. De says: "There is no trace of any great women in the desert of desolate theological speculation of the extensive Brahmana literature." (in "Great Women of India" ed. Swami Madhavananda and Dr. R. C. Majumder, 1953, p. 137.)

At this stage, we are in a position to answer the question. What is the contributions of the Vedic and Upanishadic women to the religious life of India? The Vedic literature teaches that the con-

mmation of womanhood lies in unstinted devotion, d unquestioning faithfulness to the husband and in ning the love of the husband to beautify woman's e. The Upanishadic women teach us to seek after ith, and to leave out all the things that would not ake for immortality. The contributions of these o types of women are, of course, not contradic- ry, nor inconsistent, when allowance is made for e differences that would occur in different stages development.

TA, DRAUPADI & GANDHARI

We must now refer to the Ramayana at least, if ot to other epics and the Puranas. In the Rama- na, we find as if there is a sum total of the ideals id ideas practised by typically Indian men and omen. Particularly regarding the women, we find Sita the epitome of Indian womanhood. Her story as been the main-spring of inspirations to Indian omen throughout these ages. "As Mary the Madon- a to the women of Christendom, so is Sita, Queen Ayodhya, to them of Hinduism. Hers is indeed a alm beyond the aspirations of merely earthly so- reigns. For she is the ideal of womanhood itself, id she wields undisputed sway, in millions of earts over the kingdoms of love and sorrow, and ainless womanly honour and pride. Though beauti- l and a queen, she never chose ease. To her the mple lives of saints and scholars were more joy- us than all the luxuries of courts. Such was Sita, ueen of Ayodhya, crown of love, veiled in sorrow, nd peerless amongst women." (Sister Nivedita : Cradle Tales of Hinduism"—introduction to the Cycle of the Ramayana.")

We have also the great Mahabharata, where e meet Draupadi and Gandhari. We have also the uranas; though they are myths, still we have ere Madalasa, Sati, Uma, Shaibya. We shall do etter not to throw all these into oblivion on the core of their being legends. Goethe once condemned hose who said that the ancient legends of Rome, f Lucretia, for example, were spurious and false. nything that was essentially false and spurious ould only be absurd and never beautiful and ins- piring.

GREAT DEVOTEES OF BUDDHA

Next we come to the Jaina-Buddhistic age. In he literature we find frequent references to great vomen in this period (circa 500 B.C. to 500 A.D.). ut no great recorded contribution of them has eached us. Only one selection has been published oncerning women namely, the 'Therigatha' (Songs f the Sisters), which tells us of some of the great levotees of Buddha.

The Therigatha records the life-stories of Maha- ajapati Gotami, Isidasi, Ambapali, Kshema, etc., mong others. Gotami was the sister of Mahamaya, he mother of Gautama. Her greatest contribution o Buddhism was to secure Buddha's consent for he formation of the order of nuns in the Buddhist ystem, and it was at her instance that several rules were framed for the disciplinary guidance of nuns, known as "Bhikshuni-pratimoksha-sutra." In the songs that go by her name in the Therigatha, she xpresses her admiration for Buddha, and pays ho- nage to him for quenching her thirst for knowledge nd pointing out to her the source of all miseries. n the gathas attributed to Kshema in the Theriga- ha she also sings the glory of the Lord Buddha. Kshema was once enticed by a handsome youth; but she replied to him that physical body had no signi- ficance to her, which was only an unbearable store- house of various diseases. Only by following in the footsteps of the Enlightened Lord can the way to consummation be found out.

The Therigatha contains not a large number of verses. But all the gathas are inspiringly written by sincere followers of Buddha. These gathas have not only diffused the teachings of Buddha; the theris or nuns are even today continuing their spiri- tual career in different parts of the Buddhist world.

'UPASAKA'S — THE LAY DISCIPLES

Besides these, there were also other women, mostly lay disciples or 'Upasaka's of Buddha, some of whom, e.g. Samavati, Khujjuttara, have become famous. Samavati was the wife of King Udayana; she persuaded her husband to accept a lay disciple- ship of Buddha. Because of her earnest desire, a monk would come to the palace daily to deliver discourses. For her earnestness, Buddha gave her the foremost place among his lay disciples. The contribu- tion of these lay disciples was particularly impor- tant in view of the fact that, being women, and wives of non-Buddhist kings and others, they were able to enlighten their respective lands by the Light of Asia.

Like the Buddhist women, we have also the accounts of some great Jaina women on record. Be- sides diffusing Jainism to the best of their capacity, they have also left behind exemplary instances of chastity and purity. To take an example, Kannaki is worshipped even today amongst the Tamils. She is adored as Pattini Devi in Ceylon. Her greatest claim to fame is that she was chastity incarnate. The Tamil classic, "Shilappadikaram" embalms her life story Similarly, we have the instance of Raji- mati. This woman is a glaring example of the un- wavering devotion of a woman to her husband. For, her husband, Neminatha, went away just before the finishing of his marriage ceremony with her. Raji- mati also followed her legal husband and was true to him till the last.

CONDITION IN ASOKAN PERIOD

About the women in the next age, i.e. in the Maurya-Scythian era, we know something from Greek writers and contemporary epigraphs. We are told that some of them pursued philosophy, but married women were denied the privilege of sharing with their husbands a knowledge of the sacred lore. Asoka refers to women as devoted to trivial and worthless ceremonies. But the record of the benefactions of Karuvaki, the second queen of Asoka, shows that the wife took prominent share in the religious activities. The Nasik record refers to Gautami Balasri, showing the way of life led by a pious widow devoted to plain living and high thinking. One great name in the subsequent period is that of Rajyasri, the sister of king Harshavardhana,—a picture of love and detach- ment. These instances are important in view of the fact that during this period, because of foreign im- pact, there had been some amount of dislocation in Indian social life, and law-givers consequently tight- ened their hold on women lest they should drive a nail in the coffin of the traditional Indian Society. But, even in such circumstances, noble women con- tinued to radiate their pure influence on the religious life of India. Historians tell us that "the custom of burning widows on the funeral pyre of their hus- bands was coming into general use, at least among the ruling class." (Advanced History of India, Mac- Millian, p. 197). We must not fail to note that this system of 'sati,' however objectionable, marks the culmination of the traditional requirement that the

wife should be singularly devoted to her husband, and also to note that this system continued to influence the religious life of the Hindus for a great many number of years.

BHAKTI-CULT — MIRA BAI & LALLA

In the philosophical sphere, India was then under the powerful sway of Sankara and his followers, and the religious minds of the more enlightened Indians were imbued with Sankara's absolutist ideas. But to the common man, with simple understanding, Sankara's philosophy still remained a far cry, unattended to. As a necessary counter-poise, India saw the emergence of the 'bhakti'-cult, with its emphasis on a personal, loving God. This 'bhakti'-cult had its happy culmination in the period under the Turko-Afghans. The beneficial effect of the impact of Islam on the existing Hinduism of India made itself felt in this 'bhakti'-cult which sought to meet the challenge of the egalitarian Islam by offering to regard all human beings irrespective of castes and creeds as equal and preaching the fundamental equality of all religions and the unity of Godhead. The quintessence of this new-religious turn was that to the common man, God cannot be realised through the impersonal philosophy of Sankara but only through absolute surrender and loving devotion.

The heralds of this new, soothing religion to the bereaved souls of thousands of vanquished Indians were Ramanuja, Ramananda, Vallabhacharya, Kabir, Nanak etc. But women also contributed their mite to this new faith. Two names stand out most prominently. Lalla, the ascetic and composer of hymns of Kashmir, and the magnificent devotee of Krishna, the nightingale of Rajasthan, Mira Bai. Throughout Northern India both of them deeply impressed the common men with their devotion. They are remembered even today, not only for their hymns charged with divine beauty, but also for their unreserved devotion to God. Of the two, Mira stands out more prominently. Her death-defying inspiration, transcending all the ordinary bounds of temptation in family and society and soaring high above where only her Giridhara, and no one else, exists to accept the fragrant sacrifice of her heart-felt devotion, have made her one of the most successful exponents of the 'bhakti'-cult. The frequent changes and unrest in the political sphere had its direct impact on traditional Hinduism giving vent to an air of escapism and finding consolation for the bereaved soul in 'bhakti'—and to this North Indian trend of religious thought—the contribution of Mira Bai is great.

ILLICIT GENERALISATION

With Mira Bai we come to the end of a series. From Mira Bai to the modern age, there is a long gap. It seems that women recede in the background in the new political atmosphere of the country. During the Mughal domination we trace no distinguishing woman in the field of religion. In the beginning of the 19th Century we have noticed the rapid pace of Westernisation in all aspects of our traditional life. With the onrush of British culture and its impact on the traditional beliefs of India, the ideal of our womanhood which glowed with white radiance in our chequered past seemed to be cast into oblivion.

At this stage there was the advent of Sarada Devi—the Holy Mother. But that is another story.

From this short review of the long period, we may be able to get a glimpse of the Indian women and their aspirations and the history they build up. History is indeed, the biography of its great persons and the lives of these noble souls make up the history of Indian womanhood. Our women were not simply a means to an end—they were an end in themselves. They were not simply the means to satisfy men's lust,—they were instrumental in remoulding men. They were not an unaesthetic, nor a stupid sex. They were not required to be civilised by men nor were they dwarfed or inferior in comparison with men. The cynic Schopenhauer and the master Aristotle, thus made an illicit generalisation about that sex. What they tried to prove has been disproved by the progress of time and, especially, by the ideal and contribution of womanhood that was Indian.

CHARU CHANDRA DUTTA, I.C.S.

(Continued from Page 108)

gible to all. Among those who have successfully attempted to render Sri Aurobindo's philosophical, spiritual and cultural writings in Bengali, Charu Chandra stands by himself.

HIS DAY AT PONDICHERRY

After about two or three years of the establishment of the Pathamandir, Charu Chandra shifted to Pondicherry to live there permanently. Occasionally he was wont to come to Calcutta to give us opportunities to hear from him the new developments of the Yoga of Sri Aurobindo. During his stay in Calcutta he used to hold conversations at our and also his own residence. My late wife Indira Devi was a recipient of his warm affections. My wife also on her part had great reverence for Sri Aurobindo and was blessed to receive his affectionate benedictions. Charu Chandra was gratified to see that in our house Sri Aurobindo's portrait painted by Indira, was being regularly worshipped. He was also much pleased to see my wife's skill in the art of painting for which she got much encouragement from him. Charu Chandra used to tell us that Sri Aurobindo was convinced that India is destined to be the spiritual guide of the whole world. India's task, according to Sri Aurobindo, would be to spiritualise the West, whereas the West would impart scientific truths to the East. This is the key note of a synthesis which is now approaching. He was not in favour of conflict between India and the rest of the world nor between nationalism and universalism. During the Swadeshi days when Sri Aurobindo was involved in a fight with the obscurantism of the West to accept India's claim for freedom, even then, he was of opinion that the freedom for India was essentially necessary not for India alone, but for the world at large and especially for the deliverance of the West from the iron grip of materialism and thus a new avenue will be in sight for the propagation of the Sanatan Dharma or an Universal religion in which lurks the way to everlasting peace.

The later days of Charu Chandra were spent at Pondicherry Sri Aurobindo Asram where he and his wife, who had all along been a true partner of his spiritual life, had a very peaceful time passed in a luminous atmosphere.

At Sri Aurobindo's unexpected withdrawal from the scenes of this world Charu Chandra felt a vacuum within himself too deep for others to realise. But the subtle realisation of the vast consciousness of his Gurudev coupled with the consolations given to him by the Mother restored peace in his bereaved soul.

Yet he did not survive for long after the departure of his blessed Guru and idol of India, Sri Aurobindo and he breathed his last in profound peace within a year of that event.

A VISION OF TRUTH

(Continued from Page 63)

away. Someday he will have to pull down that awful snob Noren to this level. His next thought was of tea. He shouldn't have bathed so early.

The dog had ceased to follow him.

Ram Talukdar assured Noren. "Don't you worry. We will catch him, comrade."

"No comrading me please", snapped Noren. "I consider it a term of disgrace. Know what a loss it means? She was worth at least Rs. 3000|-. There ain't 4 such pedigreed dogs in the country. The litter alone would have fetched Rs. 2000|- a year, let alone medals and prizes."

Ram paid no heed to that. As he rose to go he asked, "Could I have the money today?"

"Whatever for?"

"Forgotten already? Didn't you want a strike in your jute mill?".

"For how long?"

"A month".

"Make it three months. They will anyway haggle a month's pay at the end. Will a hundred do?"

"Well, er, how can I manage....."

"Wouldn't a hundred rupees a day do?" asked irate Noren.

"My thousand and Rahman's 500 ?"

"I will deduct the price of that dog from your share. You brought that dog-stealing president to this house". Noren's brows were knit.

"You are lucky to have got off with a diseased cur. No local leader would stir an inch for less than Rs. 2000|- chips.

Noren enquired, "Will everything be O. K.?"

"Yes, If you pay cash"'.

Everything was planned. Work was slack. The labour was restive for a raise. A 12-week strike meant saving 2 months' wages even after paying a month's.

Ram Talukdar shook hands with Noren as he left, "Au revoir, Comrade".

"Workers of the world must unite", replied Noren with glee.

Rendered into English by Dr. Amritamoy Mukherjee.

HEIR

(Continued from Page 64)

platform on the Machada Local line. He did not seem to hear me. Once more I asked, "Have you any amazing Jolpan?"

"Yes." Roy seemed to hear.

He opened the tattered suitcase and took out a packet. I put a couple of pice into his hand.

"Don't you recognise me, Roy Mahasaya?"

Roy's eyes did not change nor did he blink. I stared at him too. Something about him seemed unnatural in the stillness of the platform background. He was mumbling something. The look in his eyes was aimless, wild.

Roy turned his eyes in another direction and demanded, "Do you know a good lawyer? A good lawyer?"

Without waiting for an answer he set off in the opposite direction. And then it happened.

Men with lanterns and lathis appeared. "Here he is!" one of them called, "Uncle is here."

"I've told you again and again,"' another spoke up, "to keep him chained. Why don't you listen to me?"

When I got on the Calcutta-bound train I took the Jolpan out of my pocket. I had not remembered it until then. It was wrapped in newspaper. There was no sal leaf inside. And when I opened it out, I found to my surprise, nothing. There were no peanuts, no fried dhal, no stick smeared with spice. A little dust and a few pebbles! That was all.

An amazing Jolpan!

As I looked at them the dust and pebbles seemed to me to be the past, present and future of the life of Ganga Govind Roy.

(Translated from the Bengali by Lila Ray and Ajit Mukherjee)

TAJ-MAHAL

(Continued from Page 47)

execrable and all-powerful fate overwhelmed and enervated the old man completely. ... He felt as helpless as a worm in a nest of hungry birds, and stood crushed before the enormity of the odds he was up against.

"Please, hujoor", he could no longer shut his eyes to the sinister forebodings of the inevitable and impending catastrophe, and asked with tears in his voice, "is there the least hope of her ever coming round....the slenderest....the remotest ?"

Words of false hope or hollow consolation stuck in my throat.

"None at all, I'm afraid," I replied truthfully, though bluntly.

With his head sunk low on his breast, the old man stood without a word, bowing meekly to the Will that be.

Next morning there was no sign of man and wife visible under the tree ... They had left during the night.

* * * *

It was some days later that I saw the old man again in the heart of a vast, open field. On this occasion too, as on the first, I was returning home from a visit to my private patients.

It was then midday, and the blazing furnace in the cloudless sky was raining liquid fire on the earth below.

Seated on his haunches on the ground in the scorching rays of the burning sun, the man, as I found him, was engaged in doing something with his hands ... Lest he should be badly stranded in this God-forsaken infurno with the dying Begum on his hands, I was curious to learn the exact nature of his occupation.

I went up to him.

The poor wretch was deeply engrossed in raising some sort of a mean and humble structure with broken bricks and clay for mortar, and completely oblivious of what was going on around him.

"What's it you are about, my man?" I broke in on him and enquired politely.

The man was instantly on his legs, bowing low to me respectfully.

"Building a tomb on my Begum's grave,," he informed me gravely with alacrity.

"What, your Begum's grave!" I was rather taken aback, and repeated after him lamely.

Apparently I had trodden on his toes.

"Yes, my lord". ... He was calm and composed as ever.

Rude reality struck me dumb.

After a few moments, more to change the sore topic of conversation and to end the awkward silence following, I asked him where and how he lived.

"I live on alms in the outskirts of the city."

"But you don't seem to be a familiar figure to me.....What, by the way, is your name?"

"I am generally known as Faquir Shah Jehan", he replied innocently.

"FAQUIR SHAH JEHAN !....Goodness gracious !"

I was stunned.

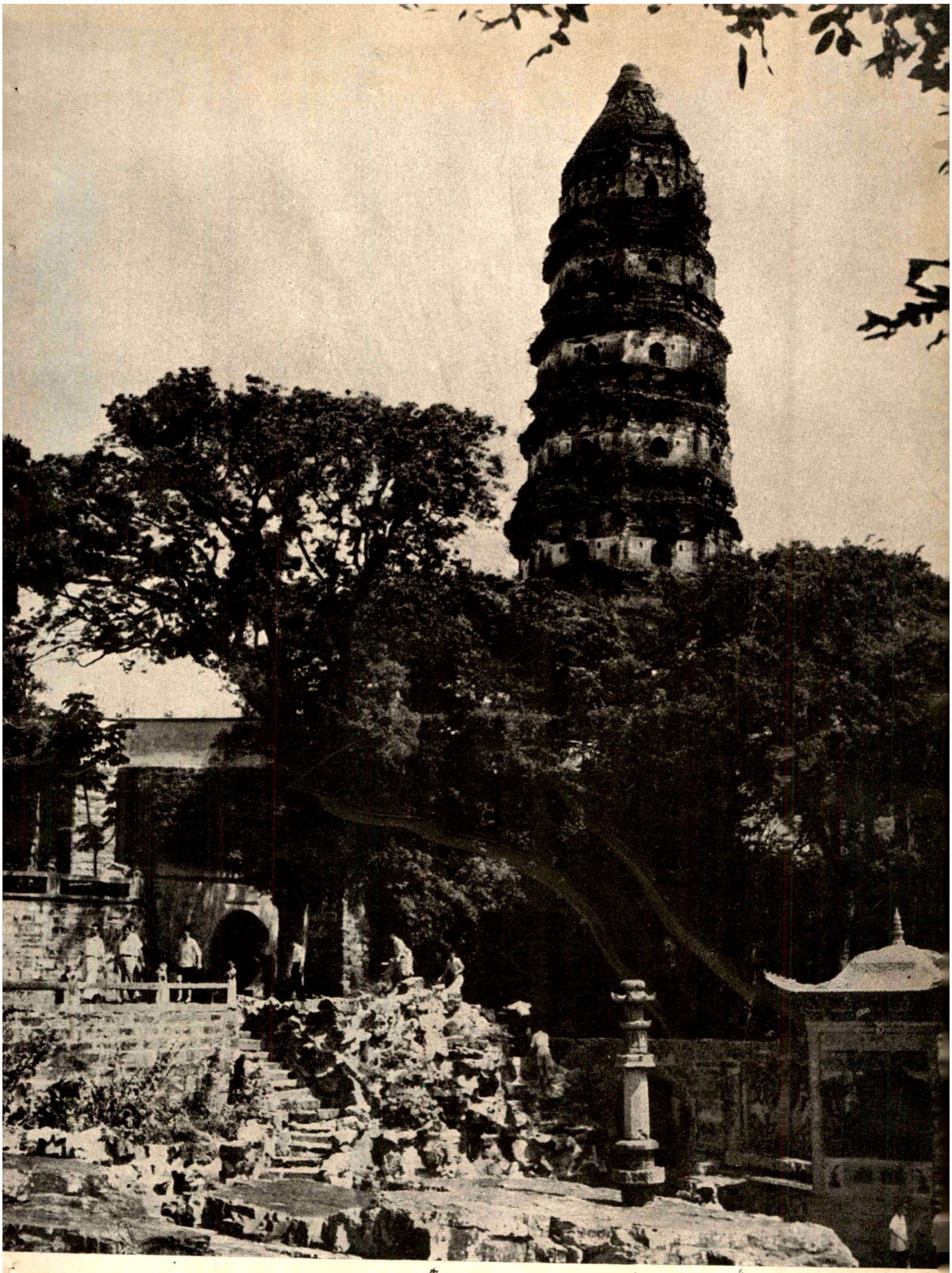
Rendered into English by Phani Bhusan Maitro

Know Thy Neighbour :

Japan

Located in Nikko, one of the most scenic spots in Japan, is this beautiful bridge known as "God's Bridge," over which no one is allowed to walk.

Pan-Asia Photo



Know Thy Neighbour :

China

Huchia Pagoda in Soochow, Kiangsu Province. Built at the end of Five Dynasties, it has a history of more than one thousand years.

Pan-Asia Photo

Know Thy Neighbour :

Burma

A huge stone statue of lion keeps vigil at the entrance of the Shwe Dagon pagoda, one of the historic structures of Buddhist Burma.

Pan-Asia Photo

Know Thy Neighbour :

Thailand

A weather-beaten statue of meditating Buddha in the ruins of Ayuthya, old capital of Thailand (1349-1767) when the city was destroyed by the Burmese.

Pan-Asia Photo

Know Thy Neighbour :

Ceylon

Kandy, capital of Ceylon during 16th Century is now a summer resort. In the centre is the famous temple of the Tooth, where a tooth of Buddha is housed in reverence.

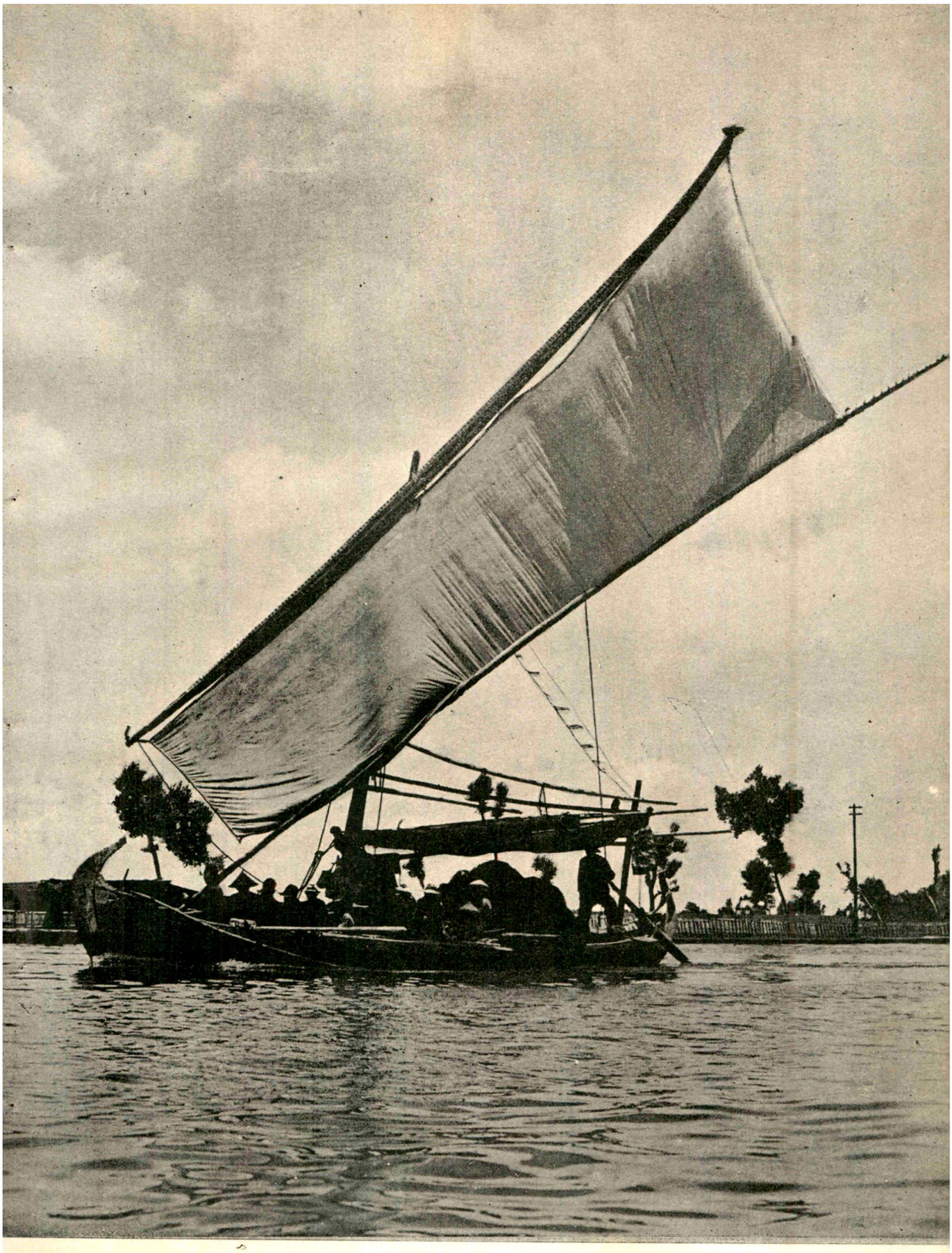
Pan-Asia Photo

Know Thy Neighbour :

Singapore

Singapore waterfront showing a group of native Sampans in the foreground and ocean-going freighters and liners in the background.

Pan-Asia Photo



Know Thy Neighbour :

Indonesia

Indonesian fishing boat adds to the beauty of the old Djakarta harbour which is a centre of fishing people operating in the Java sea.

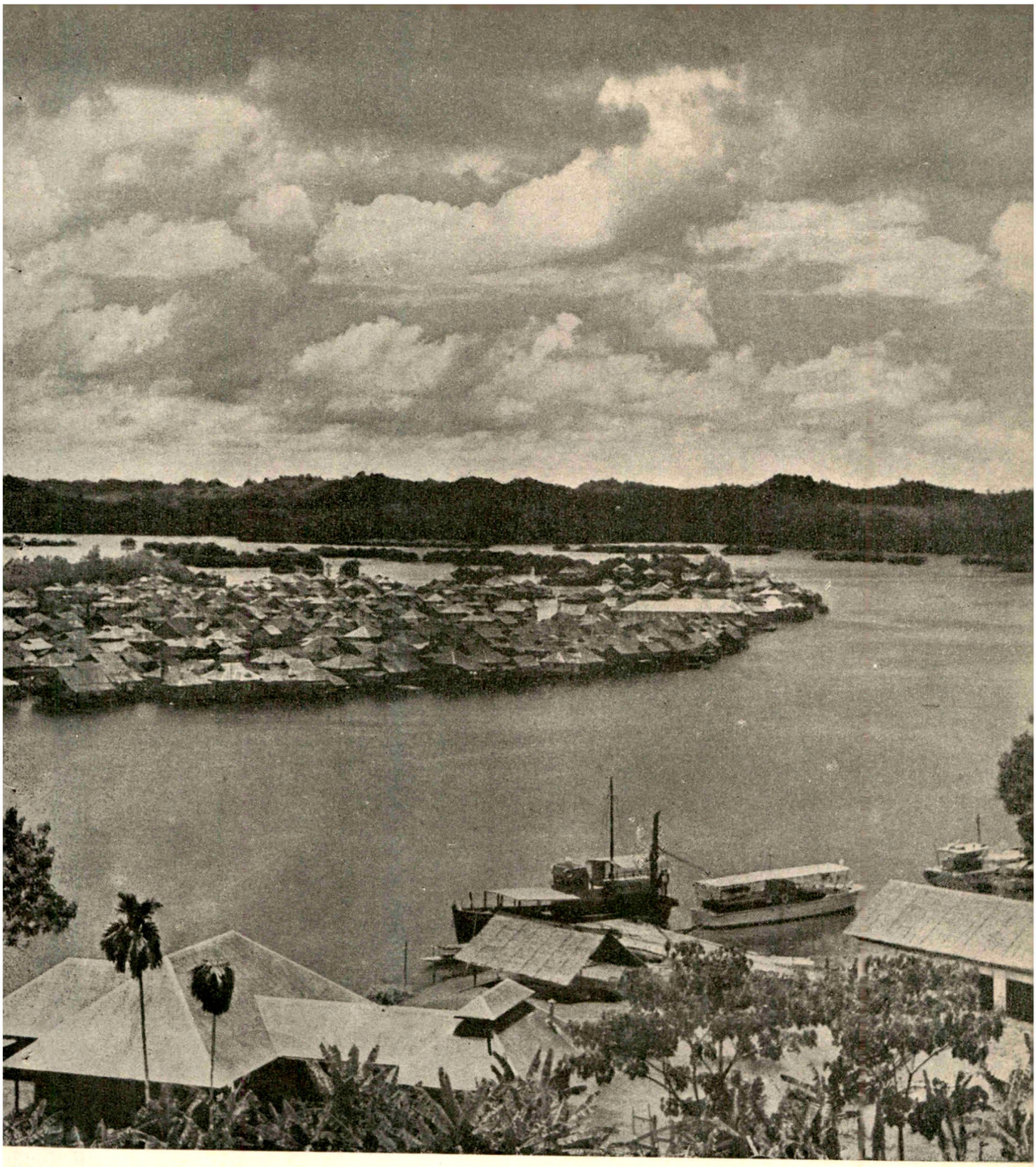
Pan-Asia Photo

Know Thy Neighbour :

Bali

Native Bali women carry cc-coaunt shells on their heads to the market place in the scenic and peaceful countryside.

Pan-Asia Photo

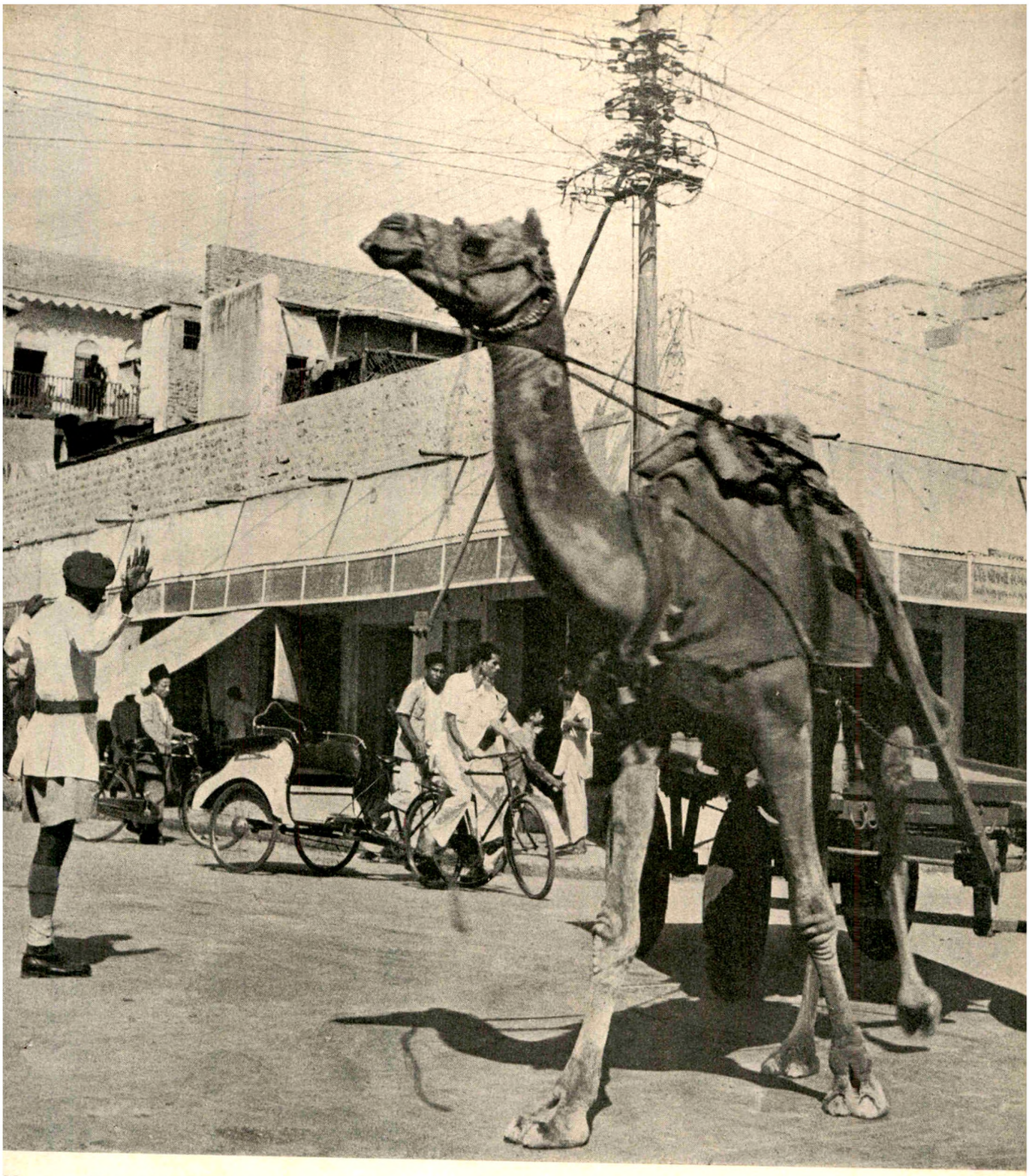


Know Thy Neighbour :

Borneo

A village on Stilts : Thatched huts of the natives of Borneo form a village on Stilts in the river flowing through the country. People from other lands live on the bank.

Pan-Asia Photo



Know Thy Neighbour :

Pakistan

City of Karachi, the Capital of Pakistan. A camel cart in the foreground which together with tri-cycles is an important means of transport.

Pan-Asia Photo

Know Thy Neighbour :

Cambodia

Floating abode is a typical scene not only in Cambodia but in other S-E. Asian countries. Many Cambodians live and earn their living aboard these boats.

Pan-Asia Photo

Know Thy Neighbour :

Hongkong

The Tiger Pagoda is a famous landmark of Hongkong. It is a 7-storey building, painted in white. Across the harbour, Kowloon and some distant hills are seen.

Pan-Asia Photo

THE INCREDIBLE INK

A thrilling mystery story,—how a drop of ink provided a clue to the discovery of the murderer !

By HOWARD BROWNE

COLONEL Marcus B. O'Connell jabbed a button on the edge of his desk. A moment later the door opened and the office boy looked in.

"See if Peddie has come in," O'Connell directed.

The boy said, "He's here, sir. At his desk."

"Tell him I want him."

"Yes, sir." The boy eyed O'Connell's feminine visitor approvingly, then disappeared.

Through the thin walls of the private office came the steady clatter of the Tinsley Department Store's credit department. Typewriters staccatoed like a stick against a picket fence, pneumatic tubes hissed and clicked, telephone bells jangled continuously. It was the Colonel's duty, as Credit Manager, to keep that clatter at a steady tempo each weekday from nine until five-thirty.

The Colonel eyed his visitor thoughtfully through the lenses of the blackribboned pince-nez that straddled his long, bony face.

"Peddie's our skip-tracer," he explained. "A little, meek, mild-mannered man whom no one ever gives a second glance. But he's clever, Eve. Cleared up a couple of murders for the police, and recovered a very valuable diamond belonging to the store. He's qualified to handle this problem of yours."

His visitor, a slender, very pretty young woman, shifted nervously in her chair and smoothed the folds of her street dress over lovely knees.

She said, "I certainly hope you know what you're doing, Marc. If what I've told you ever gets out.....Well, it might lead to something that could ruin father."

The Colonel silenced her with a wave of his hand. "Now you listen to me, Eve Logan," he said, with affectionate rudeness. "I've known your dad since we were officers together in France. And I've known you for twenty-two years—in fact, since the day I held you on my lap for two minutes and had to borrow a pair of your father's trousers while mine dried ! Do you think I'd chance anything that might hurt either of you ?

"When Wilbur Peddie comes in here, I want you to tell him exactly what you've told me. If that man can be found, Peddie'll find him. That's a skip-tracer's business, Eve. And you can trust him as you've trusted me. I'll stake—"

A hesitant knock at the door interrupted O'Connell.

"Come in," he called.

The door was cautiously opened, revealing a small, middle-aged man in a neatly pressed suit of blue serge. He had thin, graying brown hair and completely common-place features Rimless glasses shielded faded blue eyes. In one hand he clutched an old-fashioned black derby hat.

Eve Logan was conscious of a sharp pang of disappointment. Certainly there was nothing in the appearance of this man to inspire confidence !

"Well, don't just stand there, Peddie," O'Connell said brusquely to his subordinate "Shut the door and come over here. I want you to meet Eve Logan, John Draper Logan's daughter."

The little man approached her, bowed with shy courtliness and said, "How do you do, Miss Logan ?"

The Colonel pointed to a chair. "Sit down,

Peddie. Miss Logan has come to me for help. Her problem turns out to be one that will require your type of service. I needn't warn you, of course, that all this is highly confidential, since you know who John Logan is."

Wilbur knew. Logan was wealthy and socially prominent; he was his party's nominee for governor in the coming election.

The skip-tracer sat down on the edge of the designated chair and placed his derby carefully on his lap.

"Yes, sir," he said quietly.

O'Connell nodded to the girl. "Go ahead and tell him, Eve. Exactly as you told it to me."

Eve Logan seemed uncertain as to just how to begin the second account. She bridged the silence by tucking tendrils of her soft blonde hair, worn in a long bob, behind her ears; then took a cigarette from her bag and accepted O'Connell's proffered light.

She lifted her eyes to meet Wilbur's, then. "I can't tell you much," she began slowly. "You see, I know so little. Just enough to prove—it concerns father. He's in some sort of trouble, I think. Last evening, while I was upstairs, dressing, father had a visitor. A man. They were in the library for almost an hour. I had just come out of my room and was at the head of the stairs when the library door slammed open and the man came out."

Eve heard him clearly: I'll give you 24 hours to make up your mind.....after that....."

She paused to take a deep draught at her cigarette, exhaled, and dropped the butt into an ashtray. The two men watched her, their faces intent.

"He stopped in the lower hall," she continued evenly, "to take his hat and top-coat from the closet. I saw him clearly then. Just seeing such a man in our house scared me. He looked so awful. Like something from under a stone. His face was thin and mean and the colour of ashes.

"Father remained standing in the library doorway, watching him. I could see that he was very angry. He seemed almost ill—sick with rage and—fear. I never before saw him look afraid.

"The man took his time about getting into his coat and hat. I could see his deliberateness was meant to be insolent. Then he said, 'I'll give you twenty-four hours to make up your mind, Logan. After that, Bonelli will get his chance at it. You know what that will mean to you.' "

Wilbur said, "Pardon me, Miss Logan. You are sure he said Bonelli ?"

She nodded soberly, "Yes; I heard him clearly."

Does the name mean anything to you ?"

Eve Logan took a deep breath. "I read the papers, of course. He's some sort of gangster, isn't he ? Father said once that if he were to go into politics it would be to rid the state of men like Bonelli."

Peddie drummed his fingers softly on the chair-arm. He said, "Did you say anything to your father about his visitor and what you had overheard ?"

"Oh, no !" There was quick alarm in her voice. "He would have refused to explain, and would only have been upset to learn that I knew about the incident. He mustn't find out I have talked to you and Colonel O'Connell."

Wilbur nodded. "Of course....What happened next, Miss Logan ?"

"When the man had gone," Eve Logan said, "I tiptoed back to my room to think things over. I realized father was in serious trouble of some

side street off Atlantic Road. He turned up the collar of his suit coat against the thin, penetrating rain that had begun to fall two hours before, and walked rapidly to the night club.

Within, he politely refused the head waiter's suggestion of a table and moved directly to the dimly lighted bar.

One end of the mahogany counter was free of customers. Wilbur climbed aboard a vacant stool and ordered a glass of buttermilk from one of the barkeeps, a round-faced man in a tan mess jacket.

The little skip-tracer took several swallows of the beverage, put down the glass and said, "This is very good buttermilk."

The barman was not impressed. "So I hear," he said.

Wilbur looked around the large, shadowed room. A five-piece orchestra played softly while a few couples revolved about the postage stamp dance floor.

"Nice place you have here," he remarked conversationally.

"Yeah." The barman moved away.

Wilbur finished his drink leisurely and called the man back. "Another one, please," he said, pointing to the glass. While accepting his change, he said, idly: "I don't suppose Miss LaRue has come in yet?"

The round-faced attendant looked at him stonily. "I don't know any Miss LaRue."

Wilbur's expression held just the right amounts of surprise and bewilderment. "That's strange," he said. "I had the impression she was employed here as an entertainer of some sort. When she left my office yesterday she mentioned I could usually find her here around midnight."

The barman asked the logical question Wilbur had steered him toward. "What does she look like?"

"Her hair," Wilbur said promptly, "is red; it's the most striking thing about her. Tall, but of rather, er—buxom build. Has a trick of throwing her head back when she laughs."

The attendant put both hands on the bar and regarded Peddie with cold, level eyes. "Copper?"

"I beg parcon?"

"Skip it. What d'ya want of her?"

"Oh. My name is Larkin," Wilbur told him unblushingly. "I'm her attorney. At least, she retained me yesterday to....well, to get some information for her.

"Here—" He took an old-fashioned card case from his pocket, extracted a bit of paste-board and placed it in front of the man, "—this will identify me."

The barkeeps read the print slowly in the faint light. It told him that Mr. R. Larkin represented Woodbury, Selwyn, Todhunter and Craig—Attorneys-at-Law. A stately combination of names—and strictly a product of Wilbur's fertile imagination.

"I managed to obtain the facts she wanted," Wilbur continued. "And since she seemed to want them quickly, I came directly here."

"Why not call her at the hotel under the name she gave you?"

Wilbur's smile indicated embarrassment. "I've forgotten where she's staying. You see, all that information is at the office and I didn't take the time to return there to get it. Nothing else to do, I suppose, but wait here until she shows up."

He paused and added, "In some circumstances women are—ah, deceptive about their names."

The barman reflected about that. His eyes shifted to the half-empty buttermilk glass and back to the inoffensive-looking little man under the derby hat.

"I guess you're O.K., Mr. Larkin," he decided. "This business of throwing her head back when she laughs sounds like Peggy Mitchell. She's a redhead. Used to be a stripper in the show here before she took up with....some guy. LaRue's probably one of her professional names. Try her at the Chelshore Apartments."

R. Larkin picked up his glass and drained its contents. He put it back on the bar with something of a flourish, patted his lips with the handkerchief from his breast pocket, said, "Thank you, sir," to the barkeep, and left the club.

The Chelshore was a small apartment hotel on Grosnevor Street, five or six blocks from the Parrot Pub. Entering the small foyer, Wilbur scanned the row of bells until he found one under a card reading *Mitchell*. He held the button down for a polite interval, released it and waited.

A woman's voice came down the wire.

"Who is it?"

"My name," Wilbur told the tube, "is Larkin. I'd like to speak with you."

"What about?" the voice asked suspiciously.

"It's personal and confidential."

"That isn't telling me anything."

Peddie put his mouth closer to the tube. He said, "Madam, I'm an attorney. There are two people standing in this hall within range of my voice. If you want them to overhear—"

A gasp interrupted him. "You can come up," the voice said. The lock on the inner hall door buzzed immediately.

Apartment 2B was at the head of the first flight of stairs. Its door was slightly ajar—and on a chain. A young woman with a cloud of red hair and wearing a frilly negligee was peering through the opening.

Wilbur Peddie removed his derby and bowed with courtly dignity. The woman's eyes widened a bit.

"Good evening, Miss Mitchell. May I come in?"

Her sharp, rather hard blue eyes went over him carefully. The old guy certainly looked harmless, she decided. "O.K.," she said, and released the door chain.

The living-room was the drab image of that of every other third-rate apartment hotel. Through a half-open door, Wilbur caught a glimpse of an unmade bed, a litter of feminine wearing apparel, and filled ashtrays.

At the woman's invitation, Wilbur dropped into an overstuffed chair and placed his hat beside him on the threadbare rug. His hostess sank onto the davenport opposite him, pulled two well-filled silk stockings under her and reached for a cigarette box.

She opened the conversation. "What's on your

sort, but couldn't decide what should be done about it. Had I known his visitor's name—anything at all about him—I might have been able to work out some plan to get at the truth. And then, several hours later, I saw the man again."

"'Again ?' You mean he came back ?" Peddie asked.

The girl shook her head. "No, Mr. Peddie. The second meeting—if you can call it that—was accidental. Milly Beckett had called me earlier in the day, asking if Steve and I would go nightclubbing with Tod Renault and her that same evening. I got in touch with Steve—he's Stephan Kilmer, Judge Kilmer's son—and made the date. He picked me up about ten-thirty last night; we stopped off for Milly and Tod and started out.

"Along about one-thirty this morning, the four of us took a table at the Parrot Pub—a night club out on Atlantic Road. We were having something to eat and watching the floor show, when I happened to glance across to the bar."

She raised her eyes to those of the little skip-tracer. "It was he, Mr. Peddie. He was at the bar, talking to a stunning red-head in a green chiffon gown.

"I didn't know what to do. I wanted to get up and go over to him and say, 'Pardon me, I'm Eve Logan and I want to talk with you.' But I didn't have the courage. I just sat there, staring at him, trying to think of something.

"Very soon afterward, a waiter went up to the man and said something to him. The man gulped down his drink in a hurry, passed some remark to the girl and they practically ran out of the place."

"What," Wilbur asked quietly, "did you do, then ?"

"What *could* I do ?" Eve Logan asked helplessly. "I thought of following them, but I didn't know how to go about it. Later, I asked the bartender who the man with the red-haired girl had been. He just looked blank, and said, 'Sorry, lady, I don't pay attention to customers' names'. I would have asked the waiter who had spoken to him, but I wasn't sure which one it was. I couldn't very well be conspicuous about it, you know."

Colonel O'Connell removed his pince-nez and thoughtfully rubbed the bridge of his nose. The girl, as though to signify that she had finished her story, reached for a cigarette and the desk lighter.

"What's your opinion of all this, Peddie ?" asked the Colonel, after a moment.

The skip-tracer drew a speculative finger over the crown of his derby. "The simplest course," he remarked, "would be to ask Mr. Logan for details. There may be some perfectly harmless reason for what Miss Logan overheard."

Panic flooded the girl's face. "No ! You mustn't do that. Father'd only resent it. I'd much rather forget the matter than let him know what I'm doing. If this man could be located, so I could talk to him myself...." Her voice trailed off.

"Even if we manage to find him, Eve," O'Connell pointed out, "he might refuse to discuss anything with you."

"I don't think so," Eve said. "My impression was that he wanted money from father as payment for keeping something under cover. If it *is* some sort of blackmail, you can bet that father would never pay a cent—even if it meant the end of all he hopes for.

"But I'm not that proud, Marc. He's my father and I love him. Mother left me a lot of money, and I'd pay every dollar I own if it would save him from being hurt."

CHAPTER—II

COLONEL O'Connell smiled. "All right, young lady, we'll see what can be done....What about it, Peddie ? Any ideas on how to go about finding this mysterious visitor ?"

"I'd like to ask Miss Logan a few more questions," Wilbur said.

The girl nodded. "Of course."

"When you saw this man at the club," Wilbur said, "did you get the impression that he was well known there ? By the night club personnel, I mean."

The girl frowned thoughtfully. "N-o. Not especially. Although the waiter seemed to....They seemed to know the woman he was with, though."

Peddie showed his interest. "What gave you that impression ?"

"Why, you could *see* it. The barkeeps exchanged conversation with her in free moments; you know they don't usually talk to customers, particularly to women customers, unless they know them. The manager nodded familiarly to her as she left; several of the customers greeted her."

"I see." Wilbur looked down at the hat he was slowly revolving. "How would you describe her ?"

"First of all, her hair is red—a rather striking red. She's an inch or two taller than I. Her figure is....well, curvaceous would fit. I wouldn't guess she was a person of any upbringing; she laughed a lot—loudly, with her head back."

"Would you say she was young ?"

"Ye-s. I think so. At least, in years."

Wilbur Peddie understood what she meant by that.

The middle-aged little man rose from his chair. "I'll see what I can do, Miss Logan. If I succeed in learning the man's identity, how shall I get the information to you ?"

"You can make your report to me, Peddie," O'Connell interjected. "I'll see that it reaches Miss Logan."

The girl tamped out her cigarette and stood up.

"No, Marc. You've already done enough," She scribbled a brief notation on a card from her purse and handed it to Wilbur. "You can reach me at this number. If I go out, I'll leave word when to expect me. Call the moment you have information—regardless of the hour."

No one could ever pass the Parrot night club without realizing it was there. A huge outline of a parrot in brilliant green neon above a brightly lighted marquee commanded attention.

Shortly after midnight, Wilbur Peddie found parking space for his secondhand Chevrolet in a

mind, Mister ?" Her eyes and expression were openly hostile, ineffectively masking alarm.

Wilbur smiled reassuringly. "The name is LarkinR. Larkin. You are Peggy Mitchell ?"

"What about it ?" she responded, harshly.

Wilbur leaned forward. "Please understand me, Miss Mitchell. I'm here to help you. A very close friend of yours—a man—is going to find himself in trouble. The client I represent has every reason to believe that you know all the facts.

"Now, we want to know if you are willing to come in on our side. My client is ready to make it worth your while, lavishly."

While Peddie was speaking, the colour had slowly drained from the girl's rather plump face, leaving two rouge spots standing out grotesquely. She wet her lips, said, "Who do you mean ? What friend of mine ?"

Wilbur patiently shook his head. "Please, Miss Mitchell, I'm not here to do any fencing. You know the man I mean. And I know that you know. What I want is the complete story. But I am not going to give you a single cue. To do so would give you a lead on what we already know. In that way you might leave out part of the story on the assumption that it wouldn't aid us. We must have all the facts."

"A very close friend of yours.....a man .....is going to find himself in trouble".

She regarded him steadily, her eyes narrowed in appraisal. "If you mean that Kenyon rap," she said slowly, "you're wasting your time. Frank had nothing to do with it. The Grand Jury refused to indica, uh—him."

Again the little skip-tracer shook his head. "I'm not talking about the Kenyon case. Try again."

CHAPTER—III

PEGGY Mitchell wriggled into a more comfortable position on the couch, the movement causing her negligee to gap widely. Wilbur, a confirmed bachelor, looked hastily down at his hands.

"Look, Mister," Peggy Mitchell said, "I really don't know who you're talking about, see ? Give me the name of someone mixed up in the case you mean. I'm willing to pick up some money any old time, but I want to know what this is all about."

Wilbur hesitated. He had sought out this girl on the slender chance that she might drop a clue to the identity of John Logan's visitor. It was quite possible that the man had told Peggy Mitchell nothing of his activities.

"I've told you all I should," he said.

The girl started to say something, then stopped. A scowl twisted her face and her feet plunked to the floor.

"Wait a minute, you !" she snapped. "What *is* this ? You come busting in here, give me a name I never heard before, shoot me a line that's just a bunch of words; then expect me to open up with everything I know.

"Now, you'll either come out from behind your tree, or by God you'll get out of here ! Make up your mind—and fast !"

"You," Wilbur said stiffly, "are making a mistake."

"I've made 'em before ! So how about it ?"

"No."

"Then—beat it !"

"Certainly." Peddie picked up his hat, sighed, and got to his feet. "I'm sorry, Miss Mitchell, that

you refuse to see things my way. A lovely young woman, such as you, has no place in prison, and—"

"Scram !" She was standing now, pointing imperiously.

Wilbur shrugged, said no more. He wheeled and strode with dignity to the apartment door.

A phone booth in the lobby caught his eye. He looked up a number, entered, deposited a coin and dialed.

A man's voice said, *"Daily Record."*

"City desk," Wilbur requested.

Click-click. "City; Burke speaking."

Wilbur said, 'I should like some information, Mr. Burke."

"All right."

"I'd like to find out," Wilbur said, "about a case involving someone named Kenyon in which the Grand Jury refused to indict. I believe one of the principals was a Peggy Mitchell."

"Hold on a minute."

It was nearly three minutes before the unseen Mr. Burke came back on the wire. He said, "I think I have what you want. Who are you ?"

"My name is Dorset," Wilbur replied without hesitation. "You know, the private investigator," he added persuasively.

"What's your interest in the case ?"

"I'm not at liberty to tell you that, just now." There was deep regret in Wilbur's tone.

"If there's a story in it," Burke said, "we want it."

"I think I can promise that."

"Well, don't forget it if you ever want any more help. All right, here are the facts : Last fall, Robert Kenyon, only son of Forrest Kenyon, the wholesale grocer, got mixed up with an entertainer in one of the local hot spots. He put her up in a swank apartment over on Murray Hill, spent a lot of dough on her. A couple months later, some fast-talking guy called on Bob's dad, claimed to be the girl's husband and told the old man he wanted twenty grand or he'd sue the kid for alienation of affections, and publicize the whole mess.

"Maybe you don't know it, but Forrest Kenyon is a mean proposition to fool around with. Anyway, he told this guy to come back in a few days and he'd pay the bill. When the guy does come back, the old man hands him the twenty G's in marked bills, touches a buzzer, and the cops walk in and collar the guy.

"Well, it looks open and shut. They haul the guy and the gal before the Grand Jury, but for some reason no one can dope out, there's no true bill voted. That's all."

Wilbur said, "Do you have the names and addresses of the man and woman ?"

"Sure. The gal was Lois Mitchell, 1817 Sheridan Drive—that's on Murray Hill; the guy's name was Frank Lauth, 4712 Wilmot Avenue."

The skip-tracer wrote the information on the back of an envelope, thanked the newspaper man, and replaced the receiver.

The Wilmot Avenue address proved to be a four-story walk-up just around the corner from a bus line. Wilbur parked his car and entered the foyer.

There was no lock on the inner door. He debated on ringing the bell under Lauth's name, decided against it; and softly mounted the stairs to the third floor.

Outside Lauth's door, he hesitated. For a moment he thought he had caught the murmur of voices from beyond the panels. He was almost sure that Lauth and John Logan's visitor were one and

For a moment Wilbur thought he had caught the murmur of voices from behind the panels.

the same. Still, it would be better to make certain.

He rapped gently on the wood. There were sounds of feet, and a moment later the door swung back.

A short, stocky man with buck teeth and cold, unfriendly eyes stood in the opening. "Well, I'll be damned ! If it ain't our old friend, Wilbur Peddie !" the man cried.

There was a long moment of silence, broken when a voice from behind the man in the doorway said, "Who is it, Kirby ?"

Kirby turned his head. "It's papa's little helper again, Lieutenant ! Your pal, Wilbur Peddie."

"The devil !" A tall, capable-appearing man, along whose narrow face a thin white scar stretched from the corner of one eye almost to his chin, came up beside Kirby.

He said, "I'd like to know what it is that guides you to these things, Peddie. The first time it was an accident; the second, a coincidence. *This* makes it a habit ! What are you doing here, anyway ?"

Wilbur had recovered from the initial shock of finding the two members of the Homicide Department in Lauth's apartment.

"I," he explained glibly, "am looking for a Mr. Mooney."

Kirby eyed him skeptically. "Don't tell us, Wilbur, that you do skip-tracing *at one o'clock in the morning.*"

Wilbur Peddie met the officer's cold eyes with no hint of perturbation. "Only when necessary," he

explained calmly. "It seems that Mr.—er—Mooney is preparing to move again, and I wanted to contact him first. Is he in ?"

The two men from Homicide exchanged glances.

"No," Barton said. "Matter of fact, no one named Mooney lives here."

There followed a brief silence. The little skip-tracer put his derby back on his head, said, "If you will excuse me, I'll be getting on," and turned to go.

"Wait a minute, Peddie," Barton said.

Wilbur turned back. "Yes, sir ?"

"Come in here for a moment. Maybe you can help us."

Wilbur Peddie took a deep breath. He had been afraid of that. There could be only one reason for these two men to be in Lauth's apartment.

Obediently, he followed Barton and Kirby into a rather small living-room. Seated on the couch, near the windows, was the fourth occupant of the room.

Her face pale but composed, Eve Logan met Wilbur's astonished gaze with faintly quizzical eyes!

Barton said, "Sit down, Mr. Peddie. We've been here only a few minutes—that is, Kirby and I have. This young lady arrived some time before us. We were just preparing to question her."

Wilbur appeared mildly interested. "Question her?" He repeated vaguely, as he dropped into a chair.

"That's right. About the death of Frank Lauth!"

" 'Death' !" The little man's face paled noticeably. "Good Heavens, Lieutenant; not *another* murder ?"

The officer nodded grimly. "Uh-huh. And this is one time murder meets my approval. Frank Lauth was a rat—the blackmailing species. Earlier tonight, we received a tip that he was mixed up in the killing of a man named Burke a few days ago. Burke had a long record—burglary, mostly—and at the time of his death was wanted for looting the home of a former District Attorney named Rudmire, who retired from office ten or fifteen years ago."

"I see," said Wilbur, who didn't see at all.

"Anyway," Barton resumed, "Sergeant Kirby and I came here to talk to Lauth. We came up without being announced, pushed open the door and walked in. And here was this young lady standing in the middle of the living-room."

A door in the opposite wall opened, and three men came out of an inner room.

One of them, a chunky, bald man in a baggy gray suit, put the bag he was carrying on an end table and mopped his forehead with a soiled handkerchief.

"That paper-knife did it, Lieutenant," he growled. "Got the jugular neat as you please."

"How long ago?" Barton asked.

"Not over two hours; maybe half an hour."

"I expected that....Any prints, Joe ?" Barton asked of one of the others.

"None on the knife. A lot of Lauth's on nearly everything in the room."

"Get your pictures, Paul?" Barton said to the third.

"Yeah."

The man in the gray suit said, "They'll be out for him pretty soon. I called on the desk phone in there."

Barton nodded. "O.K., boys; you can go ahead."

After the three filed out, Barton drew a chair into position directly in front of Eve Logan, and sat down.

"Now, Miss," he said, "I'd like answers to a few questions. To begin with, suppose we have your name."

"Of course. I'm Eve Logan, and my address is 1217 Milldale."

"All right. Now, if you—"

Barton stopped there, his mouth open. "Wait a minute ! You said, *Eve* Logan ?"

"Yes, Lieutenant."

Barton appeared definitely uncomfortable. He said gruffly, "I *thought* I'd seen you before. Aren't you John Draper Logan's girl ?"

"Yes, Lieutenant."

"Well, now." Barton seemed at a loss for words. "I don't understand this, Miss Logan. Your being mixed up with a man like Lauth—and a murder. How come ?"

Eve Logan wondered with a sinking feeling how on earth she could explain having come to this apartment without bringing her father's name into the case. It could be dynamite in his political campaign. The knots in her stomach tightened as she realized that anyway there'd be headlines; Gubernatorial Candidate's Daughter Questioned in Murder Case.

CHAPTER—IV

JOHN LOGAN'S daughter took a cigarette from her handbag and accepted the light proffered by the police officer.

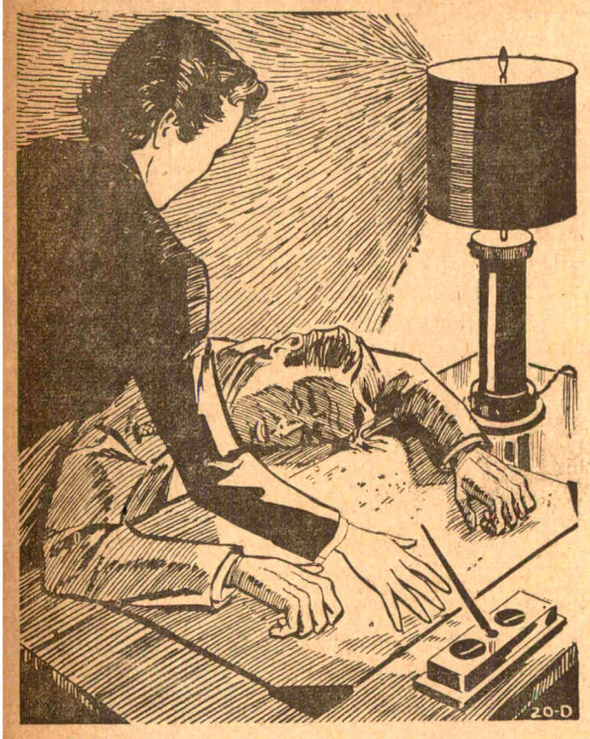
Eve said, "I assure you, Lieutenant, that I had nothing whatever to do with this man's — Mr. Lauth's death. He was just as you saw him when I arrived."

Barton said casually, "How long had you been here before Kirby and I came in, Miss Logan ?"

"Not more than two or three minutes."

"Since you say he was dead when you got here, how were you able to get in?"

Her reply to this question came smoothly, without hesitation. "When there was no answer to my ring from downstairs, I decided the bell was out of order. Since Mr. Lauth was expecting me, I was confident he was in. I came up, found the apartment door slightly ajar and the living room light burning."



Lauth was slumped across his desk, arms outthrust. A knife protruded from his neck.

I knocked once or twice, then getting no response, I pushed open the door and walked in."

Her voice faltered slightly, and she stopped there.

"Go on," Barton prompted softly.

She took a long pull at her cigarette. "The study door was open, I could see him clearly from this room. He was slumped across his desk, his arms outthrust. His face was turned toward the door, the knife protruding from his throat. I knew at once that he was dead".

She shuddered violently, then, and bowed her head. The rays from a floor lamp behind the couch made an aura of light about her blonde head.

"And then?" Barton prodded.

She made a helpless gesture. "I was too shocked to do anything. My first reaction was to turn and run — to get away from so horrible a sight. His eyes were open and staring right at me and —" She could go no further.

"What did you do, then?"

"Nothing. The next thing I knew, you and the other officer were in the room."

Peddie noted that Barton did not press the girl for an explanation of *why* she had come to see Lauth. Gallantry? Or because Barton was mindful of John Logan's political position?

Barton stood up. "All right. I'm going to have another look around Lauth's study. Kirby will keep you company, Miss Logan. Come along, Wilbur."

The body of a man of perhaps forty lay sprawled across a wide topped desk in the centre of the room. The handle of a cheap, metal paper-knife stood out from his throat below a thin, vicious, gray-skinned face, the dark, sullen eyes set in a fixed stare.

There was a great deal of blood on the desk pad beneath the body. Wilbur shuddered and turned away.

"There it is, Peddie," Barton said, waving one arm in a broad sweep. "Frank Lauth had this coming to him for a long time. But the law says—Hey, watch where you're going! You'll step in that ink stain!"

Wilbur halted in mid-stride and looked down at an up-ended inkwell on the carpet. Some of the puddle of purple ink had soaked into the material.

"Knocked off the desk when Lauth fell forward." Barton explained. "He must have plumped over like a rocket to send it that far. And the inkwell must have been full, there's so much of the ink on the floor."

Peddie nodded appreciatively at the lieutenant's observations.

The mild-mannered little skip-tracer, hands clasped behind him, wandered thoughtfully about the room, his light blue eyes noting other details. He paused for a long moment at the room's single window, fingering the catch absently. Finally, he came back to the desk and, overcoming a visible reluctance, opened and closed the drawers, glancing hurriedly into each.

Barton, watching, smiled. He knew from experience how keen the mind behind that commonplace countenance.

"How about it Wilbur?" he asked.

Wilbur sighed. "It seems rather obvious. The man who murdered Lauth did not come here to kill him. He came to get something from Lauth; was prepared to pay for it. For some reason the two men quarrelled. The murderer struck Lauth down and began a search for what he had come to buy. He was interrupted; possibly by the arrival of Miss Logan. Anyway, he left by the window, descending the fire escape."

The lieutenant was staring at him, a strange expression on his face. He said, "Wait a minute, Peddie. Why do you say a *man* killed Lauth?"

"Is there any reason to think otherwise?"

Barton's shoulders lifted and fell. "That," he said, "depends on the answer Eve Logan gives me to a question. I'm going to ask it now."

They went back into the living-room.

The lieutenant straddled the chair in front of the girl. "Miss Logan, what time would you say it was when you arrived here?"

It was not the question Peddie had expected Barton to ask — not the first question he would have asked if he had been in the lieutenant's position.

Eve Logan thought for a moment. "Well, father got home around midnight. I went out immediately afterward. I came here by taxi; which means about twenty minutes ..... I'd say around twelve-thirty".

Barton pursed his lips. "All right. Now you say Lauth was dead when you came in. You say you remained in this room from the moment you arrived until Kirby and I showed up. Is that correct ?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you want to qualify that answer in any way?"

She met his eyes steadily. "Certainly not!"

Barton seemed suddenly very tired. He said, "When Lauth was stabbed, he fell across his desk, knocking an inkwell containing purple ink onto the carpet."

There were puzzled lines in the girl's forehead. She said, "Yes?" uncertainly.

The officer hesitated. "I shall ask you again, Miss Logan: Were you at any time, and for any reason, in Lauth's study tonight?"

Anger edged into her voice. "I've told you I was not!"

"Then," Barton snapped, suddenly savage, *"how did that purple ink get on the skirt of your coat ?"*

Eve Logan's eyes widened in abrupt horror and she glanced quickly down at the folds of her light spring coat. There, weak and washed-out appearing from the rain-dampened cloth, were several small but distinct splotches of purple ink!

Slowly she raised a stricken face to the waiting officer. "I — don't know," she whispered shakily. "It's — it's incredible! I wasn't in that room".

"Stop it!" Barton rasped. "You're lying and we both know it. I'll tell you what happened here tonight, Miss Logan.

"I can guess why you came here tonight. Blackmail was Lauth's business; and he knew how to get a hold on persons — particularly women who slipped up. He probably had something on you. You pleaded with him to give up his hold on you. Lauth refused; perhaps said something so insulting that you lost your temper. In desperation you grabbed his paper-knife and stabbed him. He was rising from his chair as you struck; when he slumped forward the ink-well upset and some of the flying drops fell on your coat.

"Then you started through his desk, hunting for the evidence you had come to get. But when the sergeant and I arrived, you were trapped. So you did the only thing possible: returned quickly to the living-room, then claimed you had arrived just ahead of us. But those ink-stains tripped you up".

His voice, harsh and compelling, softened abruptly. "It's no use, girl. You killed him. And he got only what he deserved. You may as well tell us about it. Under the circumstances no jury or court would convict you".

Peddie understood Barton better now. He spoke up. "It might be best, Miss Logan, if you didn't make any more statements until you have the advice of a lawyer."

Barton scowled at him.

Dazedly, Eve Logan shook her head. "But I didn't kill him," she said stubbornly.

Barton was on the point of replying when a knock sounded at the hall door. Two men in white came in, a stretcher between them.

Kirby jerked a thumb toward the study door and the pair went in. They came out almost immediately, the stretcher weighted under the sheet-covered figure of Frank Lauth.

After they had gone, Barton broke the silence. "You'll have to come along with us, Miss Logan. I suppose you'll want to get in touch with your father?"

"If you please, Lieutenant." The girl's voice was very low but perfectly controlled.

"Of course. You can call him from—uh—my office."

Wilbur Peddie cleared his throat. Barton's head came around quickly. He said, "Something, Wilbur?"

The others looked at the little man expectantly. Hope lightened the girl's eyes.

Wilbur said thoughtfully, "If I could have a glass of water ....."

Quick interest showed in Barton's expression. "What for, Peddie?"

The skip-tracer looked faintly surprised. "Why—to drink. I'm thirsty."

Barton flushed, scowled, said, "Try the kitchen", shortly, and pointed to one of the doors leading off the living room.

When Wilbur came back from the kitchen, the others were ready to leave. Eve Logan, a grimness about her mouth, was standing between the two officers. There was nothing of the fragile, helpless, bewildered child about her. She seemed, instead, self-possessed and resolute.

They went into the hall, waited until Kirby made sure the door's spring lock was in operation, and descended the stairs — all without a word being said.

As Eve Logan stepped into the back of the police car, Wilbur said, "Will you need me any more tonight, Mr. Barton?"

The lieutenant shook his head briefly, smiling at the word 'need.' "No, Peddie. I'm sorry you didn't get a chance to use your talents this time. But then not all murders are mysteries. Goodnight."

Wilbur doffed his hat to them as the car pulled away from the curb. The misting rain clouded his glasses so that he could not see their faces clearly.

"Goodnight", he said cheerfully, glad that Barton had not left a policeman to guard the murdered man's apartment.

CHAPTER—V

EXCEPT for a dim bulb on each landing, the rear stairway of 4712 Wilmot Avenue was in complete darkness. Wilbur Peddie paused on the third level, quite aware of the consequences of being discovered on some tenant's porch at two in the morning.

But he heard and saw nothing alarming; and seconds later he was opening the door into the kitchen of the late Frank Lauth.

He reset the bolt he had drawn while in the kitchen on the pretext of quenching his thirst, a few minutes earlier, then felt his way into the living-room.

Entering the study, he tiptoed across the room to draw the single window shade, then turned on the desk light.

The wide, ugly red stain still gleamed wetly under the soft yellow rays. The inkwell, black and squat, still lay on the taupe rug near the deep purple blotch of spilled ink.

He slid squeamishly into the dead man's chair and carefully drew open the desk's centre drawer. A heavy-caliber automatic pistol lay exposed there, with something efficiently ominous in its chill perfection.

Gingerly, Wilbur withdrew the gun and placed it on the desk. Removing his derby, he set it carefully over the weapon. Then he tackled the job of thoroughly examining every scrap of paper in the drawers.

He was in the act of combing through the bottom drawer, a few minutes later, when the interruption came.

"Get your hands up — quick!"

Wilbur's fingers came out of the drawer's interior as though its contents were white-hot.

A broad-bodied man in a gray trench-coat stood in the doorway. A soft-brimmed hat came well down over his dark-skinned, round face. Black, lusterless eyes were slitted in cold appraisal. A shiny revolver with a black tube fitted around its barrel was trained squarely on the skip-tracer.

Wilbur Peddie could feel a sudden dampness on the crawling skin of his forehead.

"Where," said trench-coat tonelessly, "is Lauth?"

And then, instantly, many things were clear to Wilbur Peddie,

He said, "He's out, Mr. Bonelli."

The man in the trench-coat did not change expression; but Wilbur caught the involuntary start.

"I don't know *you*," he said. The remark was a tacit admission of his own identity.

Wilbur said nothing.

"When will he—" Bonelli broke off sharply, with a hissing intake of breath. His eyes were fixed on the red stain in the centre of the desk blotter.

"It is not necesary," Wilbur said calmly, "to go through all this on my account."

The gun in Bonelli's hand did not waver. "Meaning what?"

Matters were clearing so rapidly for Wilbur that he quite forgot to exercise caution.

He said, "You had to come back. You didn't have time to finish your search the first time."

The man in the trench-coat came a few steps nearer the desk, his gun still covering the little skip-tracer. There was a puzzled expression around his dark eyes.

"You're doing a hell of a lot of talking, grandpa", he said mildly, "but it doesn't mean anything. Make it clear."

Wilbur Peddie said, "You were here earlier tonight, Mr. Bonelli. You had an appointment with Lauth, he was to sell you something that would enable you to keep from the governor's chair a man who hated you.

"But for some reason Lauth would not sell. You saw your only chance to stay in power slipping away. With Logan in office you were through.

"And so you murdered Lauth, Mr. Bonelli. Killed him with his own paper-knife. Then, while in the act of rifling his desk, you heard someone at the hall door.

"It could have been the police. You had to get away. The only avenue open was the fire-escape outside the window of this room. And that's the route you took.

"From some point you watched the police arrive. That told you Lauth's body had been found. When you saw them leave it, it seemed safe for you to come back and take up your search."

"Lauth knocked off!"

A grayish pallor had overspread Bonelli's face. He said hoarsely, "You're nuts! I didn't even know Lauth was dead."

Something glittering in the dark eyes suddenly awakened Wilbur Peddie to the danger of his own position. Certainly it was no aid to longevity to accuse an armed man of murder!

He reached an unsteady hand for his hat. "Then somebody else must have done it," he said weakly. "Now if you'll excuse me, I'll be getting along."

"Wait a minute, grandpa."

In one simultaneous motion Wilbur flipped aside his derby, picked up Lauth's gun and fired.....

The gun in Bonelli's hand came forward with determination.

"Yes, sir?" Wilbur's voice had developed a squeak.

"Where—" The threat in Bonelli's tone was as evident as a naked blade —" did you get all the dope about Logan's confession and my interest in it?"

"I—uh—" Wilbur could go no further.

"I'm sorry, grandpa." The regret in Bonelli's voice might have been sincere. "But you know things you shouldn't".

That which followed seemed mostly a series of blurs. Bonelli's gun hand lifted slighty, the trigger finger beginning to tighten. In one simultaneous movement, Wilbur Peddie flipped aside his derby, snatched up Lauth's gun and fired at the other's chest. The sound of exploding powder filled the room. Through a blue haze, Wilbur watched Bonelli topple forward, a neat blackened hole in the exact centre of his forehead.

Wilbur stood up slowly, swallowing mightily to keep his stomach under control. He reached for the

phone. used both hands to steady the receiver, said, "Police" with the second attempt; then he slumped forward in a dead faint.

There were, in addition to Wilbur Peddie, four men and a woman in the modernly furnished office of Malcolm Paine, the district attorney.

Paine, fleshy and florid-faced, with a frugal manner of speech, leaned back in his swivel chair and neatly displaced his cigar ash in a streamlined chrome ashtray at his elbow.

He said, "I'm satisfied. Bonelli killed Lauth; you killed Bonelli. Good work, Peddie. Both you and Miss Logan are at liberty to go. We'd like both of you to be at the inquests, however."

Lieutenant Barton cleared his throat uncomfortably. He said, "I'd like you to know, Miss Logan, that I'm both happy and relieved that things worked out this way. The police are just as happy to clear an innocent person of murder as to find a guilty one. I'm glad that this break came before your happening to be in the apartment got into the papers. Please understand that what I said when questioning you was necessary under the circumstances."

The girl smiled wearily. "You did your duty, of course." . . . .

John Draper Logan stood up abruptly and reached for his hat. A dark suit of excellent cut emphasized the military erectness of his bearing.

He said, "Since you've no objections, Paine, I'm going to take Eve home. She's had a trying time of it."

"Certainly," the district attorney said heartily. "I'll have one of the boys drive you there".

"That won't be necessary," Logan said. "My own car is waiting." He placed the Homburg on his closely-cropped iron-gray hair and turned to his daughter. "Come, Eve."

The girl rose from her chair but made no move to follow her father. Instead, she turned to the little skip-tracer.

"Mr. Peddie," she said.

Wilbur looked up. "Yes, Miss Logan ?"

"How will you get home?"

He looked at her, surprised. "My car is still parked over on Wilmot Avenue. I'll take a cab there, and drive home."

"Come home with us," the girl urged. "It's too late to go through all that. Besides, father and I haven't thanked you properly."

John Logan said, warmly, "By all means. We insist on it, Mr. Peddie."

"Well, I — I thank you," Wilbur said, and together the three of them walked out.

Sergeant Kirby watched the door close behind the two men and Eve Logan. Then he went over and sat down on the edge of Malcolm Paine's desk.

"There's just one thing I'd like an answer to," he said flatly.

Barton and the district attorney stared at him. Finally Paine said, "Well?"

"Look," Kirby said. "Bonelli goes to see Lauth. He can't get whatever it is he wants from the rat. So he knifes him. Right?"

"He seems to have admitted as much to Peddie," Barton said.

"Fine. Then the Logan dame shows up and scares Bonelli away before he can find what he wants. He takes a powder by way of the fire-escape; lays low until everybody leaves; then goes back, jimmies the front door and goes in — to find Peddie ahead of him. Peddie calls the turn on him; Bonelli admits he killed Lauth. then goes for his gun to erase Peddie. Right?"

The question was rhetorical, and drew no answer.

"Then," Kirby concluded, *"how did Eve Logan get purple ink on her coat?* And why was she there in the first place?"

Paine's florid cheeks darkened. "Don't be a damned fool, Kirby !" he snapped. "Could have got there a hundred ways. This case is closed; understand?"

Yeah," Kirby said, "yeah, I understand." But he wasn't satisfied. Intuition, shaped and sharpened by years of police work, told him that somebody could be getting away with murder.

CHAPTER—VI

THE Logan home was a square, three-storied residence of brown stone, set back among well-kept lawns. John Logan unlocked the front door and entered first.

"The servants are asleep," he explained, smiling. "Good thing, too; can't let them see the hours we keep !"

Eve shrugged out of her light coat and swung back the door of a hall closet.

"If you two will excuse me", she said, draping the garment about a hanger and thrusting it into place on the crowded rod, "I'm going to get some sleep. It isn't every night a gal gets herself accused of murder!"

Wilbur Peddie turned his derby self-consciously in his small hands. "You're sure I'm not putting you out?" he asked timidly.

The girl reached out impulsively and squeezed his fingers. "Of course not, Wilbur. You mustn't be so formal with us. What you have done for me tonight is something I can never make up to you. All I can say is. I'll love you forever !"

Before the astounded little man could realize what was happening, she had bent swiftly and kissed his cheek. Then she was gone, running lightly up the staircase to her room.

John Logan chuckled. "She means it too, Peddie .....Come along; we'll have a drink before I show you your room."

Still under the influence of his first such kiss in thirty years, Wilbur Peddie allowed himself to be led into a large low-ceilinged room, its walls lined with books. He dropped into a leather lounge chair, at Logan's invitation, and closed his eyes. For a moment he was conscious of being very tired.

Logan's voice roused him. "A drink, Mr. Peddie?"

Wilbur opened his eyes. "No, thank you".

Something was nagging at him from the back of his mind; something that had tried to come out into the open since Eve Logan had opened that hall closet .....

He stood up abruptly. "Excuse me for a moment sir," he said rapidly. "I forgot to put my hat away."

Logan, in the act of taking a squat bottle from a portable bar, looked up in mild surprise. Before he could offer comment, Wilbur, hat in hand, had disappeared into the hall.

When he returned, John Logan, in shirt sleeves and loosened collar, said, "Sit down, man, and relax. Sure you won't have a drink?"

Wilbur resumed his chair, shaking his head poli-

ely to the question. For a moment or two, both men vere silent.

At last the little skip-tracer shifted his position nd, as Logan glanced at him, said, "It's really none f my business. Mr. Logan...."

A tiny vertical line appeared between the other's yes. "Yes?" he prompted, wonderingly.

"Did you get back your confession," Wilbur sked clearly, *"after you killed Lauth ?"*

Deliberately, John Draper Logan bent forward o place his glass on the table. When he straighten-ed, there was no particular expression on his face. Except for a trace of heightened colour in his cheeks, he might not have heard the little man's words.

He said, "Do you realize what you're saying?"

There was regret in Wilbur Peddie's expression, ut nothing of indecision. "Yes, sir," he said simply.

A smile managed to find a hold on Logan's stiff ips. "I'd like to hear about it."

Wilbur nodded gravely. "I didn't know the truth, nyself," he admitted, "until just a moment ago. You ee, everything pointed to Bonelli as the killer except or one item which none of us could explain. And ince there seemed to be no explanation, I made the nistake of disregarding its importance."

"What item do you mean?"

"The ink stains on your daughter's coat."

Logan nodded. "Yes; Lieutenant Barton told me, t Paine's office, what those stains implied. But vhen your call came through, and we heard about our story later, nothing more was said about them".

"Can *you* account for them?" Peddie asked.

"No".

"Very well," Peddie said, "let's go back over the night's events.

"You were at Lauth's apartment shortly before midnight, having gone there to buy a confession of ome kind that implicated you in some way. Lauth efused to sell, and you killed him with the first veapon you could lay your hands on.

"It's my belief that you found the confession almost at once; for only two drawers of the desk had been ransacked, and no one interrupted you.

"With it in your possession, you returned home at once. Miss Logan, having located Lauth's address n some way, waited until you returned; then she went out on the same mission from which you had ust returned. Of course, she did not know you had been to see Lauth a few minutes earlier."

"You haven't given a thing to show I had been here," Logan observed mildly.

I'm coming to that".

Logan smiled. "Pardon me."

"When I heard Miss Logan's story," Wilbur continued, "and saw the ink on her coat, I reluctantly concluded that she had killed Lauth. Also, I realized she had failed to get the confession. The police would need it to show an adequate motive for her slaying of Lauth, I hoped, all during the time the two officers were there, that they would postpone an examination of the dead man's papers.

"When I saw they were ready to leave without going over Lauth's effects, I arranged to go back to hunt for the confession."

"Why?" Logan demanded bluntly.

"Because, guilty or not, your daughter did not deserve to suffer for Lauth's death", Wilbur said equably. "He was not a good man, Mr. Logan; the police admitted as much."

John Draper Logan could find no answer to that.

"When Bonelli surprised me," Peddie went on, "I immediately jumped to several obvious conclusions. Some were correct; but I went beyond the truth, nearly losing my life as a result . . . .

"With Bonelli dead, and with what purported to be an admission that he had killed Lauth, the police were satisfied. The case was closed. Everything dovetailed together perfectly."

John Logan reached for his glass and the decanter. "I'll say this for you. Peddie," he observed lightly, "you can certainly put together a convincing story."

Wilbur shook his head. "The stains on Miss Logan's coat had not been accounted for. Unconsciously, I suppose, I was still trying to find just where they fitted into the puzzle. A few minutes ago I found the answer."

"Well?"

"They came from your own coat!"

"What!"

"Yes. When Lauth's body upset that inkwell, several drops lodged on your topcoat. Because the material was dampened with rain, the ink did not dry.

"When you returned home, you hung the coat in the hall closet, *next to that of your daughter.*

"As a result, some of the ink was transferred to her coat. When Barton pointed out the marks, I wondered at their faintness, but reasoned the damp condition of the material had blurred the ink.

"It was not until I saw Miss Logan place her coat in the closet that I saw the light. When I put away my hat a moment ago, I examined your coat. The original stains were there."

John Draper Logan tossed up his hands.

"You're right, of course," he admitted. "Everything worked out exactly as you say. Although I

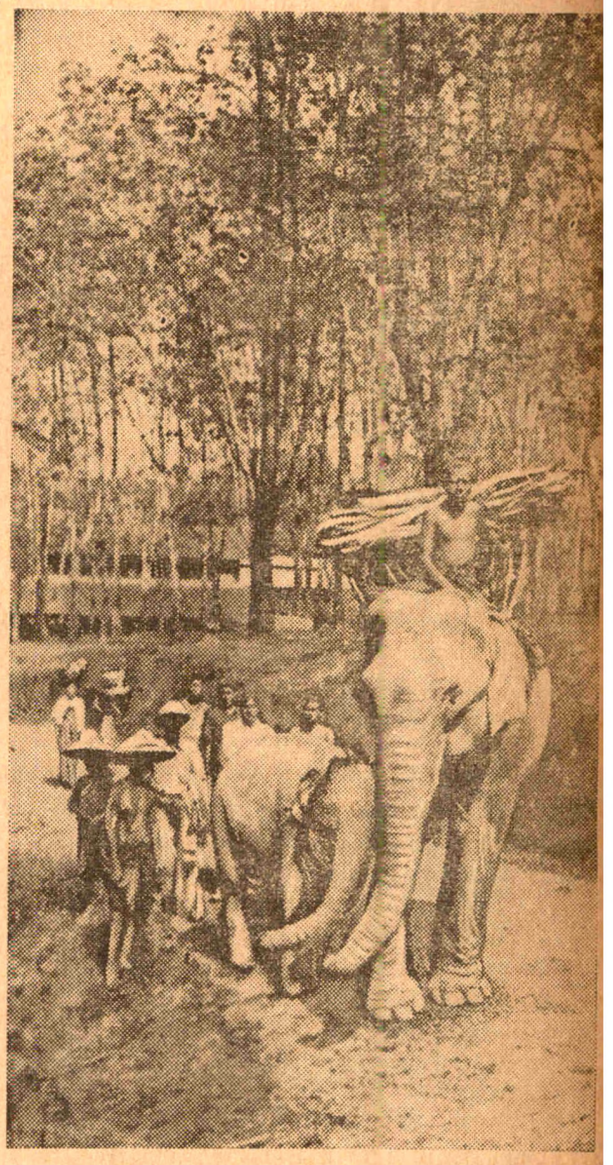
(Continued on Page 128)

A BOTANIST'S ADVENTURE IN SOUTH BURMA

By Dr. K. BISWAS

ONE day twenty-eight years ago my boss asked me, "Look here, Biswas, you should better come along to the Burma Cinchona Plantation. There you will learn what is real field Botany."

Passage was booked and one early morning of March, I embarked the Rangoon mail boat with heavy heart. She reached Rangoon in the forenoon after two and a half days. I stopped at Rangoon with my relation overnight and boarded the Mergui boat "s|s Sir Harvey Adamson." After twelve hours of pitching and rolling over rough sea the boat reached the town of Mergui. The steamer stopped at a distance as this portion of the back water of the sea was too shallow. A shampan, curiously shaped and manned by means of a couple of oars by a single person took us safely to the shore. It was an exciting experience this shampan trip as it was found to be very unstable, and though at every turn it was almost swept away by the rushing breakers, the tiny boat manoeuvred dexterously and managed to glide over the surfs. Thus dodging the waves in the shark infested sea, we reached the pretty Mergui jetty. Here I stopped for a couple of hours in the wooden rest house of the Cinchona Department and after lunch boarded the Cinchona boat. This country boat fitted with a small motor drove speedily along the meandering course of the narrow tidal muddy Tenasserim river. Thus passing through the picturesque forest clad low hills I reached in the late afternoon the flourishing township of Tenasserim situated on the bank of the river and inhabited by many rich rice merchants. The name of the town owes its origin to many a legend. There is a story that it is called after the name of a beautiful young Burmese married lady, who met a tragic death. The spot where she was buried is still marked by a monument of granite pillar, which is visited annually by the Burmese girls with offerings of flowers. In olden times Tenasserim used to serve as an important port of Burma and Siam for the Far East.



AN EXCITING EXPERIENCE

On reaching the Cinchona Plantation in the evening and after settling up the details, I left next morning with a party of ten sturdy Nepalis for exploring the unchartered forests. We had to cut our way with scraches all over our bodies through the cane and bamboo brakes forming a lower storey of almost impenetrable thorny thicket overtopped by the canopy of giant trees. I had one guard with a rifle and also my own gun and some ammunition. It was really a thrilling and exciting experience for me as I never, even in my imagination, pictured such a dense and luxuriant tropical vegetation and such a virgin rain-forest, infested with wild ele-

phants, rhinoceros, bisons, wild buffaloes, tigers, leopards, sloth bears, wild boars in hundreds, many types of snakes—cobras, king cobras, vipers, huge pythons—one of which was seen swallowing a calf and was hammered to death—the harmless sacred ant-eating tapirs, sombur, spotted deer, barking deer and many other animals. Once the manager was attacked by a 15 ft. long king cobra. The serpent which he noticed was rushing towards him at a lightning speed. Though frightened, with extra-ordinary presence of mind he opened out a lady's sunshade, which he was carrying in his hand. The snake stood up on its tail half inclined, hissing and foaming with rage and fully spreading out its hood. The deadly snake charged the manager, but fortunately the fang struck on the central knob of the umbrella. The hood pierced through it when the venomous snake was shot dead by the guard, who was accompanying the manager with a rifle.

VARIOUS BEAUTIFUL BIRDS

There were in the forests various types of beautiful birds including large and small hornbills with black and white streaks on their coat. They were often found here and there peeping out of their nests in the hollows of the large trunks of trees. Peacocks now and then were seen resting on the branches of trees or dancing on the ground before a female stretching out their gorgeous plumes and screaming from time to time with their shrill note. Green pigeons, whistling birds and colourful parrots were seen in hundreds cooing, whistling and chirping all the time and moved about camouflaged with the vegetation. Cicadas rent the air with their continuously ringing tune. Of the monkeys, a type of long-armed black and brown ape was found to be common in these forests. They were always seen moving about in pairs, and sometimes walking in a somewhat erect posture. They are, however, loving creatures although they make a lot of noise at daytime. Once I fired a blank cartridge just to scare away a couple. One of the pairs fled leaving behind the mate alone. This poor creature wept and cried in a very mournful way almost like a human being throughout the night near my camp and stopped only at daybreak when the mate joined. These timid gibbons behave in a very peculiar manner. A female one was kept and tamed in a spacious cage as a pet in the plantation. When men approached her she behaved in a docile and loving manner. She also liked to be fondled by men; but if a female came near her, as I once noticed when the manager's wife came close to the cage, she flew into a rage and attempted to bite and scratch her stretching out her arms out of the iron bars of the cage.

CRIMINALS & SMUGGLERS

My camp was established by the side of a hill stream for obvious reasons. The improvised aerial camp consisted of two platforms, one above the other ingeniously and securely tied with the branches of adjoining tall trees. I used to stay on the top and my men below. Green bamboos were cut into small pieces with nodes and internodes intact, and piled up in small heaps around the camp. These when set fire to, burst with loud explosions like crackers. It proved to be an easy and effective means for driving away the wild animals, particularly at night, when wild elephants moved about in herds. Led by one giant tusker they used to be two to three young females and one or two calves.

The greatest danger in this area was, however, as I was told, not so much the wild animals, but criminals and smugglers, who sometimes found their way into the forest from across the frontiers of neighbouring countries. The nomadic criminals were generally armed with bows and poisoned arrows. They would not hesitate to kill anyone entering the forest and particularly those who possessed fire-arms and ammunition just to rob. Once two opium smugglers, while attempting to cross the border, were pierced through by an arrow. No human being was, however, seen by me during my three trips in the forests.

RICH PLANT LIFE

The forests in this part of the world are typical rain-forests which are predominantly Malayan in composition and character. Tall Depterocarpus sp., Dellenia pentagyna, Salmalia, Tetrameles mudiflora, Lagerstroemia, Stereospermum and others form an overhead canopy with bamboo and cane brokes in the middle followed by usually small arboreous and shrubby association. Tall herbaceous association composed of low Palms, Cycas and Scetamenaceous species form in moist areas under the shade of taller trees a typical ground flora. Elephants are particularly fond of these large leafy banana-like plants. They opened up a different route when they saw we encroached upon their old beautiful shady avenue leading to the river where they used to come for drinking water. Once a tiger was met by Tajib, the plant collector, when during very early hours of the morning he went out to shoot a jungle fowl. He described it as a huge animal, but good tempered. Its fur was reddish brown with the usual black stripes and unlike the ordinary tiger. This might be due to their residing in shady forests. After meeting the tiger almost face to face Tajib was so much frightened that he could not utter a single word during the night, and told about his experience only next morning.

On the border of Siam an area, locally known as "Nam-Sap", was discovered. This spot, I called the rendezvous of big games particularly bisons, elephants and rhinoceros. Here in a corner of the large open clean flat piece of land without even a

blade of grass covering it, was found a badly smelling pool. This corner was obviously used by these large animals for rest. Along the base of the hills here and there, were found many large round stone balls with which the elephants played. Large cavities in the rocky hill-sides were noticed where salt deposit attracted the elephants. We watched a herd of bisons grazing leisurely along the shady hill-sides across the "Nam-Sap" on the Siam side, but soon retreated our steps to a place of safety in case these animals spotted us and chased us. The tops of the surrounding hill forest here appeared as if in flames with the spring bloom of a tall climber (Butea suberosa).

LITTLE WASP SAVES LIFE

Several incidents occurred here in these forests. Some of these are worth-relating here. Once during my search for the interesting Gymnospermous climbing plant, *Gnetum scandens* whose young leaves are edible and liked by the Burmese, I was stung by a wasp. I stepped aside and was thus prevented from proceeding further, and as I cast a glance on the ground, I found to my great horror near my feet a poisonous green viper coiling round a piece of bamboo lying across the path with its vermilion coloured fangs opened out as if watching and waiting to catch a prey. My next step would have been on the head of this beautiful serpent. The little wasp was thus instrumental in saving my life. An interesting parasitic orchid found growing as a root parasite on the roots of trees with its tall profusely flowering spikes appeared to be rather common in this part of the forest. When I wanted to collect the specimen a Burmese warned me saying that he who would collect this orchid would surely have a quarrel with his wife, and such a quarrel might even lead to divorce. The specimen was, however, collected. My wife is still with me, thank God ! One night when I just finished developing my plates in a dark corner of a thatched hut, an improvised "dark room" in the plantation, Tajib flashed the torch and took me aside. He then pointed out to me the bamboo raft over my head. There was a six inches long dark brown scorpion with its black hooked sting at the tip of its beaded tail raised in a striking position. It was collected by a pair of long forceps and kept in the museum as one of the largest scorpions met with so far.

VERITABLE VOLLEY OF DEATH

One day we walked and walked after what seemed to be a mirage. The rustling of the bamboo leaves sounded like the bubbling of a hill stream nearby. Such a sound in the hill forest attracted us continually as we ran after the stream to quench our thirst. But from morning 8 o'clock to 4 o'clock in the afternoon, we all walked but failed to locate the brook. Our way back to the camp was lost in the forest. Exhausted, we sat down when the Sirdar (the headman) cut his toe while clearing the jungle. The most frightful thought of our being devoured alive by tiger, and worse still by giant deadly spiders, beetles, moths and flies completely unnerved us. When all hopes of finding out our camp almost vanished, I told my men that if I fell down unconscious and they happened to find the way by any chance, they should then first take me, if of course, they still found me alive, by the river side and pour water down in my mouth as I felt almost dying of thirst. The smell of rotting vegetation and fungus all round made me sick too. As I stood up and proceeded a few steps, my feet got entangled with the thread of rattan (a long cane). My followers just then shouted with great joy, saying, "Sahib, we have found our way." The long rattan was made into a thread by one of my men who left it behind when he got tired of carrying it any longer. This cane rope lay along the path leading to the camp. Reaching down the bank of the river an improvised drinking glass was made of an internode of bamboo. It was filled with cool crystal clear water of the hill stream and poured down into my mouth. I was refreshed. My cook was found weeping and beating a canaster with a stick and shouting at the top of his voice to attract our notice. But it was of no avail. Even our blank fire was not heard of in such a deadly wilderness.

One wonders how the Allied Army had to fight with the Japanese during the last World War here in these dense forests, a veritable volley of death, exposed to the attack of dysentery and the deadly Typhus fever and other dangers. The infection of this disease passes from the rodent to man after completing a phase of its life-cycle through a particular type of vegetation in these forests. It is no wonder that I used to get sick and take quinine and other drugs and my stomach was so seriously affected that my health broke down.

THE LUMINOUS FUNGI

Some interesting biological phenomena observed in this part of the world, are also worth mentioning. It is here that I discovered for the first time the Luminous Fungi. One dark night while resting in the *machan* half-dosing and getting scared by the screaching of owl and crashing noise of an old falling tree, I was awakened by a hot discussion among my men. Some remarked, "It is certainly a ghost." Others were so frightened that they even could not utter a word. They simply pointed out to me an old stump of a tree at a little distance which from time to time was seen in flames. A flash of pale bluish light flared up with every gust of wind. It struck me that it might be the luminous fungus about which the world famous botanist, the late Hans Molisch of Vienna told me when he visited India and worked in the Sir J. C. Bose's Laboratory in Calcutta. The forest paths strewn with decomposed leaves were also found emanating flickering light like the glow-worms with the breeze. It was an amazing sight indeed which I would never forget in my life. Such phosphorescent light is composed mainly of two substances, lucerin and luceferin, which are also present in the glow-worms and the Noctiluca. The latter is a phosphorescent marine flagellated organism. There flagellales floating *en-masse* produced magnificent phenomenon when the rolling breakers of the sea stretching as far as the eye can reach got luminous with the breeze in a dark night. Such a sight was enjoyed on the night I spent sitting in the verandah of the Mergui Dak Bungalow facing the sea.

These trips to South Burma proved to be a training ground for me as rightly stressed by my much esteemed predecessor. On my way back I stopped at Rangoon for a day and offered flowers at the feet of the Lord Buddha in the famous Shwedagon Pagoda. I rang also the huge bell three times. Curiously enough, as the belief goes, I had to come to Burma three times to collect botanical treasures and on my return paid my homage to the Lord of the Sacred Pagoda.

THE INCREDIBLE INK

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didn't understand how that ink could have gotten on Eve's coat. You see, I didn't know my own had been spotted.

"It all started long ago, Peddie. When I was a young man, the brother of the girl I later married accidentally killed a man while driving my car. To protect him I confessed to being behind the wheel. The whole thing was the result of criminal negligence and should have meant a charge of manslaughter.

"The official who took my statement, at the time, was an assistant district attorney named Rudmire—a close friend of my father. He shelved the statement at my father's request and the incident blew over.

"A few weeks ago, Rudmire—now retired from office—was the victim of a burglary, in which my confession, among other papers, was stolen. The police were given a tip that a burglar named Burke had pulled the job. But he was murdered before they could find him.

"Two evenings ago, this man Lauth came to me with an offer to sell my own confession to me. He admitted he had also approached Bonelli.

"The rest follows your reconstruction almost to the letter. I killed Lauth when the argument over his fantastic price became so bitter that he went for a gun.

"I found the confession, came directly home and hung my coat in the hall closet without realizing it was ink-stained. I burned that damned paper without further delay."

Wilbur nodded. "One other point," he said." Your daughter engaged me to locate Lauth. How, then, was she able to go directly to his apartment tonight?"

"She told me about that at Paine's office," Logan replied. "While I was out last evening, she went through my desk, hunting for some clue to my visitor's identity. She found the slip that Lauth had given me, on which was written his name, address and phone number. She immediately recognized the name as that of the man who had tried to blackmail a very good friend of ours: Forrest Kenyon. Reason told her it was the information she wanted."

"And that," Wilbur said quietly, "seems to complete matters"

To protect the young man, brother of my wife, I confessed to being behind the wheel, said Logan.

Logan put down his glass and rose to his feet with an air of finality. "No reason," he said, "why we both shouldn't get some sleep. I'm going to need a clear head when I go back over this thing with Malcolm Pathe, this afternoon."

Peddie was startled. "You're going to tell him you killed Lauth?"

It was John Logan's turn to show surprise. "Naturally. I'd rather do that than put you in the position of an informer."

Wilbur Peddie solemnly shook his head. "I think it would be very foolish of you to stir matters up again. Certainly I have no intention of doing so. The police and the district attorney are satisfied, and the case is completely closed. Everyone agree Lauth deserved to die."

Silently, John Draper Logan proffered his hand, and, as silently, Wilbur Peddie grasped it.

"I think," Wilbur said, to pass off his embarrassment, "that I'll have that drink, after all."

"Good!" Logan turned to the portable bar. "What will it be ? Scotch ? Bourbon ? Brandy ?"

"Buttermilk", said Wilbur Peddie firmly.

Well-carved figures of innumerable forepart of elephants standing in row, of the size of full grown huge actual elephants, on the four sides of the monument of RUVANVALISAYA.

ART TREASURES OF CEYLON

By PROJESH BANERJI

TEMPLES and monasteries are profusely scattered over Ceylon and every temple is an art treasure. These monasteries and temples are objects of interest not merely to Buddhists but even to students of art, who will find in them examples of exquisite carving and elaborate architecture.

As it is said that India is the country of Ajanta and Ellora, the same kind of metaphor can be attributed to Ceylon as well by stating that the island is of Sigiriya. Its paintings in the rocks of a fortress in the sky constitute a subject matter for a separate article. Suffice it to say here that Ceylon may lose its importance in the eye of the nations, but Sigiriya paintings will be ever new and will always be ranked in the first line in the list of art treasures of the world.

Coming to the place of next importance is the town of Anuradhapura, the most famous of Ceylon's ruined cities. It is here that remains of religious buildings stand out most prominently to our day. Naturally, however, it was in the name of religion that the most enduring monuments were reared and it is no surprise that giant "dagabas" tower over all else of ancient time. A "dagaba" is a familiar feature of a Buddhist temple and is one of the spots at which worship is offered by the devotees. In order

to propitiate and invoke the deity artists have made the place beautiful by carvings and paintings.

History tells us that Anuradhapura continued to be the centre of the island's cultural activity. This activity was in no way retarded by the fortunes of war. On the contrary, archaeological work has proved that some of the finest works of art can be dated to the final years of Anuradhapura's period as capital.

3 PARTS OF BUDDHIST TEMPLE

It is worthwhile mentioning here that in a Buddhist temple there are three constituent parts at which worship is offered. One is the "dagaba" where the faithful hold corporeal relics of Buddha to be enshrined; the second is the "Vihara" where the likeness is portrayed in paint or more solid medium, and the third is the Bo tree ("ficus religiosa"). It was under a Bo that Siddhartha Gautama attained Supreme Wisdom ("Bodhi") which entitled him to be called Buddha. The three places of worship treasure works of art.

The giant monument of Ruvanvalisaya, the work of Dutthagamani, is reached passing through the remains of two ancient entrance houses. One comes to a courtyard which encloses a retaining wall ornamented on all sides by huge and well carved figures of innumerable forepart of elephants standing in a row. They make as if to hold up the terrace on which the "dagaba" was constructed. At each cardinal point is built an ornamental screen. In front is an altar for laying the offerings of flowers. The screen served the artist who could here display his skill which the dome itself denied him.

The visitor notices some sculptures of large size, on the eastern side as he ascends the terrace of the "dagaba". Four of the most interesting are housed in the verandah. The three Buddhas have been attributed to an early period. The fourth is the figure of Mettiyya, the Buddha to come. Another very pleasing figure is that popularly known as the likeness of king Dutthagamani. It is by the steps. It probably represents Boddhisattva or a God.

Near it there is a dainty bell-shaped "dagaba" ringed by rows of stone pillars with ornate capitals. This is the Thuparama Dagaba, the earliest historical construction of the kind. Thuparama Dagaba, says the Mahavamsa, enshrines the right collarbone of the Buddha and is held in great reverence by pilgrims. Its graceful beauty is enhanced by the monoliths around it.

Between Thuparama and Ruvanvali there is a monastery, the balustrades for the steps of which are carved. Among reliefs are temple facades, lions, forest and cave scenes, jungle men and women, bears, deer, monkeys, peacock, mongoose, cobra and other wild animal life which does not fail to amuse the art connoisseurs. The Jetavana Dagaba is an impressive structure with vaulted roof and in the "sanctum" there is a colossal Buddha image. Fragments of the lotus-shaped pedestal may be seen. The doorway is high and is so constructed as to permit a full view of the image within. Traces of paintings which decorated portions of the "Vahalkadas" yet cling to the fragments of plaster on the stonework in these ruined structures.

FINEST BATHING POOLS

Abhyagiri provides the largest as well as the finest examples of bathing pools used by the ancient monks; the stonework, steps, balustrades show Sin- both by the chasteness of work on them and their size.

Near Abhyagiri there is a stone statue of the Buddha. It is in the Meditation Pose (Dhyani Mudra) with hands on lap and folded legs. This is a noble piece of sculpture and is at least 1,600 years old. Abhayagiri formed an important centre of worship of the "Tooth Relic," and according to Fa Hien, the gorgeous procession wended on sacred days on a road which had been sprinkled with perfume and decked with flowers.

Here there are two interesting monuments, one of which, the so-called Queen's Pavilion, contains probably the finest example of moonstone. The moonstone is a carved stone of a semi-circular shape placed at the bottom of a flight of steps. In the example here, a frieze of four animals, lion, bull, elephant and horse (animals connected with the north, west, east and south respectively) are grouped in spirited procession between a band of petals and another of a foliaged scroll. Next to this last, is a procession of swans and on other bands narrowing to the central half-lotus are other scroll or lotus petal designs. The carving has been done with great delicacy and the stone still bears a superb polish.

There is another structure near it marked by massive monoliths. Its moonstone is simple but on one side is an unrivalled janitor stone, one of the finest works of the sculptor. Animals and human beings may be made out issuing from the mouth of "Makara" framing the cobra-hooded head. The figure itself is that of a cobra-king in the form of human being.

Examples of the finest screen work and spirited reliefs depicting groups of elephants deporting themselves in lotus pools, are in abundance in baths and ancient structures. In Isurumuni Vihara can be seen low relief of elephants. There is a relief of a dignified personage seated in the Royal Pose (Maharaja Lila). The head of a horse is visible above his right shoulder. Between the shrine by its side and the other lower down is an area walled in with stones collected at random. Some of these contain reliefs and among them is a slab in fairly high relief showing a woman seated on the left leg of a man. This is known widely as the "Lovers." The man's face is delicate and the group and its execution are of unquestioned beauty.

One of the Vessagiri caves contains some remnants of ancient paintings which can be classed as masterpieces in art. At Pankuliya there is a unique Buddha of granite of undoubtedly the early centuries. It is the only instance so far known in Ceylon of a seated figure having the hands in the gesture called "Abhaya", that is freedom from fear.

IMPRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE

Among the numerous sites of archaeological interest in which Ceylon is so rich, there is perhaps none better than Polonnaruva, where one can see impressive examples of architecture and sculpture dating from one of the most glorious periods in the island's long history of over two thousand years. An artistic painting has recently been revealed from the northern temple here. The ruined building of Prakramabahu, round the base of which runs a frieze of elephants in bas-relief, is carved wonderfully true to life, and of which the pillars are adorned with chaste designs. To the north-east of Thuparama is the Vatadage. There is a small 'Stupa' with four Buddha images facing the four entrances. A profusely carved stone railing encompasses the whole

shrine. The stone work is effectively decorated with floral designs and figures of dwarfs and animals.

It seems that on an average at every yard there is a Buddha image skilfully carved. Apart from the aesthetic qualities of these images, the colossal size as well as the picturesque background against which they are seen tend to make them extremely impressive.

The Tivanka Image-house is noteworthy for its wall paintings, depicting scenes from the sacred stories of the Buddhists. The Buddha image in the sanctum of this shrine, now headless, is of an unusual type, showing bends at the knees, at the waist and at the shoulders. The shrine itself is named Tivanka (probably Tribhanga) after the image.

The Potgul Vehera of Polonnaruva possesses a colossal rock sculpture. The image is more than life-size, and is carved on the face of a boulder of moderate dimensions. The subject is represented as holding, or rather balancing in the two hands an object like a palm-leaf book. The sculpture, which is a remarkable work of art, does not conform to any known iconographic standards of Indian religions, and also, somewhat unique in Indian art, it does not represent an idealised type. The artist, definitely, has made an attempt to bring out individual character in the physiognomy.

FRIEZES OF "GANAS"

The "Vahalkadas" of the Kantaka Cetiya of Mihintale are more profusely ornamented than those found at Anuradhapura. On the cornice below the topmost one is a frieze of "ganas" (dwarfs), and on the one further below is a frieze of "Hamsas" (geese). The brickwork above the facing contains arched niches between pilasters. In each of these niches there appears to have been the image of a deity made of stucco of terra-cotta, fragments of some of these figures being still in position. The heads of some were picked up in debris and among them are two of terra-cotta, which are of considerable artistic merit. These images as well as the whole structure of the "Vahalkadas," were originally painted in diverse colours, traces of which are still visible.

The friezes of "ganas" mentioned above are full of interest. Many of these dwarfish beings are portrayed in various lively attitudes—some playing musical instruments, one sporting with a cobra, another standing on his head and so on. Some are animal-headed. We have one with the head of a horse, another with that of a bear, and yet another with that of a monkey. Particularly interesting is an elephant-headed "gana", apparently with one tusk, attended by other "ganas" holding various objects. It is possible to conjecture that this is a prototype of Ganapati, the various attributes of the deity being held in the hands of the attendants as the figure is provided with only two hands, unlike the later images which have four.

EARLIEST PLASTIC ART

The sculptures on the stelae flanking the "Frontispieces" are among the earliest examples of the plastic art of the ancient Sinhalese. They are mostly of a decorative nature, and some of the motifs employed are reminiscent of the decorative sculptures on the pillars of the gateways of Sanchi. The commonest motif is a foliage design springing up from a vase and crowned by a Buddhist emblem or a "Naga" figure and, in one case, a goddess seated on a lotus. In one example, the foliaged scroll

Statue of Buddha in Asokaramya Temple.

is so designed as to form five circular spaces, on above the other, in which are, respectively, th figures of a cock, a lion, a bull, a man and an ele phant. In another are pairs of men and animals stan ding back-to-back on either side of the stem. Thes decorative designs resemble those on stelae alread found at the Anuradhapura stupas, but the stelae o the eastern frontispiece are decorated in a manne quite different from anything yet found elsewher in Ceylon.

The whole surface of the broader side of th stelae is provided into four rectangular panels which starting from the bottom, are occupied by foliage pattern, an elephant, a second foliage pat tern, a peacock with young, and a decorated vas from which spring leaves and flowers with bird sporting among them. The narrow sides of th stelae are decorated with a tapering stem springing from a vase, with conventionally treated leaves spreading on either side. Besides these, "Naga" figures in human form are found in some of the stelae. The style of the sculptures is very archaic.

At Mihintale is the famous "Lion Bath." The striking "tout ensemble" combination of the delightful moulded lines of the whole structure, the quaintly carved reliefs of its dado, and the life-like rampant lion guarding the bath, cannot fail to win unalloyed admiration for this masterpiece of sculpture, as boldly designed as it is perfectly executed. Ball

(Continued on Page 159)

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THE TALE OF 1857: ITS SAD AND CRUEL ASPECT

By Dr. R. C. MAJUMDAR, M.A., Ph.D.

The great revolutionary movement of 1857 has been treated one-sidedly by historians. The author makes here an objective study of the misdeeds on both sides.

NEXT year India will celebrate, with due solemnity, the centenary of the great revolutionary movement that convulsed the whole of North India from one end to the other. Apart from the many stirring incidents that marked it throughout its course, it also recalls to our mind many side-issues which are of great interest and no less important for the study of human nature and human civilisation. I propose, in this paper, to deal with one of these, *viz.* the atrocities committed on both sides. These were of so horrible a nature that some have expressed a desire that a veil should be drawn over them. But with a few honourable exceptions, English writers, and following them others, have drawn the veil over the excesses of the English, but not over those of the Indians. Historical truth demands that the veil should be drawn aside, and an objective study made of the atrocities on both sides.

In describing these, it is necessary to state, at the very outset, that we are dependent for our information almost exclusively upon British writers, who are likely to exaggerate the crime of the Indians.

The first acts of cruelty were those perpetrated at Meerut on May 10, which saw the beginning of the Mutiny of Sepoys. There was an indiscriminate massacre of Europeans, and "Hindus and Muslims were stirred by one impulse to slaughter the Feringhees, man, woman, child." Helpless women were butchered without mercy, and children were slaughtered under the very eyes of their mothers. But all this was done not merely by the sepoys but also by the criminals released from prison by them, and by the usual goonda elements of the town who never fail to reap full advantage of the absence of law and order.

The scene was repeated at Delhi. A number of European men and women were done to death by the sepoys in cold blood, and their example was followed by the scum of the population who joined them. "Every house occupied by European or Eurasian was attacked and every Christian upon whom hands could be laid was killed. There was no mercy and there were no quarters".

Similar acts of cruelty were perpetrated by the Indians in many other places. A tragedy of a

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ghastly character in Allahabad is thus described in a letter from Banaras, dated June 16, 1857 : "A gang of upwards of two dozen sepoys....cut into two an infant boy of two or three years of age, while playing about his mother; next they hacked into pieces the lady; and while she was crying out of agonising pains for safety.....felled, most shockingly and horridly, the husband".

THE TERRIBLE RETRIBUTIO N

Then came the terrible retribution. General Neill, who proceeded from Calcutta, in May, 1857, with a regiment towards Banaras and Allahabad, gave written instructions to his officer Major Reinaud "to attack and destroy all places en route close to the road occupied by the enemy." "Certain guilty villages were marked out for destruction and all the men inhabiting them were to be slaughtered." Reinaud faithfully carried out his chief's order, as would appear from the following passage in Russell's Diary : "An officer who was attached to Reinaud's column told me that the executions of natives were indiscriminate to the last degree.....In two days forty-two men were hanged on the road-side, and a batch of twelve men were executed because their faces were 'turned the wrong way' when they were met on the march. All the villages in his front were burnt when he halted, and mothers, wives and children fell miserable victims to the first swoop of English vengeance." Sherer has described a similar scene along the line of Havelock's march. "Many of the villages had been burnt by the way-side, and human beings there were none to be seen. ....the occasional taint in the air from suspended bodies upon which before our very eyes the loath-some pig of the country was engaged in feasting."

Even before the Martial Law was passed on June 9, English "military officers were hunting down the criminals of all kinds, and hanging them up with as little compunction as though they had been parish dogs, or jackals, or vermin of a baser kind....some young boys, who, seemingly in mere sport, had flaunted rebel colours and gone about beating tomtoms, were tried and sentenced to death....Volunteer hanging parties went out into the districts and amateur executioners were not wanting to the occasion. One gentleman boasted of the numbers he had finished off quite 'in an artistic manner', with mango trees for gibbets and elephants for drops, the victims of this wild justice being strung up, as though for pastime, in 'the form of a figure of eight'....Officers, as they went to sit on courts-martial, swore that they would hang their prisoners, guilty or innocent....Prisoners, condemned to death after a hasty trial, were mocked at and tortured by ignorant privates before their execution, while educated officers looked on and approved....Old men who had done us no harm, and helpless women with sucking infants at their breasts felt the weight of our vengeance, no less than the vilest malefactors."

NORMAL WAY OF PUNIS HMENT

One of the normal punishments of the sepoys was to blow them from the mouth of a gun Forty sepoys were thus blown up on June 10, at Peshawar, in the presence of the whole garrison and thousands of outsiders. Lord Roberts wrote afterwards that it was a horrible sight, but had to be done "to show these rascally Mussalmans that, with God's help Englishmen will still be the masters of India." A clergyman's widow thus describes another such incident. "One gun was overcharged, and the poor on being covered with blood and fragment of flesh; the head of one poor wretch fell upon a bystander and hurt him."

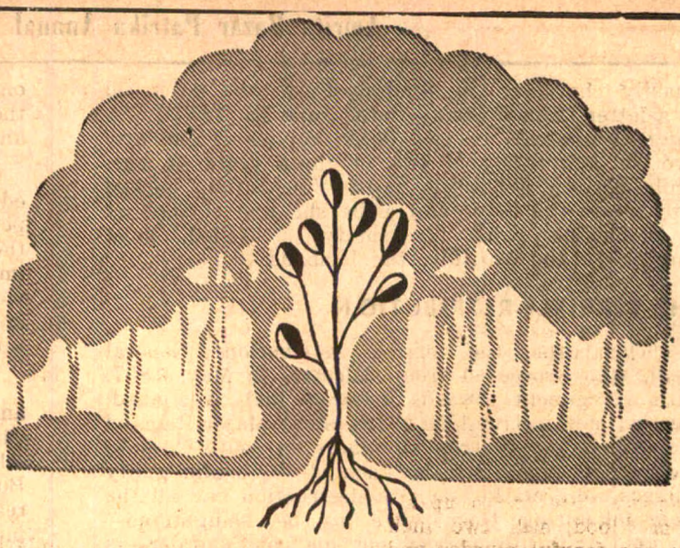
The sepoy mutineers at Kanpur mostly belonged to the localities where these cruelties were perpetrated. So we pass on to the next scene where the provoked sepoys went one stage further and improved upon what the English soldiers did. The violent deeds of Nana Sahib and his sepoys are well known even to the school boys, but must be mentioned in fairness to the other side.

An agreement was reached between Nana Sahib and General Wheeler, the commander of the besieged British forces at Kanpur, that they should be allowed to go by river from Kanpur to Allahabad But as soon as they boarded the forty boats kept ready for them, "a murderous fire of grapeshot and musket balls was opened upon the wretched passengers from both banks of the river; and presently the thatch of the boats burst into a blaze". Many particularly the sick and wounded, were burnt to death, while the rest, including some women with children in arms, took to the river. Many of these were killed and a number of them were made captives. Only a single boat escaped, but it was later seized, and only four of its occupants fled with their lives to tell the tale of this grave tragedy.

NANA'S REVENGE : BIBIGHAR STORY

Whether Nana Sahib was personally responsible for this tragic episode, will perhaps never be known with certainty. But other incidents are reported which show that his thirst for the blood of Englishman was not a whit less than Neill's for that of Indian. An old gentleman, supposed to be a merchant, his wife and two children, both in their teens, were brought before him, and he caused them to be shot on the spot. Later, on June 10, an English lady travelling with her four children from N. W. P. to Calcutta, while passing through Kanpur, was taken before Nana, and they were all shot. The same fate was dealt out to another lady under similar circumstances on the day following. On the 12th a number of European fugitives from Fategarh, mostly women and children, numbering 126 (according to Malleson, 169), were coming down in boats to seek refuge in the British cantonment at Kanpur. They were seized and carried to Nana. All the men, with the exception of three, were killed in his presence, and the women and children, along with the other English prisoners, who were taken from the riverside, were kept in a small house known as Bibighar.

But Nana's cruelties reached their climax in his treatment of these prisoners. As soon as he heard that Havelock's relieving army had reached the neighbourhood of Kanpur, he issued orders for the massacre of the women and children in the Bibighar. There were four or five men among the captives, these were brought forth and killed in the presence of Nana. Then a party of sepoys was sent to shoot the women and children. But the sepoys were more humane than their master and fired at the ceiling. Then some butchers were called. They went in with swords or long knives, and slashed the women and children to death. And there the bodies lay, some only half dead, all through the night. Next morning the dead and the dying were brought out and thrown into an adjacent well. Some of the children were alive, almost unhurt; but they were also thrown into the well.



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cruelties emanated from hostile sources. But they have been repeated by several witnesses. Even allowing for exaggerations, normal in such cases, it is difficult to deny the fact that Nana's fiendish cruelty has for ever tarnished the fair name of India, which rightly boasts of an age-long humane culture.

NEILL'S COUNTER VENGEANCE

When Neill reached Kanpur shortly after this ghastly scene was enacted, he took a terrible vengeance which can better be imagined than described. To the indiscriminate hanging of the guilty and the innocent alike,—virtually amounting to a mass massacare, — he added two refinements which he has himself described with great glee. He made the ringleaders "first clean up a certain portion of the pool of blood, still two inches deep, in the shed where the fearful murder and mutilation of women and children took place." He did this for he knew that "to touch blood is most abhorrent to the high-caste natives; they think by doing so, they doom their souls to perdition." The first man, a high-caste Brahmana and an ex-Subedar, refused to clean up the blood; but, Neill continues, "a few lashes soon made the miscreant accomplish his task". The other refined cruelty, invented by Neill, was to *bury* all the Brahmanas and to *burn* all the Mussalmans after they were hanged or otherwise killed. The object was the same—to punish the cursed miscreants both in this world as well as in the next.

COOPER'S ACHIEVEMENTS

History does not record whether Neill had any one in the opposite camp to match him in his refined cruelty and far-sighted vision to extend the punishment beyond this transient life to eternity. But Nana Sahib had undoubtedly his white counterpart in Frederick Cooper, the Deputy-Commissioner of Amritsar, who emulated Nana as far as his limited opportunities enabled him to do so.

Fortunately for the historian, he has himself described his own exploits, so that there can be no doubt or uncertainty about them. The story concerns the 26th N. I. who had mutinied at Lahore and fled for their lives. Weakened and famished after forty miles' flight, they tried to cross the Ravi; but 150 were shot by the villagers assembled, and drowned. The main body took refuge in an island of the river, and Cooper pursued them in armed boats. "The doomed men with joined palms crowded down to the shore on the approach of the boats, one side of which bristled with about sixty muskets, besides sundry revolvers and pistols....In utter despair forty or fifty dashed into the stream; and the sowars being on the point of taking pot shots at the heads of the swimmers, orders were given not to fire".

The sepoys, simple and un-sophisticated country folk as they were, thought that they would be tried in a regular manner. But nothing was further from Cooper's mind. He continues : "They evidently were possessed of a sudden and insane idea that they were going to be tried by a court-martial, after some luxurious refreshment. In consequence of which, thirty-six stalwart sepoys submitted to be bound by a single man, and stocked like slaves into a hold in one of the two boats emptied for the purpose". Two hundred and twenty-eight prisoners, thus secured, were put in a bastion at the police station. Next morning, August, 1, 1857, the prisoners were pinioned tied together, and brought out thus, in batches of ten, to be shot. They were filled with astonishment and rage when they learned their fate, but Cooper went on with his task. He himself describes the scene as follows :

"About 150 having been thus executed, one of the executioners swooned away, and a little respite was allowed. Then, proceeding, the number had arrived at 237; when the district officer was informed that the remainder refused to come out of the bastion, where they had been imprisoned temporarily, a few hours before....The doors were opened, and, behold ! Unconsciously the tragedy of Holwell's Black Hole had been reenacted....Forty-five bodies, dead from fright, exhaustion, fatigue, heat, and partial suffocation, were dragged into light."

These, dead and dying, along with their murdered comrades, were thrown into a well. Cooper exultingly remarks : "There is a well at Cawnpore; but there is also one at Ujnalla." This short sentence expresses a great truth which no one, particularly no Englishman, should ever forget. Thompson, one of the few English writers who had the courage and fairness to describe the British atrocities, justly observes : "I see no reason why Cooper should be denied the immortality he craved so earnestly. Let his name be remembered with Nana Sahib's".

It is a moot point to decide whether the originality of the idea of throwing the dead and the dying into a well belongs to Nana alone or also to Cooper. Perhaps the credit should be given to both, for it is very doubtful if Cooper had heard of the incidents that happened at Kanpur on July 15, when he unconsciously imitated them on August 1.

HORRORS OF SACK OF DELHI

The fall of Delhi (September, 20, 1857) was followed by indiscriminate murder and plunder on a massive scale. According to official report, "there was not a house that had not been ransacked and plundered, friends and foes of the Government suffering to an equal extent." The trial was a mere mockery. "The judges were in no mood to show mercy. Almost all who were tried were condemned; and almost all who were condemned were sentenced to death." An English lady heard reports that the soldiers bribed the executioners to keep the sepoys a long time hanging, as they liked to see the criminals dance a 'Pandies' hornpipe, as they termed the dying struggles of the wretches. "The English officers used to sit by, puffing at their cigars, and look on at the convulsive struggles of the victims."

The horrors of the sack of Delhi were fully kept alive even in the next generation. According to the information supplied to Blunt on the spot in 1883, "the English soldiers slew and destroyed some thousands of innocent men in revenge for the death of about one hundred. The old Loharo chief assures us that 26,000 persons were killed by the soldiers or hanged or shot or blown up during the eight months following the capture of the city. The city was deserted, and whole quarters and suburbs razed to the ground."

Details of this type might fill a volume. But enough has been said to indicate the nature of barbarous and inhuman cruelties that were perpetrated during the outbreak of 1857. Indeed it seems to have been "a contest between two savage races, capable of no thought but that regardless of all justice or mercy, their enemies should be exterminated".

The centenary of 1857 necessarily recalls also its blackest spot. Many would perhaps fain draw a veil over it, but it is necessary, in the interest

(*Continued On Page 154*)

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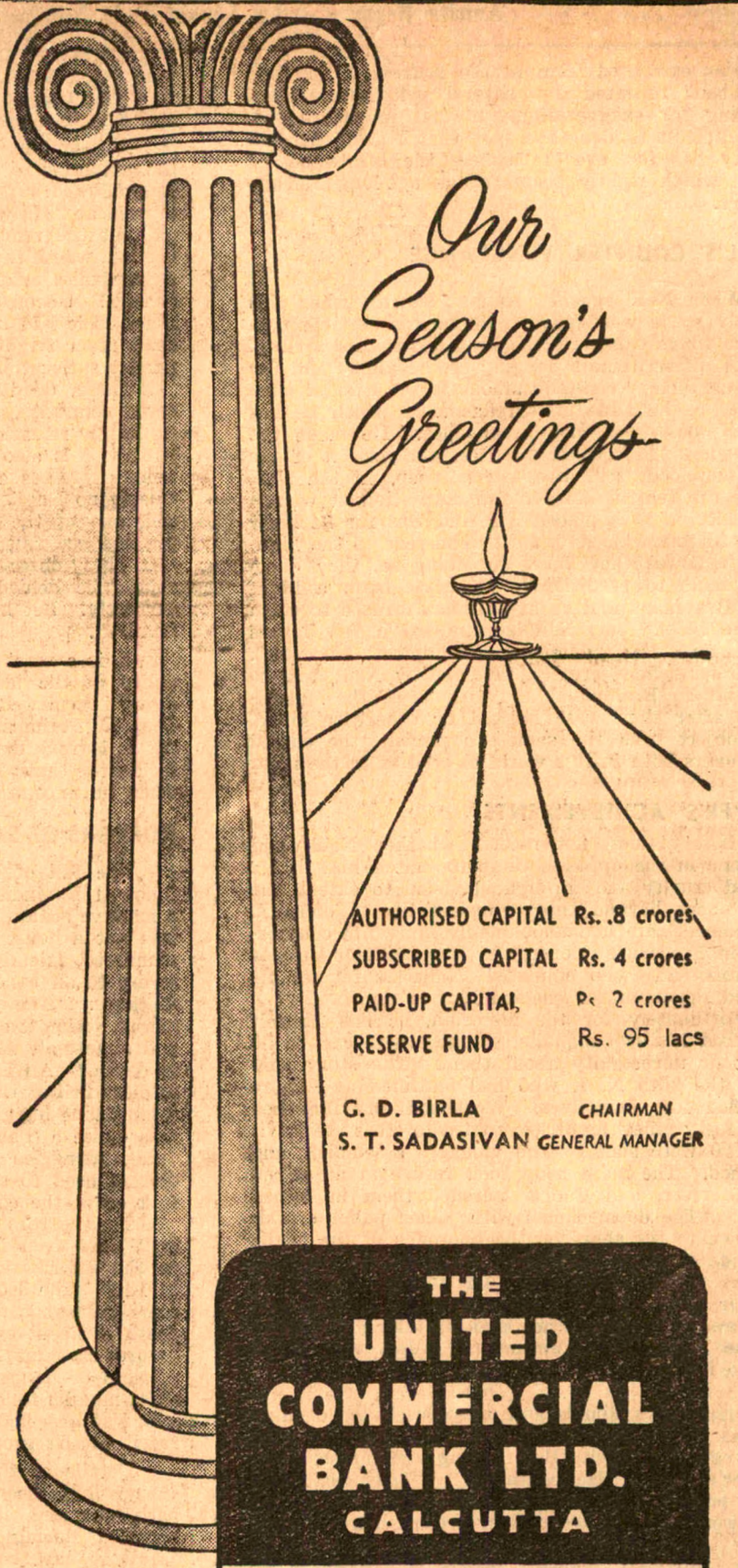

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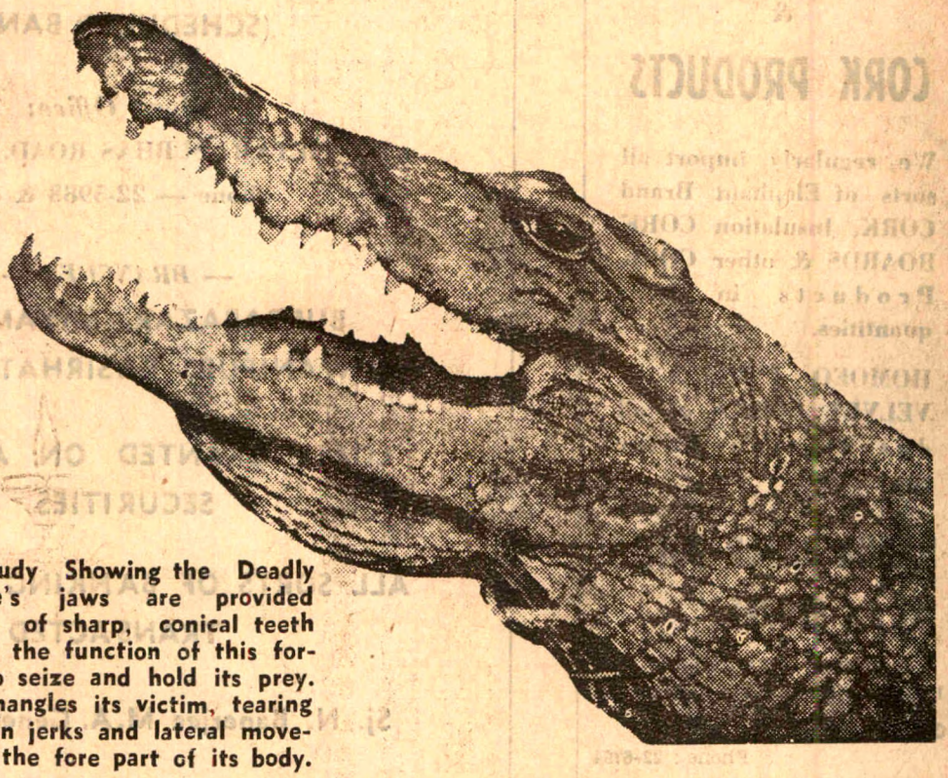

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WEAPONS IN NATURE'S ARMOURY

By U. C. CHOPRA

Almost any part of an animal may be converted into a weapon. Horns and hoofs, teeth and claws are among the more obvious weapons in Nature's armoury, and in tracing their development it is interesting to note that, just as in the story of human warfare, each succeeding instrument of death brought into being the means for its repulsion or evasion.

LIFE worth living always means some struggle or endeavour. The plant has least of it. It does not thrust against unfriendly influences, but it parries. Deep in the heart of the living creature there is the power of answering back effectively, so that its life is preserved. Among animals this is much more marked; they thrust as well as parry.

One does not suppose that the heat of the sun, the frost of winter, the breakers on the shore, the sandstorm in the desert, and so on, are unfriendly to animals. That is a word that doesn't fit. But animals have to struggle against them, and when we come to discuss animals in their homes from Pole to Pole we shall see how interesting that kind of struggle is, and how intense — as Tennyson saw so clearly :—

"For life is not as idle ore,
But iron dug from central gloom,

And heated hot with burning tears,
And dipt in baths of hissing tears,

And battered by the shocks of doom
To shape and use."

The chief reasons for the struggle of living creatures are four in number :—

In the first place organisms or living creatures tend to multiply so rapidly that there is no room or food for them all.

In the second place, the plan of Nature is a chain of reincarnations, the higher forms eat the lower, and the lower forms (among animals) often struggle against being eaten.

In the third place, a vigorous organism is self-assertive, a bit of a hustler, sticking out its elbows in the crowd.

In the fourth place, outside conditions are often changeful, and living creatures must struggle to keep their foothold.

WEAPONS OF EARLY MAN

In early days man had to struggle with wild beasts, and for a long time he must have found "discretion the better part of valour", for he was

(Continued On Page 144)

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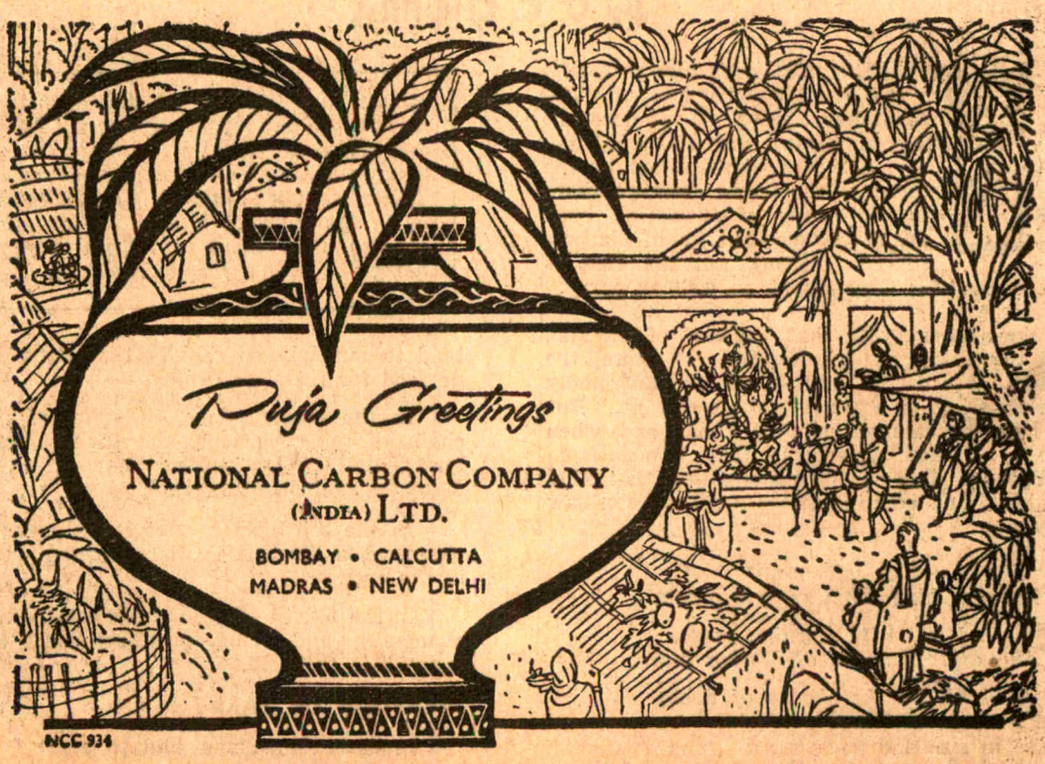

LIFE BEGINS AT ZERO

By Dr. SIVATOSH MOOKERJEE, M.Sc., Ph.D. (Edin), F.R.M.S.

INCOMPARABLY, the most intricate phenomenon in the life of an individual is the miracle of procreation. The process of fertilization becomes an inevitable means of reproduction in higher animals. This is not anything like airy-nothing affair, but it works in a very implict manner to bring bout the special reproductive units from the father nd the mother together. To achieve the union of spe-ially endowed reproductive cells, a sexual congress ecomes a necessity and the wedlock works for a ender trap for it in disguise. From time immemorial, this has been the process by which a new life s formed out of the union of pre-existing sex cells nd thus transcending the organic limit of a generaion. The phenomenon continues for ever, so that he life never extinguishes. The entire range of ertilization process is charged with so much of subtlety and naivete, so time-specified and remarkably elaborate, that often unscientific predilections are brought to bear upon the subject to diffuse the true tale of fertilization. However, such attitude is unwanted, because, now, more accurate observations have been made with better experimental techniques with no little exactitude at the crucial point when life begins. The moment of fertilization is a moment of destiny; what is to become a human being is a tiny bead of substance, smaller than a full stop, impregnated with an inherent quality to divide and develop into an adult being.

SELF-PERPETUATING UNITS

Nature is almost prodigal in arrangement towards the formation of the reproductive units inside the body. Both sexes contain special glands where the self-perpetuating units originate and pass through the various stages of ripening. These glands are testis and ovary. Inside them, complex specializations leading to the formation of spermatozoa and ovum take place. The biological process of manufacturing the sperms is called Spermatogenesis and Oogenesis for the egg-production. In spite of their difference in details, both are comparable in their essential respects. The production of reproductive units or gametes as they are called, is under hormonal control of the pituitary gland of the brain which stirs up and sets in the reproductive mechanism. Both processes undergo through three essential phases of multiplication for increase of number of cells; growth for increase in size and maturation for the reduction of chromosome numbers. Each of these stages render complexities necessary for a generative cell. The essential factor in the self-perpetuating units is t manifest a way to half the nuclear elements—a intricate phenomenon to suit the future union of tw cells and to restore the basic number of chromo somes. All sperms, produced in course of sperma togenesis, are functional. However, n a set of four only one is functional in case of Oogenesis. Othe three degenerate ova have nothing to do with th actual process of fertilization.

ASTRONOMICAL FIGURES

Not until puberty, can individuals produc functional reproductive cells. In human males, th production of spermatozoa begins with puberty an lasts till late in life. In woman folks, on the othe hand, the egg-producton commences with the puberty till menopause. It has been calculated that a woma is capable of producing about 400 eggs during he whole life time; producing normally one egg pe month, 12 eggs annually till the end of her fecundity period. Though in some exceptional cases, there may be more than one egg being produced monthly In contrast to this, a normal human male is capable of producing at the rate of 50 million sperms a day and about 500 billion sperms during an average normal life. In a single seminal discharge for a healthy man, there are some 200,000,000 to 500,000,000 spermatozoa liberated. This may seem like a terrible wastage of sperms when only one sperm fertilizes, but release of less than 80 million sperms in a single sexual act, has little chance of begetting children. Failure to produce adequate number of sperms is a frequent cause of human infertility. Unlike the astronomical figures of spermatozoa, the single human ovum is shed between the 12th and 21st day of a menstrual cycle, counting from the first day of uterine discharge, the 15th day has been the centre of incidence. Normally one ovum is shed in each cycle, there may be two or even more. A significant point in this connection is that the ovary has been seen to contain a few thousand immature eggs of which a few only will mature. However, the rate of egg-production in some animals like fish is extraordinary, there may be about 10,000,000 eggs and in some sea-urchin the number may go upto 20,000,000. The mechanism of reproduction is different in human beings; one egg against millions of sperms is sufficient for the purpose.

The relative structure, size, shape, volume of eggs and sperms are worth comparing. The ovum is almost pherical whereas a spermatozoon is more or less elongated having a head, a middle piece and a long flagellated tail. Ripe human ovum has a diameter of about 0.2 m.m. and the total length of a sperm is about 0.05 m.m. or it is about 1/500th of an inch. It has been estimated that about 100,000

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sperms could find place inside an egg. Out of the entire length of each sperm, the tail comprises nine tenth of the length.

In older days, there has been a serious misconception about the structure of a sperm. Many erroneously thought that inside a sperm there is a miniature human being awaiting growth. This unborn tiny creature, they called a — 'Manikin'. However, recent studies have completely dispelled this fantastic notion and have proved beyond any doubt that the head of a sperm contains the vital element of nucleus and no miniature human-being is to be found there. Of late many excellent electronmicroscope photographs of sperms have been taken. The nucleus of the sperm unites with the nucleus of the egg and there begins a new series of biological change. There is nothing performed in development; differentiation ushers new changes.

Manikin — erroneous 17th Century idea of sperm, assuming that a miniature human being sits inside it.

ACTIVATION OF THE EGG

The ovum waits upon the oviduct for the sperm to come and activate its development. One of the essential prerequisites in the process of fertilization is that both sex cells must be in the proper state of ripeness. The sperms make an entry into the female generative tract through coitus near the opening of the uterus and make their way up the female tract. The total time required by human sperms to reach the egg is not known but it cannot be more than a few hours at most. The forward progress of sperms is at the rate of about 1.5 m.m. a minute and they have to go a distance of about 5 inches. It has been previously thought that the active transport of sperms inside the oviduct is mainly due to some chemical attraction from the ovum. But this idea of chemotaxysis of sperms is gradually losing ground and their transport seems to be a phenomenon of their own lashing movements of the tail. There are some animals, unlike human beings, where the sperm does not fertilize the egg immediately after coitus but lie dormant in the female generative tract for some time. In some bats, the coitus takes place in autumn and fertilization does not take place until the next spring. In rabbit, sperms are viable for sixty days inside the female reproductive system. In common fowl, the sperms may be stored for two to three weeks and normal fertilization results by these sperms. The transit of sperms in dogs and in mouse is rather quick and active spermatozoa are often found near about the ovary after half an hour or so of the coitus. In human beings, there are doubtful records of sperms for two or more weeks in the oviduct after coitus; there is no good reason to believe that sperms can fertilise after a day or two. Similarly, the ovum is also fertilizable for at most 48 hours. When this eventuality of fertilization becomes a living reality, it is the beginning of a new life. The role of ovum in fertilization is more of a quiescent nature and not until the sperm comes and activates, does it show a new series of changes in the form of cell division, cell growth and cell organization to reach the adult condition. However, all these changes in egg are only possible if it has been activated by a sperm, otherwise all the promises of future development in an egg will remain unfulfilled.

The process of fertilization is now understood as an outcome of a series of chemical interactions between the two different substances liberated by the sperms and ovum. The substances of the ovum are called 'Fertilizin' and that of the sperms are 'Antigertilizin'. As their names suggest, the substances are antagonistic in their property to each other. Only at the time of fertilization, these substances unite and form a neutral compound, conducive to fertilization.

The sperm itself is a wonderful mechanism but it is surprisingly short-lived. Perhaps for this reason, the sperms store their energy and show no sign of movement inside the testis. As soon as they are introduced into the female generative tract, they begin their tad-pole-like movements. It is now advanced that the keeping down of their activity is by means of producing their own substance — 'Antifertilizin'. However, the initiation and acceleration of their movement, after reaching the female reproductive system, are responsible by another substance liberated from the egg — 'Fertilizin'. This shows the antagonistic properties of the sperm substance and egg substance. There are other chemical reactions which take place at the actual time of fertilization. Contrary to the first series of reactions the other properties of 'Fertilizin' has been tested and found to agglutinate the moving sperms. Agglutination is a condition of semiparalysis which may be reversible and sperms generally produce some other 'Antifertilizin' to revitalise their ownself for a successful fertilization. It is to be understood in this context that both 'Fertilizin' and 'Antifertilizin' in fact include a number of opposing chemical reactions taking place at different time levels from the entry of sperms in oviduct to actual fertilization. These mutual antagonistic reactions work for a variety of functions including a check mechanism to hybrid fertilization. But, above all, the minuteness with which the 'Fertilizin' and 'Antifertilizin' reactions

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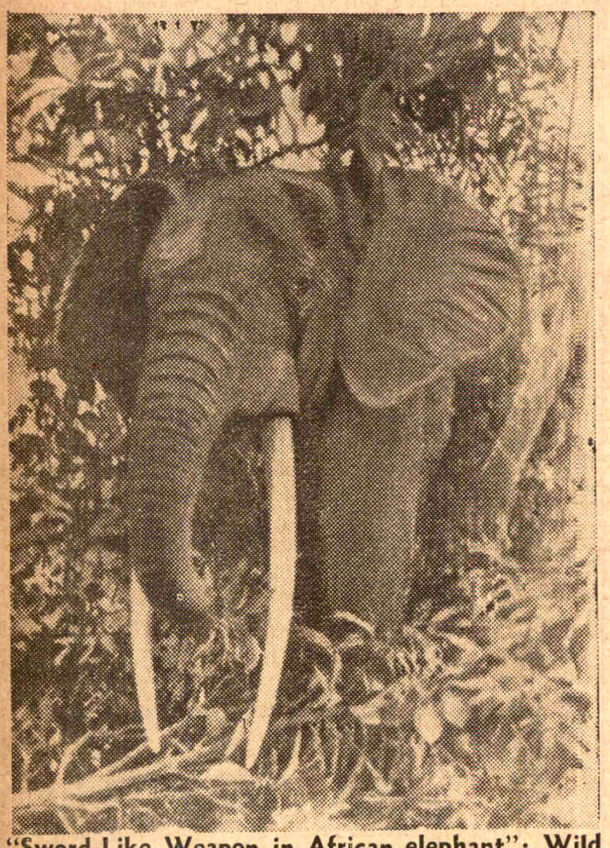
WEAPONS IN NATURE'S ARMOURY



"Sword-Like Weapon in African elephant": Wild tusker's way of dealing with a charging beast is first to pin down with his tusks and then to kick it away to its eternal doom.

(Continued From Page 139)

not strong compared with a lion, or swift compared with a panther. His only weapons, to begin with, were sticks and stones, and he had no armour save a skin shield. His safety was in his wits.

It is likely that he would pick up some ideas from watching his rivals, for he might notice that some beasts of prey lay in ambush, that others posted sentinels, and that others found strength in union. It is also very probable that he got hints from animals in regard to weapons, and that he imitated horns and claws, teeth and stings. In fact we know that early man used parts of animals in fashioning some of his weapons. Thus the story goes that Ulysses was killed by a fish-bone, and when we inquire further into the matter we find that this was a sharp-toothed spine that one of the Sting-rays bears near the end of its tail. The Sting-ray is a near relative of the skate, and when it lashes out with its tail it can give a terrible wound. The Sting-ray's spine would obviously make a very formidable spear-head. It would be an interesting exercise to make a long comparison between man's weapons and those of animals. Some very strange things would be discovered.

Some fish are actually poisonous, others are capable of giving an alarming electric shock, and in these cases the coloration and appearance of the fish serves as a warning. In other cases where the males and females are of markedly different appearance, the males are the more ferocious-looking and this serves more than one useful purpose.

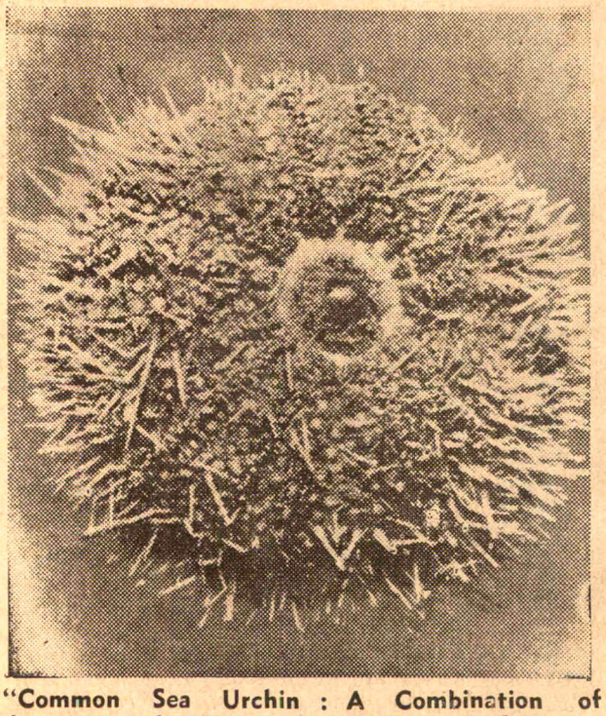
Compared with human beings, fish are short-sighted. The lens of the eye is spherical or globular, and the range of perfect vision cannot be more than a few feet. Consequently, in order to escape from its enemies all a fish has to do is to make a short and swift dash out of its enemies' sight. In the great majority of cases this is sufficient, and the muscular arrangement of the fish's body secures this sudden dart out of sight. When it is not so, it is difficult to see how such defenceless fish as mackerel or herring could survive, in spite of their enormous fecundity. The effect of the monstrous or horrible appearance of a large number of species of fish is, therefore, unquestionably in use to frighten away or warn off other species.

MONSTROUS AND DEADLY FISH

Take, for instance, the horrid sea-scorpions, the family to which they belong comprises the ugliest collection of sea-monsters available. The general appearance of this disagreeable fish, especially of the head, can only be described as monstrous and thus trespassers are warned off, since these fish are provided with poisoned dorsal spines. These spines are in their terminal portions provided with a deep groove on either side at the lower end, in which is a pear-shaped gland containing a milky poisonous fluid. The wounds made by these fish are often deadly.

A few fishes are provided with poison glands, similar in function to those possessed by poisonous snakes, and if these fishes are handled incautiously when alive, they are capable of inflicting a wound which in extreme cases may be fatal to a human being, and in any case produces partial paralysis which may last for months.

These poison glands are not associated with the teeth or fangs of the fish, but with spines which are



"Common Sea Urchin : A Combination of Armour and Weapons" : This wonderful creature of the sea is literally a starfish covered with strange appendages — spines, sheers, pincers and grapnels. The mouth is furnished with five teeth and near the tip of spines are located the little poison bags that prove fatal to victims.

situated either in the back fin, as in the Weevers; or in the tail as in the Sting-rays. These poisonous fish have a very unattractive appearance and are doubtless repellent in respect to other fishes.

There are some other fishes that give poisonous wounds as the Weever does, and in an American Toad-Fish, the apparatus is more perfect, for each of the spines has a central canal up which the poison flows. Even with the doctor's help the wound is sometimes slow to heal.

The Sting-rays or devil fish have a formidable barbed spine behind the fin.

FISH WITH WATER GUN

Malayan Archer fish has evolved the water gun, but rather as a legitimate means of livelihood than as a weapon pure and simple. The little fish squirts a jet of water from its spout-shaped lips at any chance fly perching on water-side vegetation, and the insect, fairly struck, is quickly engulfed as it falls upon the surface of the water. Rarely does the Archer fish fail to hit the target.

The muscular system in some fish is modified in a peculiar fashion so that electric organs have evolved out of the muscular substance. The so-called Eel of Brazilian waters has the tail muscles—which constitute four-fifths of the body—converted into powerful batteries. A six-foot Eel being able to give a shock of several hundred volts, the power being chiefly utilized to kill or stun the prey. Horses and men have been drowned by this fish.

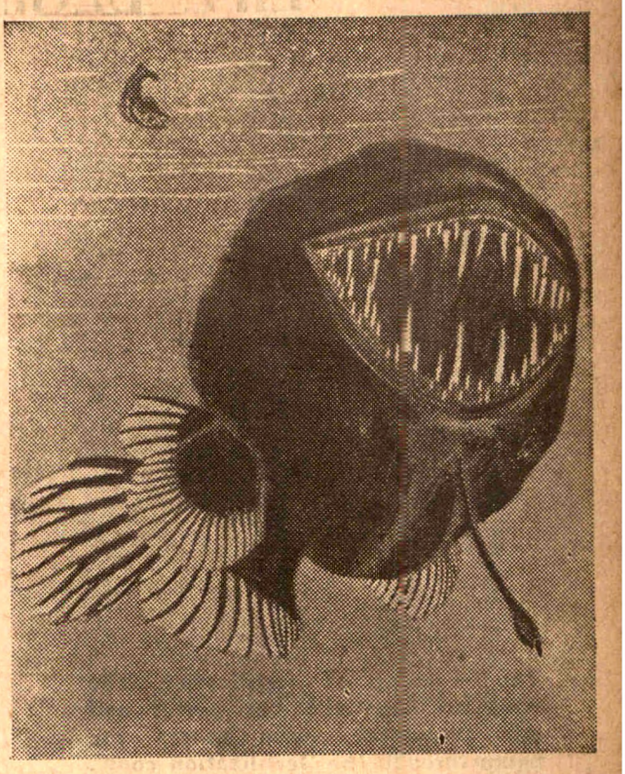
The Catfish of Arabia has the entire body wall converted into an electric organ, the fish being invested with one big battery as with a garment. It uses this weapon, not like most electric fish to stun its prey but to shock other fishes into disgorging their meals, which it appropriates.

MASSAGE BY ELECTRIC RAY

The electric rays or a torpedo ray, are common in all warm seas and notify their presence to anyone treading on them as they lie buried in sand in a very dramatic manner. A big electric ray or torpedo ray can give a shock of about thirty volts, the batteries being arranged in the form of hexagonal cylinders laid out vertically in two groups, one on either side of the body. Like the electric Eel it has been used in aquarium to light electric bulbs, ring bells, and otherwise turn its batteries to account.

In olden times this fish supplied a crude form of vibro-massage for rheumatic sufferers. The patient stood on the fish for as long as the physician ordered or for his own powers of endurance decreed.

Octopus, the gigantic creature of the seas, is not really a fish, but a mollusc. It has been known from time immemorial, as it is frequently carved on Greek objects of art such as vases, gems, coins and ornaments. The Octopus has eight long tentacles or arms provided with suckers. Some of the tribe have ten arms, and are quite capable of attacking the largest sea creatures. Even whales are not exempt from their attacks, as frequently whales, killed by whaling ships, have their bodies scarred off all over with saucer-shaped ulcerated depressions marking the grip of the octopus.



"Teeth As Weapons": This Angler Fish is known as the Sea-devil and is famous for its dreadful teeth. It gives a murderous bite and the sharp teeth are pierced into the victim's body.

It is often about the size of a large orange and among the spines it looks like a hedgehog. The shell is covered with regularly arranged sharp spines, moving on ball and socket joints, and helping the little creature in locomotion. Among the large spines there are many minute spines with three snapping blades on the end of a stalk. At the base of each blade in some of these snapping spines there is a poison bag, and the poison exudes near the tip. Some kinds of sea-urchins have a little poison-bag near the tip of their ordinary spines. If the sharp tip enters the skin of man and breaks off, some of the poison gets in, and the result is a painful wound,

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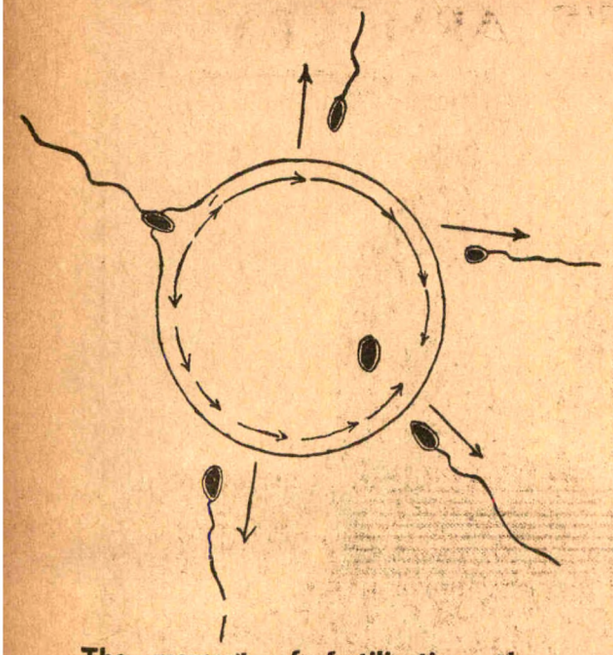
LIFE BEGINS AT ZERO



The moment of fertilization, the wave of negativity has passes and the successful sperm enters the ovum through the 'fertilization cone'.

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are translated may seem extraordinary and defy the imagination. However to a microscopist, it is a hard fact of reality.

HEREDITARY SUBSTANCES

In all mammalian fertilization, before the actual entry of the spermatozoon, the covering of the egg is broken down to enable it to go into the fold of ovum. The biochemical analysis has already brought to notice that the covering of the egg (Corono radiata) is made up of hyalorunic acid coating which tends to block the enzymes of the egg. That is why the hyalorunic-acid-covering has got to be removed in order to activate the ovum. The sperms, in addition to chemicals so far discussed, also contain an enzyme—the hyalorunidase—to disperse the hyalorunic acid covering of the egg.

The real implication of the hyalorunic acid and the hyalorunidase reaction is to permit the sperm nucleus to enter the ovum. The extraordinary fact remains that only one sperm is passable into the egg though in some forms polyopermy may be the regular case. In such cases, others soon degenerate after the entry, leaving one to function.

Even today, there is no adequate explanation to offer why only one sperm enters and not thousands of them in mammals. However, quite a detail has been worked on the point when a sperm actually enters the egg. It is believed in some quarters that as soon as the first sperm has touched the surface of the egg, a wave of negativity passes on quickly all round the egg, thereby denying the entry to other sperms. The lucky one is then engulfed by a fine projection (fertilization cone) from the egg surface which literally drags the sperm into its fold. A contrary behaviour, at this critical moment, is shown by the egg itself when it cannot be said to be entirely inactive but it is full of mechanical dynamicity to ensure fertilization. In human fertilization, it is believed that the entire sperm is taken into the egg including the long tail which soon degenerates after entry. But in other animals, only the head and the middle piece find the entry, the tail is left behind. The entry of sperm nucleus brings the message of a new life. The hereditary transactions of the paternal and maternal elements, resident in two nuclei then intermingle with one another so that the chromosome-numbers in the newly created individual may be conveniently again brought back to the normal number, as it were before the reductive division has taken place.

THE GOLDEN THRESHOLD

In the true prospective of organic evolution, the process of fertilization should be viewed as a golden threshold in the initiation of a new life, originating out of the union of two specially endowed cells. As long as they are not united, sperms and ovum are a part of the father and the mother respectively, but no sooner they are united than it marks the beginning of a new generation which strives to achieve the adult dimension of the race to which it belongs. After the fertilization has been accomplished, the new development is heralded in the fertilized egg at the time when it loses much of its cell contents which come out through the surface of the egg. The entire volume of the newly constituted cell thus falls appreciably. The sperm nucleus and the egg nucleus immediately after fertilization resolve into distinct chromosomes which divide equatorially and two daughter cells receive the equal number of paternal and maternal chromosomes. The first division in the fertilized egg is followed by many more divisions, differentiation and organization of cells which set in the condition for the ultimate emergence of an adult being. This marks the triumphant end of fertilization. In fact it is the gateway through which the stream of life always passes on. It affords the bringing about of the endless variety of maternal and paternal hereditary-stuff; thereby it is at work to enlarge the

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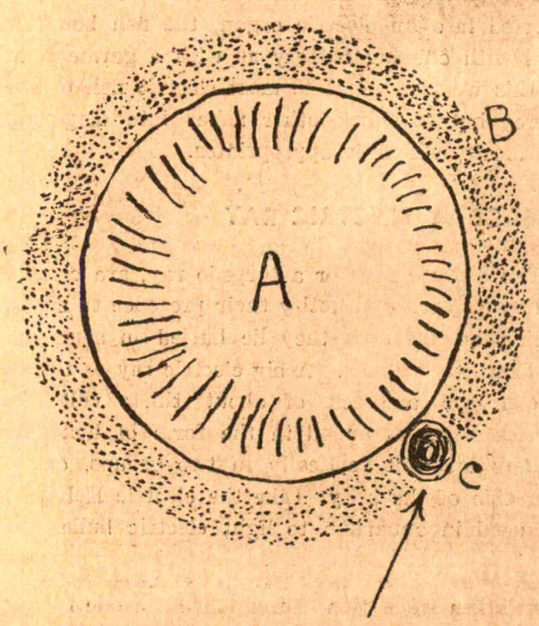


The biochemical reactions during the fertilization, sperm brings hyalorunidase (C) to destroy the covering of the hyalorunic acid (B) so that the egg substance (A) may be activated.

WEAPONS IN NATURE'S ARMOURY

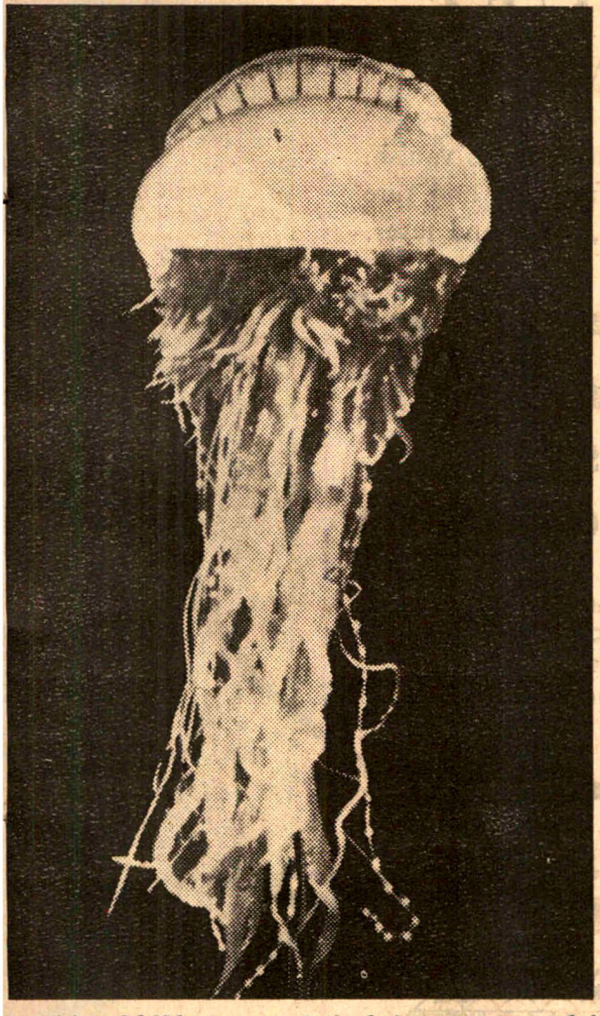
(Continued From Page 145)

often slow to heal. Thus the sea-urchin is well equipped with a combination of armour and weapons.

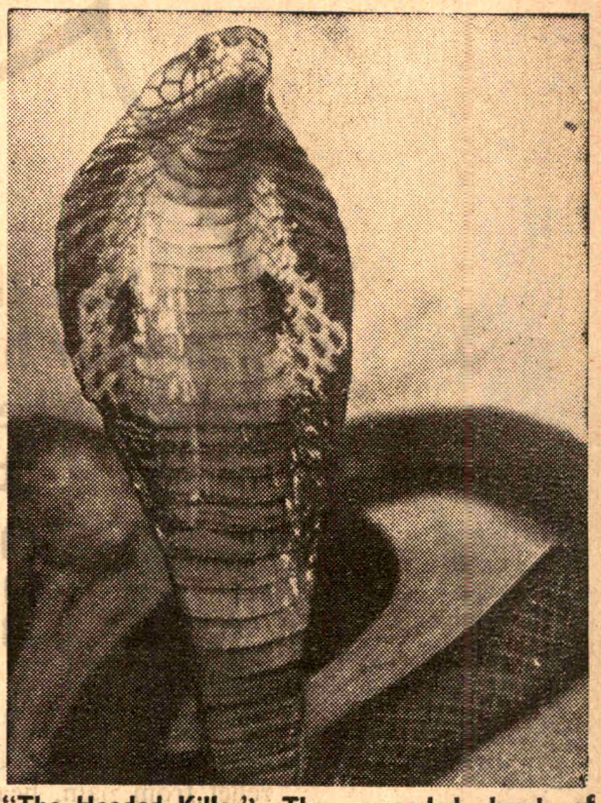
HOW BIG JELLY-FISH STING

A typical creature of the surface waters of the seas is about two feet or more across. A high-power microscope reveals each sting as a barbed dart, with sharp flukes, folded close to a shaft to which is attached a neatly coiled line. Contact with a foe touches off the whole apparatus by means of a hair-trigger, and the barbed dart, suddenly expanded, plunges into living tissue. Shaft and line are dragged after it, and when hundreds of such darts find their way into a bather's blood stream, as when he collides with a big jelly-fish, it is small wonder he later suffers from irritant blisters.

With few exceptions the amphibians of today are naked-skinned. But they make up for the absence of armour by the presence of abundant poison-glands in the skin. The common Toad is doubtless an unpopular creature, credited with the habit of spitting of which it is not guilty. It is not poisonous, but it has, as a means of defence, a dirty, whitish secretion in the pores of the skin which has an irritant effect. When excited the Toad puffs itself out and exudes beads of this secretion. Experiments with birds have shown that if the bird has tried a young Toad once or twice, it will not touch it again, even if it has had no food for a considerable time.



A "Man-Of-War" : A Jelly-fish is a beautiful colony consisting of a float from which are suspended numerous individuals, some nutritive, some locomotor, some tactile, and some reproductive. There is a poison-bag attached to the snapping spines. When bathing in the sea people are sometimes badly stung by coming into its contact.



"The Hooded Killer" The expanded hood of the Cobra which is a temporary dilation of the skin of the neck gives a warning.

The poison of a small tree-frog, which ranges from Panama to the Amazons, is used for making arrowheads deadly, and also, in a curious way, for faking the colours of parrot's feathers.

SNAKES CAUSE HUMAN TRAGEDY

It is common among snakes, that glands which are in ordinary cases quite harmless become venomous. This gives us a glimpse of one of Nature's ways of working, if we may so say — making a new thing out of something very old. In snakes the poison-glands are made out of transformed upper-lip glands or out of a pair of salivary glands, which are known in other animals as parotids. The saliva in ordinary cases contains a ferment which changes starch into sugar; in certain snakes this is replaced by a poison. This acts on the nervous system in the cobras and their relatives, on the blood-vessels and blood in the rattle-snakes and vipers.

Always the poison is injected through a hollow teeth in the upper jaw, usually by a lightning stroke or a chewing action. A few snakes actually squirt the venom from their fangs, a notorious example being that of the deadly South African spitting cobra or ring-hals. Its venom invariably causes blindness if it enters the eyes, and should it penetrate a cut, death follows in an hour or two.

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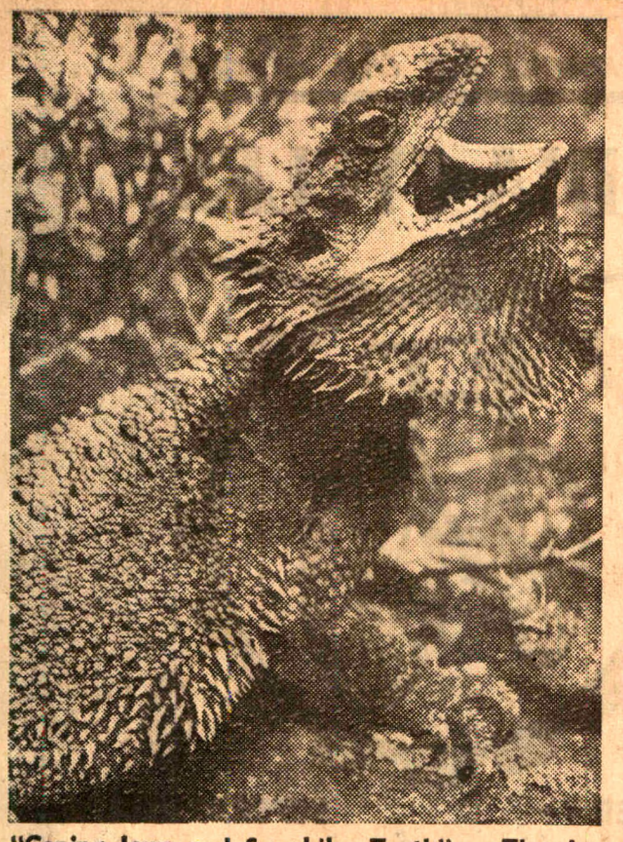

"Gaping Jaws and Saw-Like Teeth": The Jaw Lizard or Beaded Dragon has very sharp teeth situated along the jaw, like the teeth of a saw. The photograph enables us to see the wide-gaping jaws of a creature which is ready and willing to inflict a terrible bite upon a man or animal that attacks it. The skin is covered with bony beads.

dred odd species of snakes now living are poisonous in varying degree. The viper, found in Great Britain, inflicts no more than half a dozen "stings" on human beings perhaps in the course of a year. In contrast to this, the kraits and cobras of India alone account for some twenty thousand human lives annually.

VENOMOUS LIZARD OF MEXICO

It is remarkable that there should be in the large order of lizards one case of poisonousness. This is the "Gila Monster" or Heloderma of Mexico and Arizona, a lizard about two feet long, very thick tailed, covered with a bead-work of bony tubercles. Its colours are dark brown mingled with orange or yellow, and in the tail region there are alternate dark and light rings.

This strange creature is sluggish during the day, but crawls about in the evening in search of worms, centipedes, frogs and the eggs of other lizards. It possesses glands and fangs like those of a snake, but rarely if ever causes human fatalities.

VARIOUS POISONOUS INSECTS

Some animals and birds are able to tackle venomous snakes with great success, being very dexterous in avoiding the bite. The mongoose and the Secretary Bird are two good examples. It seems, however, that some of the creatures that deal with snakes are more than dexterous. They have a mysterious inborn power of resistance — called immunity — so that if they are bitten the venom has no effect. In the same way, if one cobra bites another cobra there is no poisoning.

The Secretary Bird possesses very long legs and stands about four feet in height. It is found throughout South Africa, as well as in parts of East and West Africa. The bird has for long been famed as an eater of snakes, both venomous and non-venomous. Because of the benefits it thus renders to mankind it is protected by law in many districts.

Many of us have had first-hand experience of insect poisons such as those of the ant, which consists largely of formic acid, or of the mosquito, bee and wasp. In the last mentioned the poison is conveyed from two glands, one containing an alkaline, the other an acid fluid. The consequences of the sting are so severe that one is led to suspect that the entrance of the instrument was accompanied with the introduction of some disease-germs. This is true of the bites of some insects. It is not the bite itself that matters, it is the introduction of

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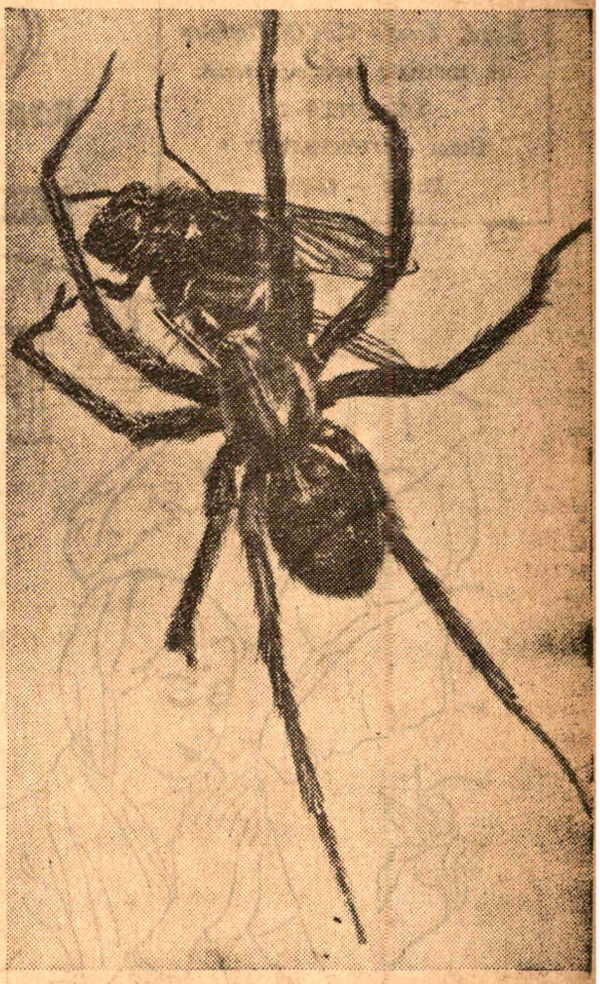

"House Spider Dealing with a Blue-Bottle": Leg are armed with spurs and mouth with terrible jaws. It pounces on the luckless prey and disables it with its fangs. It then proceeds to suck the juices of its capture until only a shrivelled skin is left. Some species have poison fangs.

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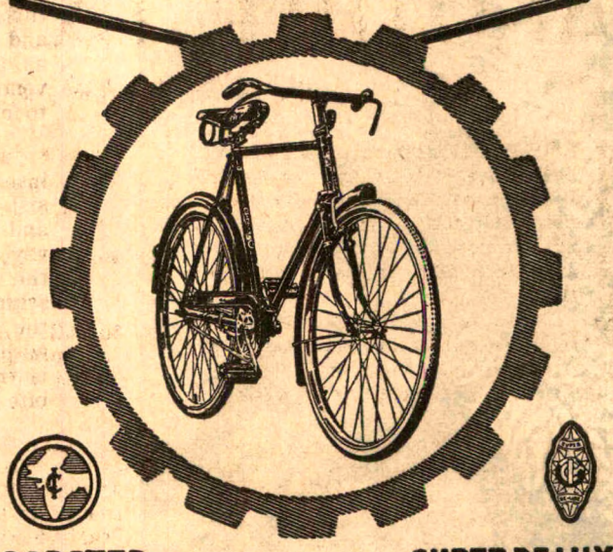

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THEY WANTED TO BUILD ANOTHER TAJ MAHAL

By K. R. N. SWAMY

PROBABLY more encomiums have been showered on the Taj Mahal than on any other handiwork of man. Often, it has been argued as to whether anyone can build another edifice more magnificent than the Taj.

So far, this challenge has remained unanswered, although many noteworthy attempts have been made to build a monument equalling, if not excelling the Grand mausoleum at Agra.

Strangely enough, the first attempt was made by no other person than the Emperor Shah Jahan, whose love for his Empress, Arjmand-Banu-Begum, resulted in the creation of the Taj Mahal. After having built the Taj Mahal, the Emperor felt that it would be befitting to have another mausoleum, the exact replica of the Taj Mahal, but in black marble, constructed on the other bank of the Jamuna, so as to house his mortal remains.

He further decided to have a marble bridge across the Jamuna to connect these two mausoleums, so that as in life, in death also he and his beloved would remain united.

On completion of the Taj, he ordered the master builder to start work on the Black Taj Mahal. But it is doubtful as to whether, Shah Jahan, the Grand Moghul as he was called, could have financed the building of the Black Taj Mahal.

Even in the building of the Taj Mahal, History reveals that the Moghul treasury shouldered only one third of the expenses, the rest being borne by contributions from Maharajahs and Nawabs. Further the price of the superior Caucasian Black marble, used in the Taj, was five times the price of the pure white marble.

The expense of building the Black Taj Mahal would have been at least 160 million rupees, when compared to the 32 million rupees spent on the Taj Mahal.

Tradition avers, that even while building the Taj Mahal, Ustad Isa, the master architect, ran short of black marble and was forced to use white marble soaked in correct chemicals for years, till it acquired the proper black colour.

Anyhow, the fratricidal wars that ravaged the Empire of Shah Jahan, during his last years put an end to this Grand Scheme.

Today, on the bank of the Jamuna, opposite to the Taj Mahal, one can see the foundations of a vast red sandstone platform that was to house this mausoleum.

Aurangazeb, Shah Jahan's successor was not interested in completing the monument and when Shah Jahan died his remains were placed in the same crypt where lay the remains of Mumtaj Mahal. "The mortal remains of my parents should lie buried side by side, as they loved each other so strongly," Aurangazeb decided, "but to build another such monument would be wasteful and ridiculous excess."

AURANGAZEB'S ATTEMPTS

It seems a little ironical that the second attempt to build another Taj Mahal was made by the Emperor Aurangazeb himself. This time, it was in memory of his wife, Dilras Banu, surnamed Rabia-ud-durani and better known as Durani Begum.

She died in Aurangabad and the edifice known as the Bibi-ka-Muqbara in Aurangabad is the mausoleum Aurangazeb erected in her memory. The mausoleum cost him seven lakhs of rupees and took seven years to build.

Chronicles mention that the marble had to be brought from the North Indian quarries and that the master architects, Ataulla and Haibat Rai, designed the monument.

But to any observer, it becomes apparent that this monument, (built within seven years of the completion of the immortal Taj) while following in outline the basic features of the Agra edifice is no equal to it.

According to the well known historian Percy Browne, the Bibi-ka-Muqbara falls far short of the Taj in that the symmetry and simplicity are absent in it.

The mausoleum is approached by a paved avenue having a broad pond, with 13 fountains in the centre. At the end of the avenue, within a spacious area stands the monument. The total height of the monument is 110 feet above the ground.

Up to a height of five feet from the terrace, the building is of pure marble and above this height the superstructure is of stone stucco. On the top the huge dome is again of white marble.

The decline of the Moghul Empire and the distance the Bibi-ka-Muqbara was from the imperial capital of Delhi, caused the edifice to fall into disrepair and Aurangazeb's son, Prince Azam rebuilt it again.

The centuries that followed had spelt ruin for this monument and the costly treasures inside it and at the beginning of the 20th century, Lord Curzon ordered the cataloguing and conservation of old China, copperware and carpets that had been lying neglected in the Muqbara. Since then, the Nizam's Government has spent a lot of money in the upkeep of the monument.

Lord Curzon took a keen interest in the architectural heritage of India and the Indian Archaeological Department owes its present status to this illustrious Viceroy. It was Lord Curzon, who made a positive attempt to find the fate of the Peacock

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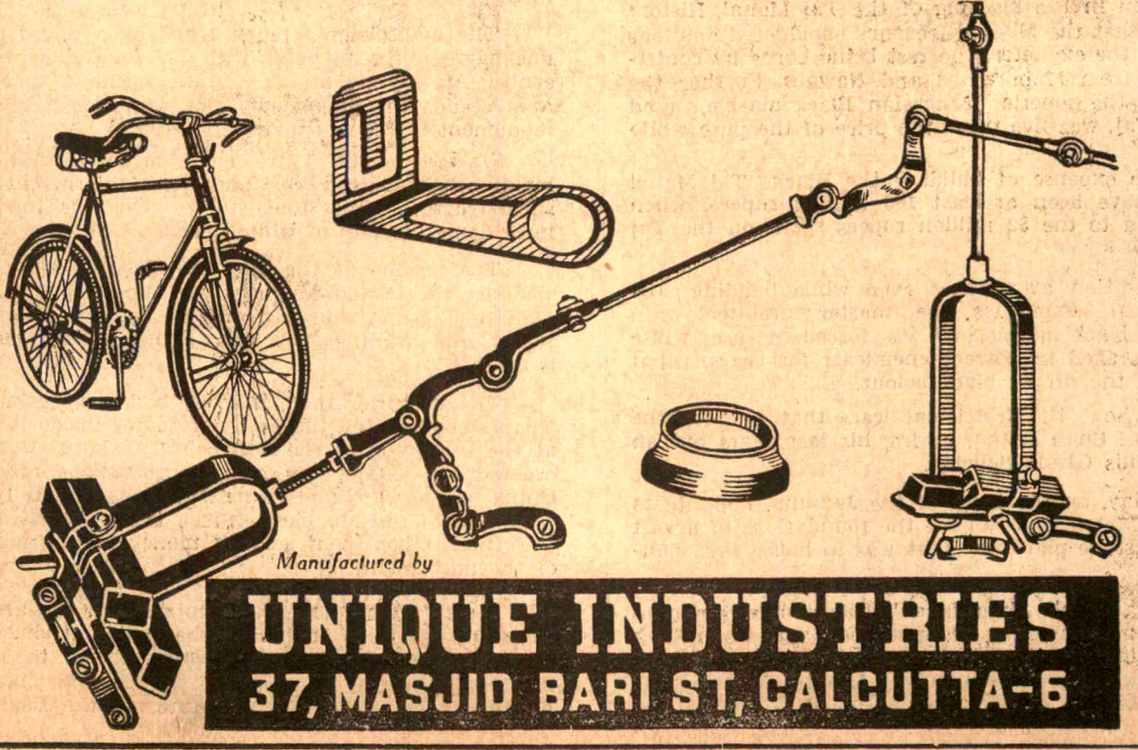

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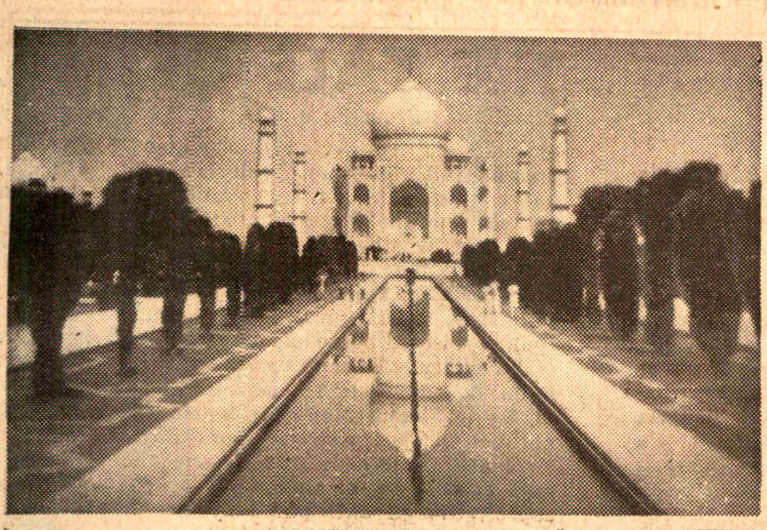
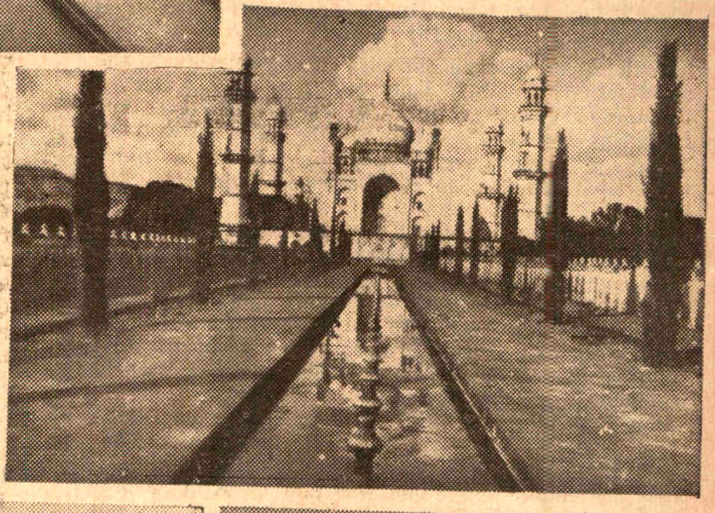
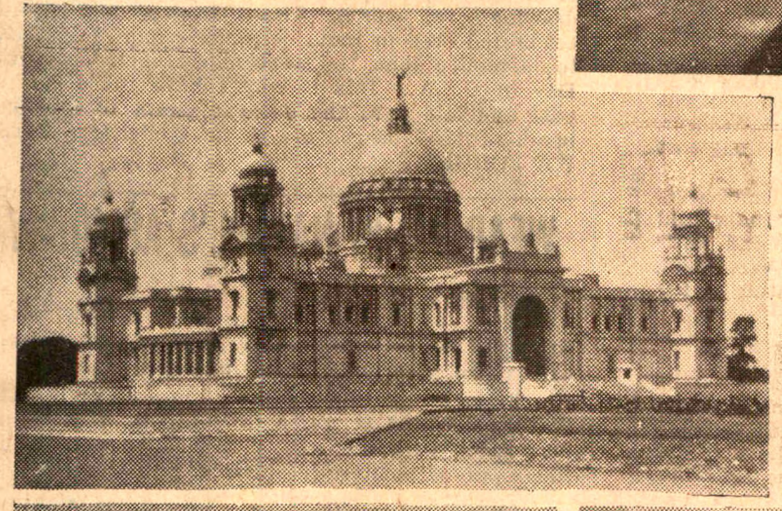


(Left)
The Immortal Taj at Agra.

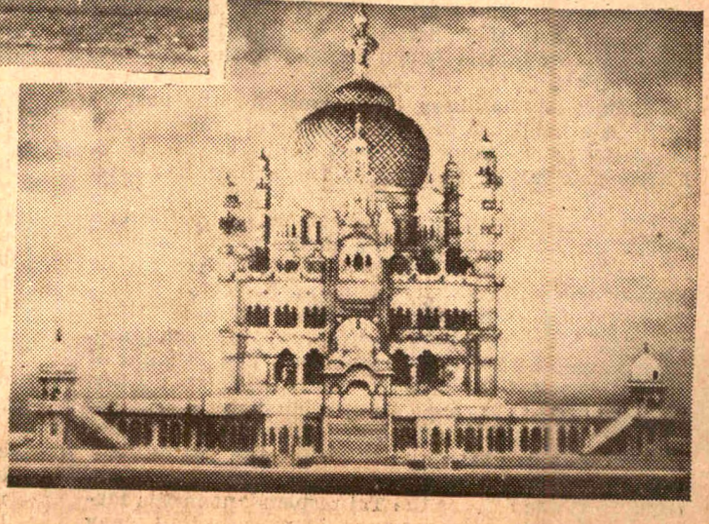
(Right)
Bibi-Ka-Muqbara, Tomb of Emperor Aurangazeb's Queen At Aurangabad.





(Left)
The Victoria Memorial Hall at Calcutta.

(Right)
The Model of Radhaswami Memorial Hall at Agra.



Throne and thanks to his efforts, the historic monuments of Agra have been saved from the ravages of time.

"TWENTIETH CENTURY TAJ"

But this Viceroy had a greater ambition to fulfil. This was to build in India, an edifice to perpetuate the memory of Queen Victoria, just like the Taj Mahal was meant to keep immortal the memory of the Queen of Shah Jahan.

The third attempt to raise an edifice to equal the Taj was thus made by Lord Curzon, who had resuscitated the Bibi-ka-Muqbara, and this has resulted in the building of the Victoria Memorial known as the 'Twentieth Century Taj,' in Calcutta.

When the news of the death of Queen Victoria reached him, a committee was set up to build up a 'stately building, which in its shimmering beauty is a worthy rival to the Taj in Agra.'

'I want a magnificent shell', Curzon wrote to the architect, Sir William Emerson, "pure and severe in its simplicity with various galleries and corridors radiating around its centre space which will be dedicated to the Queen." As it happened, the architect chose the Italian Renaissance style for the Victoria Memorial Hall.

The project prospered and the appeal for funds met with a magnificent response. In spite of the fact that Curzon refused to accept the huge offers from some of the Indian Princes, feeling as he said, that the memorial ought to be erected by the contributions of the thousands rather than that of the few, he received within the short space of three months nearly 30 lakhs of rupees.

He was able to say, when he left India three years later, that the amount had increased to 52 lakhs of rupees.

The foundation stone was laid by King George V, when he was the Prince of Wales, in 1906 and was declared open by his son, now the Duke of Windsor, during his visit to India in 1921. But the final cost of the monument was 72 lakhs of rupees.

Today the 183-foot high Victoria Memorial is one of the most magnificent buildings in India, and houses a priceless collection of paintings and antiques including one by the Russian artist Verestagin, and reputed to be the second biggest painting in the world.

ANOTHER RIVAL IN MAKING

The fourth attempt to build an edifice equalling the Taj, is still going on. Four miles from the city of Agra, the Radhaswami sect of Hindus are building a monument to their first Guru and in the words of one of the architects "when completed, the memorial will rival the Taj."

The work has been in progress for the past 50 years at an expense of over 20 lakhs of rupees and according to the Chief Engineer in charge, Mr. G. S. Bhatnagar, only a fraction of the edifice has been built so far.

The monument is to be completed by the end of the present century and a model of the building as it will appear when completed, is displayed in the halls of the Radhaswamy Memorial Society.

The proposed building has an oriental setting, but different styles have been beautifully combined. The original estimate of the expense was 50 lakhs of rupees. but it is opined by the builders that when completed, the cost may be as high as one crore of rupees. The total height of the Memorial will be 193 feet, 27 feet less than the height of the Taj Mahal.

On ascending to the top of the uncompleted second floor, one can see the Taj resplendant in the far-off horizon. The Radhaswamy Memorial Hall may not equal the Taj Mahal in beauty, but will cer-

THE TALE OF 1857

(Continued From Page 137)

of historical truth, that it should be widely known and its full significance fully realised. Besides, it has a great lesson for humanity, as it scathingly exposes how the much-vaunted human culture is but skin-deep, whether that skin is black or white, or belongs to the spiritual East or materialistic West. The periodic recurrence of such exhibitions of primitive animal instincts in man serves as a counterpoise to our complacent view of the progress of humanity. To many a contemporary the sack of Delhi by the British troops recalled the atrocities of Nadir Shah. Many an Indian today would find parallel to the atrocities of 1857 in the recent communal frenzy in Bengal and the Punjab, and look upon it as the centenary of 1857 in its bloody aspect, though anticipated by ten years.

So it goes on, from Tamerlane (1398 A.D.) to Nadir Shah (1739), and then with gradually diminishing intervals to 1857, and 1946-7. What is the use of blinking at the glaring, though bitterly unpleasant, truth? Our national motto is "Truth triumphs" (*satyameva jayate*), and we must have the courage to face the truth. You cannot wipe off an evil deed by simply ignoring or forgetting its existence, hiding your head in the sands like an ostrich. So let us know this world as it is, with all that is good and all that is bad; and this applies not only to the big world outside, but also to the little world in which we live. Constant reminder of an evil is perhaps more salutary than deliberately drawing a veil over it. The Hiroshima Day, recently celebrated even in India, is perhaps more instructive to humanity than the anniversary of Independence Day in U.S.A. This is why I have raked up the past and laid bare the darkest aspect of the Outbreak of 1857 on the eve of its Centenary,—LEST WE FORGET.

WEAPONS IN NATURE'S ARMOURY

(Continued From Page 149)

microbes. It is from the bite of an infected insect that man becomes infected by such terrible diseases as malaria, sleeping sickness and the plague.

There are certain soldier white ants or termites that squirt fluid at a foe, the said fluid hardening in contact with the air so that a luckless spider thus sprayed is literally petrified.

All spiders kill their prey by means of poisons injected through their hollow fangs, but only the venom of a few large tropical species affects human beings.

Explosives would appear to be the secret of one class of creatures only, a family of small and obscure beetles that have earned the title of bombardiers. Several species are native to Great Britain, and if disturbed, as by upturning a stone beneath which they may be hiding, answer back to molestation the obtruder by expelling from their body an irritant substance, which explodes in the air with a distinct report — thus coming very near the horrible modern device of poison gas.

Even today we see animal weapons turned against their possessors. The deer's antlers are exceedingly tough and springy, and when two bucks meet in conflict the horns easily become so interlocked that death by starvation or at the teeth and claws of wandering carnivores overtakes both

Picture shows the Jaina temples in ruins at Pakbira. (Copyright Archaeological Dept.)

JAINA ANTIQUITIES IN MANBHUM

By P. C. ROY CHAUDHURY, M.A., B.L.

IT is now almost forgotten that the district of Manbhum in Chotanagpur Division of Bihar had once been a great centre of Jainism. Probably in no other district in India could be found more ancient Jaina antiquities lying in neglect than in Manbhum. Manbhum was the district through which one had to pass while going from Bengal or Bihar to Utkal or Orissa.

It will be remembered that Jainism as a creed had once a very great hold on Orissa. The antiquities in Khandagiri Caves in Orissa are unique specimens of Jaina antiquities. The famous Jaina King Kharavela of Utkal or Orissa came upto Barabar Hills in Gaya where he had left his impress. Manbhum was the via media through which the contacts between Bihar and Orissa were maintained. This may be one of the reasons why there are so many Jaina antiquities scattered all over the district of Manbhum.

Hiuen Tsang, the Chinese traveller in India in the 7th Century A. D., mentions that he came across a province which he called "Safa". General Cunningham mentioned that Bara Bazar of the Barabhum Fargana was the headquarters of this "Safa" province. Mr. Hibert, however, identifies Dalmi, which is near Patkum as the capital of "Safa" province. There are some ancient remains which are clearly of Jaina origin at Dalmi hills. Srawakas or lay Jainas in this part of the district were a great factor at one time. The Srawakas occupied important areas in Manbhum district and were predecessors to the Bhumij population in Manbhum. They were mostly engaged in some sort of trade. The district of Manbhum was very important for the inter-district and inter-province trade routes connecting Benaras, Jagarnathpuri and Tamralipta, an important port in Bengal. Even now there are a large number of Jainas scattered all over the district of Manbhum. For our purposes we have included the present sub-district of Dhanbad as a part of Manbhum. There is no doubt that Dhanbad will very soon attain the status of a full district.

PREACHING OF CULT BY MAHAVIRA

Tradition ascribes to Lord Mahavira having visited the province of "Safa" when he was on tour for the spread of his cult. It is said that the aboriginals who were in an overwhelming majority in the "Safa" province were not very keen to listen to or follow Mahavira and that he was even molested by them. But undaunted, Lord Mahavira went about preachnig his cult and ultimately his sense of sobriety and

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saintliness touched the heart of the tribal population and many were converted to Jainaism.

Balrampur commonly known as Palma Balrampur, a village about four miles from Purulia is on the bank of river Kasai. There is a temple at Balrampur in which there are a number of Jaina images some of which are clearly of the Jaina Tirthankars. Some of the images have the Jaina *Chinhas* and are apparently quite old. An inscription on a stone fixed to a pillar was found at this village. The inscription was removed several years back by an agency commonly ascribed to be a Settlement Officer and now could be seen fixed by the road side within the Court compound.

At Boram, a big village situated four miles south from Jaipur railway station, there are three temples in ruin which are said to be constructed by the Srawakas or the lay Jainas. These three temples are identical in design. These temples have Jaina images and were originally Jaina shrines. To the south about a mile away from Boram there is a shrine where there are images in nudity. This by itself is a clear proof that the images are Jaina in origin. The shrine is now taken to be a Hindu temple.

COLLECTION IN ATNA MUSEUM

Chandankiari, another village a few miles away from Purulia, the headquarters of Manbhum district, is the place where a large number of Jaina antiquities were accidentally found. The collection in Patna Museum of the images of the Jaina Tirthankars that were found in Chandankiari makes one of the finest collections of Jaina antiquities in India. Most of these images have been identified by the clear *Chinhas* or special emblems of the Tirthankars. Some of the figures are exquisite from the artistic point of view. The worksmanship is delicate and superb. They are all of the 11th Century A. D. There are two other villages within five miles of Chandankiari, namely, Kumhri and Kumardagga, where also there are some old Jaina images. At both these villages inscriptions have been found one of which has been removed by a local gentleman.

Among the other old Jaina remains in Manbhum district, particular mention need be made about the Jaina temples and sculptures at the small village of Pakbira, twenty miles north-east of Bara Bazar or 32 miles by Purulia-Puncha Road in Manbhum (Purulia) district. They had attracted the attention of the Archaeological Department. J. D. Beglar in the Archaeological Survey of India, Vol. VIII, mentioned about the remains at Pakbira.

IMAGE OF SHRI BAHUBALJI

A mela is held at Pakbira in the month of Chaitra where animal sacrifices used to be held. Since the last few years animal sacrifices are not being offered owing to persuasion by the Jainas. An attempt is being made by some of the leading Jainas of Purulia and Ranchi to build a temple at Pakbira and to preserve the Jaina antiquities. There are now three temples in ruins and about 20 images lying collected at three places. The temples are buried and the *Shikhars* (tops) of the temples are to be seen. A number of images are also lying half-buried. One of the images is 5 cubits high and of Shri Bahubalji. Unfortunately this image of Shri Bahubalji has developed a crack. This image is worshipped at present by the villagers as Bhaironath. There are arrangements to give a bath to the image of Shri Bahubalji.

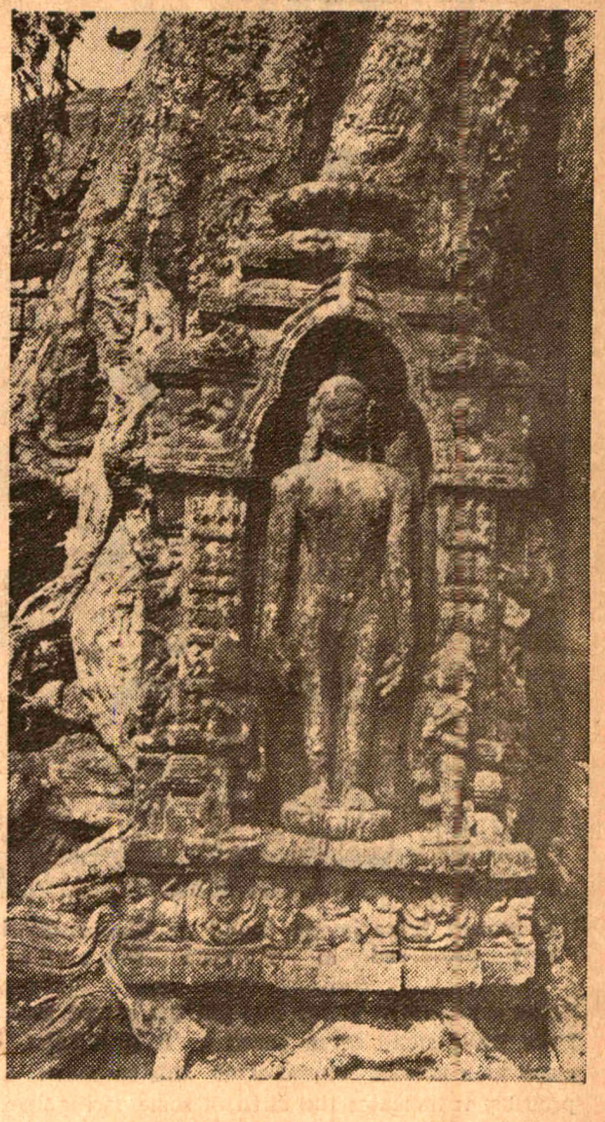
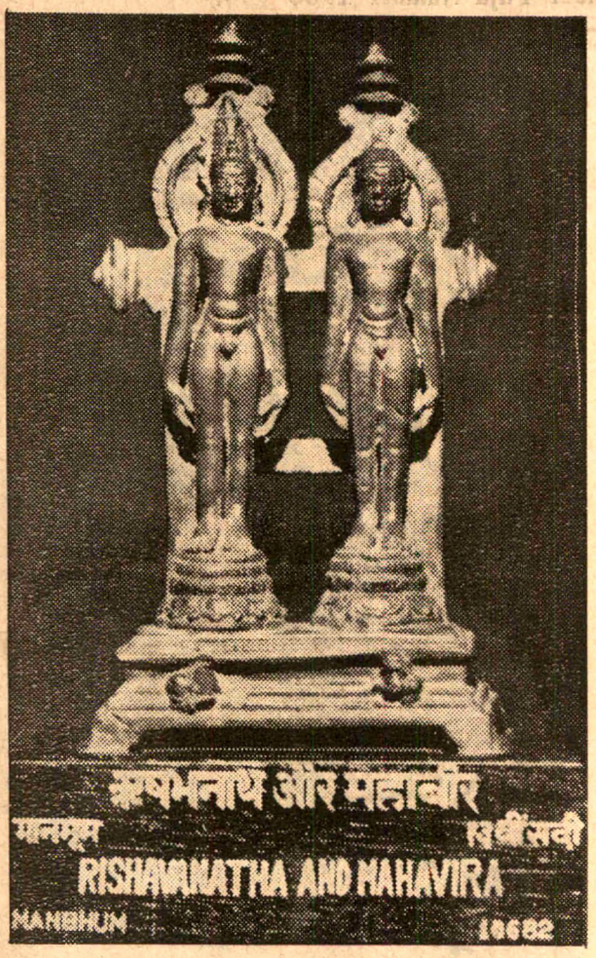


Image of a Jaina Tirthankar in village Palma Balrampur (Copyright Archaeological Dept.)

The image is now well besmeared with oil and vermilion owing to the worship by the Hindus as Bhaironath. A number of the images lying scattered are in *Khargasan* pose. The images also include Parswanath Mahavirji, Padmavati and Rishavdev. The images are apparently ancient and an opinion has been hazarded that they may be 2000 years old. Carvings are superb and most of the images are still intact.

FIGURES OF FATHER AND MOTHER

Apparently Pakbira was a very important place at one time. Several smaller villages nearabout Pakbira although they have separate names are commonly grouped under the name of Pakbira. At some of these smaller villages there are exquisitely carved stoor door jambs or pillars. In the neighbouring village of Pankha there are four images which have been damaged. One of them is that of Shri Rishavdev with 24 Tirthankars on the sides. There is another rare specimen at this village. On a stone slab a tree of the height of 2 cubits has been carved with a child sitting at the top of the tree. Under the tree there are figures indicating father and mother and the mother is with a baby. The



A bronze Jaina image found at Chandankiari, now preserved in Patna Museum.

figure depicting a father has got the sacred thread. Near them stand seven persons. It is difficult to come to a correct appraisal of this specimen but probably it indicates the birth of some Tirthankar.

In the neighbouring village of Budhpur there are a number of images which are worshipped once annually. Some of these images are Jaina specimens. All the images have been removed by individuals.

The next important group of Jaina shrines in ruins are found at Dulmi, twentyfive miles west of Bara Bazar. Dulmi is a small village on the banks of Subernarekha river. There are numerous mounds, some of stone and others of bricks. The Jaina temples are all exclusively at the extreme north end of what was probably the old city according to Beglar. Dulmi is an ancient place.

THE OLD TEMPLES AT DEOLI

A few miles from Dulmi is the small village of Deoli. There is a group of old temples at Deoli and they all appear to have been Jaina. In the sanctum of the largest temple there is in situ a Jaina figure known as Arhanath. Hindu electicism has claimed the figure as one of the Hindu pantheon and the figure is now worshipped by the Hindus as well. The statue is three feet high and on a pedestal. The figure of an antelope sculptured on the pedestal and two rows of three naked figures each over the head cut on each side make out their clear Jaina origin. The main temple which is now in ruins consists of a sanctum, antarala, and a *mahamandapa*. There are a number of small temples by the side of the main temple. Under a tree within the distance of half a mile there is a Jaina figure in nudity with the serpent-hood above the head. Research and exploration in this area are bound to bring out more relics.

It is also to be noted that a large number of inscriptions are lying scattered in different parts of the district of Manbhum. It is recently that a concerted attempt is being made through a historical society at Purulia to collect these inscriptions and to have them properly deciphered. There are inscriptions found at villages Karcha, Bhawanipur, Palma, Anai, Bauridih, Kumhri, Kumardaga, Chaliana, Simagunda and Jaida, all in Manbhum Sadar. Some of these insciptions particularly at villages Karcha, Bhawanipur, Palma, Anai and Bauridih have probably references to Jainism as there are many Jaina antiquities found at the places where inscriptions were detected. The largest inscription is at Simgunda near Nimidih Railway Station and contains six lines.

MARKS OF LOT OF VANDALISM

There are several other villages which were noticed by Beglar but which evidently had exclusive Jaina images when Beglar travelled through the district. Some of these Jaina antiquities are still to be seen although there has been a lot of vandalism on them. One of the most important of such villages is Karcha about six miles from Purulia. There are a large number of Jaina statues and five ancient mounds, the excavation of which is likely to yield fruitful results. At Bhawanipur which is about one mile to the east of Karcha village an inscription has been found on the pedestal of an undoubtedly Jaina Tirthankar Rishavnath.

This village Bhawanipur, about 8 miles east of Purulia was apparently a centre of Jainism in the past. The clear image of Rishavnath has 24 Tirthankars engraved on the sides and there are also the usual figures of *Chamaris, Incensors* and *Yakshis*. By the side of this image under a tree the writer also saw another small image of Chakreshwari Devi. Under another tree nearby in the same village of Bhawanipur there is a Jaina figure of a person on an animal which looks like a *Makar* (crocodile). The seated person has a sword in one hand and a bell in the other. The animal in this figure is taken by some as a dog but there is no place of a *Kukurbahan* image (where the dog is the mode of conveyance). Under the same tree there is also an image of Padmavati and Dhanendra. Apparently the image has been torn from its environments.

Another such village is Anai about three miles from Karcha on the river Kasai. Near about Anai village there are other ruins of brick built old temples some with broken images and some without any. Many of the images that had been observed in these Jaina temples 30 years back have disappeared by now. The village of Bauridih near Ladurka is on Purulia-Hura Road at a distance of 11 miles. It has recently yielded to the efforts of a Purulia historical society five Jaina images three of which are Rishavnath, Chandraprabhu and Parswanath respectively as made out from the *Chinhas*. The two other images are of the 24th Tirthankar Mahavira. Peculiarly enough in this village an inscription on a piece of stone has been used in the masonry work within the ring of a well. This clearly shows that the stone slabs con-

JAINA ANTIQUITIES IN MANBHUM

taining images and inscriptions were open to free vandalism in the hands of unscrupulous public.

A RICH FIELD FOR RESEARCH

Strangely enough Manbhum is a district where there are Jaina antiquities in abundance lying exposed and neglected. The more one enquires the more relics come to one's knowledge. The little known village Pabanpur in Barabhum Pargana was obviously an important Jaina centre in olden times. There are a number of ruined temples and broken antiquities. Some of these temples have exquisite carvings. On all sides of the temple there are damaged images of the Tirthankars. Another small village, Par, at a distance of four miles from Anara Railway Station has also certain Jaina antiquities but there has not been any exploration of the area. Some of the antiquities of this area had been sent to Calcutta Museum and are preserved there. One of them is a 2 ft. high image of Shanti Nathji in *Khargasan*. This is slightly damaged.

Probably because the Jaina images, many of which are still unbroken, are lying exposed under trees or on sites which were once temples, very little attention has been paid to them. The cluster of images that the writer saw at various parts of the district in neglected spots remind one as to what a commotion would have been made had they been discovered as a result of a digging. As no State protection has been given they have been freely utilised on the walls of private houses or temples. Manbhum offers a rich field for research into the evolution of Jainism in this area, its relationship with orthodox Hinduism, Saivism and Vaishnavism. A number of inscriptions on the pedestals of some of the images have been found. They have not yet been properly deciphered or studied. A proper study of the inscriptions and the images supported by some excavations in well-identified area of Jaina culture will no doubt throw a good deal of light on the history of culture in this part of the country extending over two thousand years.

ART TREASURES OF CEYLON

(Continued From Page 131)

says, "There is probably no more handsome specimen of bold artistic work of its kind in granite to be found in Ceylon than this finely conceived bit of sculpture." Among the ruins of Mihintale the graceful columns of the Ambasthale Dagaba stands pre-eminent as the "tour de force" of the stone mason.

TEMPLE OF THE TOOTH

There are other stupas and "dagabas" in galore and everywhere there is some specimen of beautiful art or other. In Kandy town one of the chief objects of interest is the Dalada Maligawa or Temple of the Tooth. This is the heart of Kandy, and the Tooth of the Buddha is the heart of it. The relic came from India sixteen centuries ago, and moved from capital to capital always with the king. The temple is enclosed by an ornamental stone wall with a moat. The most striking features that attract one's attention are the unusual carvings, brightly coloured frescoes representing torments for various classes of sinners and many images of the Buddha.

Next door to the Tooth Temple is the Audience Hall where the Kandyan kings held court with all

(Continued From Previous Col.)

pomp and ceremony. The rich carvings on the pillars and the wall plates are excellent examples of Kandyan architecture.

Good pieces of sculpture and painting and artisitc specimens of stone carving and architecture will be found in every Vihara and "dagaba" which are in plenty in this island, and special mention should be made of Natha Devale, Gangarama Temple, Mahavishnu Devale, Gadaladeniya Temple and

LIFE BEGINS AT ZERO

(Continued From Page 146)

scope of variation which becomes important for selection and evolutionary impacts.

VIRGIN BIRTH

Another important phenomenon in this connection is the artificial activation of eggs. It has been found that in some animals the matured egg can be made to develop in laboratory without the intervention of any spermatozoa. This phenomenon of activation of eggs minus the sperms is known as parthenogenesis and if these eggs complete their development it is often said this is as a result of virgin birth. There are a number of records to show that the frog's egg can be made to develop by pricking it by a needle dipped in blood. Some other physical and chemical treatments like heat and cold exposures, treatment with acids, may also produce artificial activation in some eggs. In nature there are regular instances of egg-development of wasps, bees and ants by parthenogenetic means in case there is no chance to meet a sperm. Experts now believe that the egg is a wonderful apparatus by itself which is ready to undergo tremendous changes, only needs little stimulation to initiate the process either by sperm or by parthenogenetic agents. Once stimulated, it will try to carry out its auto-mechanism.

There has been innumerable attempts to control the process of fertilization more precisely and human ingenuity in this respect is not lacking behind. Direct work on the fertilizability and longevity of sperms is opening up new possibilities which were undreamt of before. Regular process of artificial insemination in farm animals has now been recognised and samples of sperms are flown across country for making controlled mating experiments. It is now possible to successfully inseminate more than one cow from the yield of sperms from a single bull. The application of such experimental technique is full of value to human sphere of life. For fertilization is a constant source of rendering variations to the offsprings and all variations may not be useful. It will gradually become a necessity to exercise choice of selecting the 'good-sperms' and 'bad-sperms' for the sake of genetical security even in defiance of all law of Nature so that the precarious equilibrium of human population may not be broken as quite undreamt of and unguessed. Life begins at Zero and always strives for the infinity.

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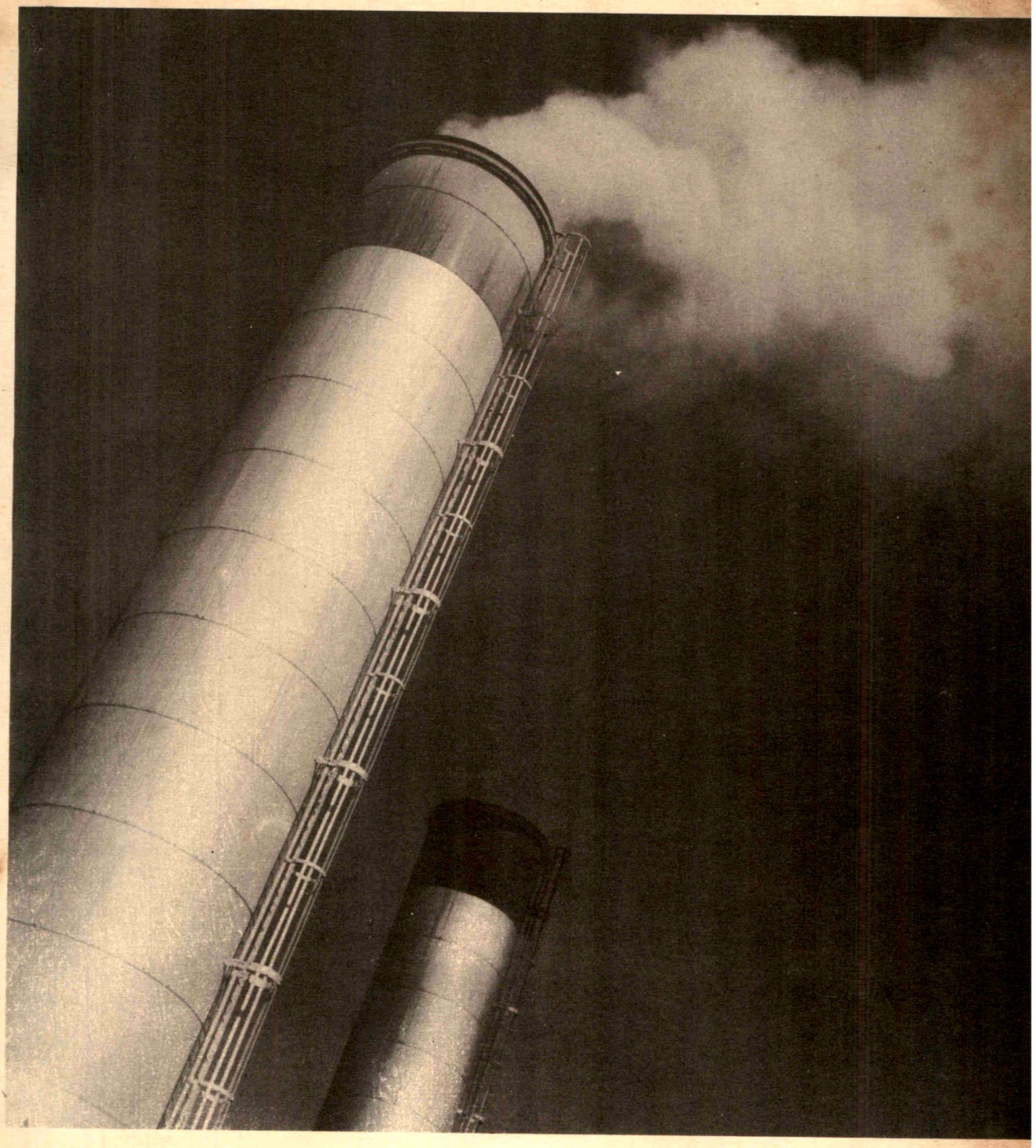

Nirod Ray. "Power in Smoke"

HOW I BECAME A MAN-EATER

A remarkable "autobiography" of a tiger acquainting us with its ways of life and its exploits — written by a skilled Shikari.

By AUGUSTUS SOMERVILLE

THERE is a range of hills that rise steeply from vast forests, known to the Jungle Folk as Sat Pahar, the Seven Hills. Here on the summit of the highest and steepest lies a large cave, deep and warm, where on a cold December night I was born.

Of those days I remember little, except the sanctuary of my mother's strong arms, the warmth of the fur around her neck and the roughness of her tongue as she licked my unruly hair into shape. Of my father I remember less.

As the days sped I grew from a helpless, woolly mite, into a strong active cub, with a will and a temper of my own. Often in the early dawn I would nestle down beside my mother and watch the great red ball of the sun creep up over the hill-tops and flood the forest with its golden light. Far below us were fields and meadows, with here and there

small village in which lived those strange, two-legged animals called Men. It was at such times that my mother taught me of the ways of the Sambur and the Cheetul, but always she cautioned me never to leave the cave but to hide in its inner-most recesses till she returned.

I GOT THE GREAT SURPRISE

As I grew older and stronger a great restlessness possessed me and one moonlit night, when mother had left me earlier than usual, I crept down the hill, following in her steps, till I found myself deep in the forest. Here, in the shadow of a large bush, I stopped, being afraid to venture further, yet unwilling to return. As I watched the trail that led deeper into the forest, I saw in the dim moonlight a large black form advancing

y concluded that it was my mother returning and I determined to give her a great surprise. Waiting till she was opposite me, I sprang upon her back. But it was I, who got the great surprise. In an instant the form had sprung upright and as I slid to the ground, a huge paw gave me a cuff that sent me sprawling and whimpering back into the bush. Here I lay trembling with fear and moaning softly, for that stroke had been a hard one and I was still little more than a cub. Then a great shaggy head was bending over me and a long grey snout sniffed me suspiciously. "Bah!" said a deep voice, "it is

Waiting till she was opposite me I sprang upon her back. But it was I who got the great surprise.

the Cub of the Striped One and he would eat his great grandfather," and I realized that it was not my mother on whom I had sprung, but Bhalu, the Wise One of the Woods.

"Come along, Young Un," he growled, and as I still did not move a heavy paw swept me off the ground and back on to the path, where a gentle push sent me running on ahead.

Thus accompanied I was soon back at the cave, but as we neared the entrance, Bhalu held back. "Go on in" he grumbled, "and see if your father

cave empty, rushed out to tell him so, but found him a long way down the path, hurrying off on some business of his own.

'BEWARE CUB OF STRANGER'

"Bhalu," I called, "wait for me," and he stood still till I had gained his side.

"What now! Do you wish to go wandering again? It is lucky for you that you sprang on my back. Had it been the Spotted One, he would have killed and eaten you in a minute Never trust the Spotted One. He is man and cowardly and will never strike from the front." So I sat on the path and as the night was young, Bhlu told me all about the forest, of where the Sambur hid during the day and the water holes to which the timid Cheetul came to drink at dawn. "All these I leave alone, Son, for it is not in my nature to kill and eat the flesh of any living animal. I prefer the nthives and the beautiful, golden honey that the bees hide in the hollow of the trees, but best of all I love the Mowah flower," and here he licked his huge chops. "Where the Mowah Flower fall, there you will find me and all my tribe, so remember this if you need my advice any day," and with that he rose to go.

"Bhalu", I asked as he moved away, "why did you not kill me when I jumped on your back?" He looked at me in silence for awhile. "Son" he replied, "there is a law in the Jungle that is never forgotten. It says, 'Beware the Cub of the Stranger.' Remember this and you will grow to a ripe old age and also avoid Man as you would the Red Dog and the mad Jackal. Remember, of all the Killers in the forest, Man is the worst. He kills, not only for food but also for the joy of killing and it is because of him that your people and mine have almost gone," and then he left me. I returned to the cave and when at dawn, mother returned bringing with her a fine juicy Kakur, I said nothing

MOTHER AND I GO HUNTING

About a month later and when the moon was at its full, mother said to me, "Come along, Son. It is time you learned to feed yourself. Tonight we will go hunting together."

I was thrilled and trotted at her side, filled with excitement, till we came to a sandy stream and here mother raised her voice in a peculiar husky cry. Almost immediately another voice answered and I saw my father stalking towards us. Ignoring me, he came up to mother giving her a playful cuff that would have knocked me senseless and then trotted on ahead of us.

Travelling in single file we hurried along the bed of the stream, the soft sand sinking deep between our paws, till we came to a pile of huge black rocks that stood out sharply from the sand and I immediately caught the scent of cool water. I would have rushed ahead to slake my thirst, but mother, with a deep growl, bade me wait. Father now went ahead swiftly and as he approached the

pool, he moved as silently as a shadow. After a while he reappeared, walking along the edge of the rocks and I knew that he had discovered no game. Then with a deep growl he disappeared into the forest.

Mother now hastened ahead and as we entered the rocks, she cast around till we discovered a shallow depression between two boulders, and here on the soft, dried grass that filled the hollow we laid down and waited.

I was young and impatient and could not lie still, but mother lay motionless through that long night, till towards dawn, when half asleep from exhaustion I had nestled against her warm side. I felt her suddenly stir. Cautiously she raised her head, then lay back, every muscle taut and only the tip of her tail quivering. Curious to see what had awakened her, I peeped over the rocks and saw, standing in the moonlight, the tips of his massive horns gleaming, a magnificent Sambur. Although evidently eager to drink, he stood motionless, sniffing the air delicately, restless and afraid. That he sensed our presence I knew, but he was uncertain, deceived by the absolute stillness of the night. After awhile he moved cautiously towards the water, stepping wearily over the dead leaves and fallen twigs, so that his approach was so silent that I did not know he had come till I heard him sucking up the water greedily.

THE SAMBUR — MY FIRST KILL

I was now to see my parent in action and can never forget the pride I felt for her. Where the Sambur stood, legs well apart and heal bent down, could not have been more than ten feet from where we lay. The height of the rocks gave us an advantage and as my mother prepared to spring, I felt her superb muscles rippling along her side. For a moment she crouched, her whole body quivering, then with a roar she sprang. That split second's warning had been enough for the Sambur. Even as mother leapt, the Sambur swung up his massive horns and I saw my mother go hurtling through the air as his antlers caught her full in the chest. But Sambur had reckoned without me! Although young and inexperienced, I was almost full grown and voicing my excitement in a childish roar I sprang a second after my mother, landing full on his back. Here, I clung on with teeth and claws while that huge beast tried its utmost to shake me from my hold. I saw my mother spring again, but this time she made no mistake. Landing on the shoulders of the Sambur, she buried her teeth in its neck. Then with one paw fixed firmly in its muzzle, she swung herself to the ground, so that her weight twisted the Sambur's head round and I distinctly heard his spine crack as he crashed to the ground.

ultation of my first kill. Springing on the body, I voiced again and again the savage call of my tribe, announcing my kill. A moment later I heard an answering roar from the forest and my father came bounding across the sand, eager to share the feast.

WOUNDED MOTHER LIES ON SAND

It was now that I noticed mother lying on the sand besides the Sambur. One of the horns had pierced her side, inflicting a nasty wound and she was bleeding freely. Rushing to her side I endeavoured to console her, licking her wound gently, but father thrust me roughly aside and laying a chunk of meat he had torn from the Sambur's side near her, he returned to his own feast. A moment later I joined him and the taste of the warm blood and the fresh meat was sweet in my mouth. After awhile I noticed that mother had started eating and when she finished the portion father had given her, she crept towards the carcass and started tearing away long strips of meat which she devoured with relish. How long we had been at this glorious feast I do not know, but suddenly we heard the thin long wail of a jackal on the prowl. He had scented the blood and true to his kind was summoning his tribe. Dad growled deeply, but later, as we heard the mellow notes of the cow-bells as the cattle came from the village to feed in the forest, he stirred restlessly. The dawn

Her old body quivering, then with a roar she sprang. ....the sambur swung up his massive horns.....

mainder of the feast to the humbler folk of the jungles, we moved away reluctantly.

Mother was sore and weak from her wound but she kept on determinedly beside us, but every now and then she stumbled and fell and when she coughed I saw the red blood on her tongue. Now I was truly afraid. Mother was the only creature who loved and protected me and if I lost her, I would be lost indeed. Dad had paused once or twice watching us, then with a strange indifference he hastened off, leaving us to whatever fate had in store.

That return journey was a nightmare experience. Mother was rapidly growing weaker and each time she fell, the struggle to get up caused the blood to gush from her side. At length when the sun was well overhead, we came to the entrance of our cave and here she collapsed entirely. Patiently I watched by her side and when, in the cool of the evening, she stirred, I helped her into the cave where she fell upon her old bed of grass and leaves and lay still.

LEAVE CAVE & FIND A MATE

A day later mother died and I, distracted with grief and fear, fled from the cave never to return till many months later.

I now took to hunting alone. As I grew in size and strength, my experience increased, till I roamed those vast forests, truly a King in my own domain. And now a wonderful experience befell me. I remember it was a fiery, summer night. The very sand at my feet was so hot that it all but blistered my pads. Panting with the heat and too exhausted to hunt, I sought instinctively the water-hole where I had made my first kill. As I approached this well-remembered spot, I slunk through the shadows for mayhap some small animal had come down to drink, and then I stopped in amazement. As the breeze from the water-hole blew gently towards me, it brought a scent that was so strange and yet so tantalizing that I felt my whole body trembling with excitement. For a moment I sniffed the air and as a species of madness came over me I rushed towards the water and then stopped in amazement. In the midst of the pool, lying contented and relaxed, was the most entrancing vision I had ever seen. As I approached her she raised her head indolently and gazed at me softly. At that moment I must have gone mad. Without considering I plunged into the water and attempted to seize her. It was then I learned my first lesson in courtship—never be too precipitate. That female may have been entrancing to look at but she carried a punch in her right paw, that when it connected landed me almost senseless in the water at her side. However, I will not prolong the scene needlessly. A punch such as I had received was something no self-respecting tiger would take from any female however beautiful and I was soon giving her back as much as I received. Anyone hearing us would have thought a murder was in progress. No one would have believed we were only having a little love tussle.

However, the Lady was willing and after a while she followed daintily in my wake and so I returned, after many months, to my mother's cave, a married man.

I may have been happy, I don't remember now, but I know that after a few months my wife presented me with a snarling, vicious lump of mischief, which she announced proudly was my son. I was now burdened with all the responsibilities of paternity having to protect and feed this useless creature and as the days went by I conceived a deep sympathy for my dad. However, in the fullness of time my wife taught my son to hunt and fend for himself, just as my mother had taught me, and gradually I returned to my old ways of life.

DAYS OF SCARCITY & HUNGER

But now a great change had come over our domain. On every side of the cave the forest was rapidly disappearing, cut down and burnt. Parties of hunters, armed with every conceivable type of weapon, marched through the forests, beating drums and shouting and slowly the Sambur and other Deer fled or were ruthlessly slaughtered, till the forests were left desolate.

Now the days of scarcity and want were on me and all my kind. Food was impossible to obtain and many a night I roamed the forest faint with hunger and all I could obtain was an occasional Hare or miserable Jungli-murgi that did nothing to stay the pangs of starvation.

Gradually I grew desperate. Often in the early hours of the morning as I lay in wait by the fields near the villages, I watched the fat buffaloes being driven out to graze and my mouth watered, but a strange fear of these two-legged creatures that accompanied them restrained me, so I let them pass, till one day a young calf came skipping by the bush behind which I lay. The temptation was too great and without a sound I sprang, sinking my teeth into its tender flesh.

That was my first domestic kill and thereafter I would hunt no other game, but morning and evening would lie in wait for the cattle leaving or returning to the villages and many a victim fell to my skill.

However, things were not so easy as all that. The villagers banded together and drove me out of the forest so that I was compelled to range far and wide. Soon there came a time when even this killing of cattle was impossible. The villagers no longer permitted their buffaloes to wander in the forest, but tied them a few yards from their huts so that I was afraid to go after them.

THE FIRST MEAL IN MONTHS

Now in truth did a great fear and desperation seize me. All wild game had long since disappeared. Even the Hare and wild fowl had been trapped and slaughtered, so that I was faced with starvation. One evening as I lay on the hill-side, I noticed the villagers driving their cattle into a pen erected on the edge of the village, where they were confined for the night. As I watched, a daring scheme entered my mind. Waiting till night came, and all sounds of movement had ceased, I crept down to the pen. The animals smelt me and started to grow restless and fearing the noise would awaken the villagers, I determined to strike at once. With a single bound I landed on the top of the stockade, built of strong sal posts. Here, I paused a moment watching the terrified animals below; then selecting a young calf, I sprang on its back, killing it instantly. Now I was in a difficulty. How was I to get the carcass out ? Even a half-grown buffalo is far too heavy for a tiger to seize in its teeth and jump an eight-foot palisade. Swiftly I acted. Dragging the animal to the foot of the stockade, I

sprang on top of the wall. Here, I wedged my hind claws in the sal posts and leaning down grasped the carcass with my teeth and fore-paws, drawing it up to the top of the palisade, then tipped it over on the opposite side. In a moment I was down beside the body and half-dragging, half-carrying, made my way swiftly to a nearby nullah where I enjoyed my first meal in months.

Dawn surprised me and hiding the remains beneath a thorn bush, where it would be safe from vultures, I returned to the cave and slept far into the next night.

When I awoke my first thought was the "kill." Swiftly I sped downhill and casting round in the vicinity of the village came across the drag down which I had pulled my kill the previous evening and so found the the carcass. Tigers, I must explain, have very poor eyesight, tracking mostly by scent and hearing.

As I approached the bush beneath which the body lay, I crouched down, surveying the site intently. I immediately noticed that the body had been dragged from beneath the bush and left on the open sand. This in itself would have been sufficient to warn me off, but I was still faint and weak with hunger and the sight and smell of the carcass was too much for me. Ignoring the danger I walked boldly on to the kill and settled down for another feed.

The night was dark and only the faint starlight lit up the ravine in which the body lay. Swiftly I seized the carcass in my paws and started to tear away the flesh, savouring each mouthful of the still fresh meat; when suddenly the entire scene was bathed in a blinding white light. Bewildered I turned to see from where this sudden illumination had come, when from a tree overhanging the ravine, came a flash and a deafening report. The same instant a heavy missile struck my paw, smashing the bone and lacerating the flesh. With a roar of rage and fear I bounded up the bank and in spite of my bleeding paw and the pain that racked me, fled swiftly back to the cave.

All that night I lay in the cave licking my wound and restless with agony and when dawn came and I saw the extent of the injury, I realized with a pang of horror that I would never use that foot again.

I BECOME A MAN EATER

There now started for me a period of terrible suffering. As the wound smelled and festered, maggots formed in the flesh and my whole body trembled and shook with a raging fever. Without food and water it seemed as if my end had come, but I was strong and young and after awhile the swellings subsided and the wound gradually healed, till one night when the fever had left me, I dragged myself to the old water-hole to drink and wallow in its cool depths. And here at last the Fates were

The blow unfortunately landed on my crippled paw.....maddened by pain I sprang straight at him.....

kind. As I lay in the water a Hare crept down timidly to drink, but when it saw me, terror so robbed it of all movement that I had only to stretch out my unwounded paw to drag it unresisting towards me.

The food provided by that Hare did a little towards restoring my strength, but I soon realized I was no match for a healthy buffalo or cow. Hunger and my incapacity to kill any of the large animals drove me to the ignominy of contesting with the jackals and dogs for the offal thrown out of the villages. Daily I became weaker and as hunger drove me to desperation, I returned to the vicinity of the villages during the day in the hope of waylaying some small calf.

One day as I crouched in the thick undergrowth I noticed a young lad driving a flock of goats towards the forest. One of them, a mere kid, came bounding towards my hideout and without a moment's hesitation I struck at it. In its dying struggle it set up the usual shrill bleating of its kind and the lad hurrying to find out the cause of its distress, came suddenly upon me. I would have slunk away, for the fear of humans was still strong in me, but the lad, probably half crazed with fear at the sight of me, lashed out wildly with his staff. The blow unfortunately landed on my crippled paw

and maddened by pain I sprang straight at him, burying my fangs in his throat.

That lad died without a struggle and appalled at my act, I fled back to the cave. Reaching here my mate came out to greet me but no sooner did she smell the human blood on my claws, than with a fierce snarl she backed away and bounded into the forest. I never saw her again.

That one accidental killing was the undoing of me. The members of my own tribe avoided me. I was shunned and deserted but the taste of human blood created a species of madness in me so that I must kill again and again to satisfy that craving.

Now, strange to say, I lost all fear of man. My name grew to be a terror in that district. People deserted their homes and fled to the larger villages. I followed relentlessly and came one night to a lone village nestling at the foot of a high mountain. Here I crouched beside a narrow road that led from this village to the town on the main road. In the early hours of the morning I saw, staggering along this path, a party of three men, who, by the way they swayed and sang, I knew to be drunk, for they acted just as Bhalu did when he returned to his cave after a night in the Mowah groves. I waited till they came abreast and then sprang. The first, a mere stripling went down before me without a sound. The other attempted to strike at me with his stick and him I killed with a single blow from my uninjured paw. The third man fled back screaming towards the town and him I disdained to follow. A short while after, a body of men armed with sticks and carrying lanterns, came towards me so that I was forced to abandon my kill and return to the forest.

NEMESIS

(As Told By The Hunter)

AS I drove my car into the Dak Bungalow compound at Bagoda, I was conscious of an unusual and suppressed excitement. Everywhere small groups of people were discussing some topic and as I finally parked the car and strolled on to the verandah, there was a general rush towards me.

Led by the village Chowkidar, about twenty villagers assembled on the steps, all talking and gesticulating together and the burden of their conversation was the oft repeated words, "Bagh mara" (The Tiger has killed).

Barum Deo, the Chowkidar, was an old friend. "What is it Barum ?", I questioned and in answer he seized one of the villagers and thrust him forward, saying, "Tell the Sahib what happened and speak the truth."

The man indicated I could see was gloriously drunk. Proud of the sudden importance thrust on him, he puffed out his chest and began a highly dramatic account of how he was proceeding down the road with his two companions when a huge tiger suddenly sprang on them. Without a moment's hesitation he seized the animal by the throat and dashed it to the ground,—and here a fist sent him sprawling to the ground himself. "Fool," the Chowkidar roared, "did I not tell you to speak the truth ?" Picking himself up the man looked round fearfully, but what he saw on the faces of the crowd decided him.

"Sahib", he said humbly, "I was going with two companions back to our village, when suddenly a tiger sprang on us. I,—I did not wait to see what happened but ran all the way back here."

"Good", I thought, "at last the truth. Now we can get some action."

"Barum Deo", I ordered, "get four men and a few lanterns. We are going to view the site of the kill."

MOTHER—AN AVENGING ANGEL

There was a tremendous lack of enthusiasm, but Barum Deo is an old martinet and in a short while he had rounded up the necessary men and the lanterns and assembled them at the entrance to the Dak Bungalow.

Taking up a blanket and my Mauser-423, I loaded the magazine and joined the waiting men. In a moment we moved off taking the road that led from Bagoda Town to the village of Atka.

We had not proceeded more than a few hundred yards down this road when we were confronted by a truly alarming spectacle. Standing in the middle of the moonlit road, a formidable spear clutched in her bony hand, was an old woman, the very embodiment of an avenging angel.

I looked at Barum Deo in amazement. "It is the mother of one of the victims, Sahib," he whispered, "better let her come along." I nodded and off we went, the old lady in the van.

We had proceeded thus for about a mile, when suddenly the old woman started wailing and rushing forward, flung herself down on the road. We hurried to her side and found her clasping the body of a young man in her frail arms, her whole form convulsed with her weeping.

"It is her son, Sahib," Barum Deo informed me, "the other one is her husband."

"Poor, old lady," I muttered, "deprived in one fell stroke of both son and husband." I turned to Barum Deo and whispered, "tell her I am here to avenge the death of her son but she must leave the bodies alone. If she removes them all chance of the tiger returning is gone."

SHE YIELDS TO ENTREATIES

Barum Deo did his best to persuade her, but to all our entreaties she was adamant. "Leave my son," she wailed, "never ! Let the tiger come, I will sit here and die with my loved ones."

"Look Mother," I pleaded with her, "you have lost a son. If this tiger does not die tonight, then tomorrow some other poor mother will break her heart over the loss of her son, for surely this tiger will kill again."

Now to my entreaties were added those of the men we had brought with us. At last she yielded, but only as far as her husband's body was concerned. Her son she would take with her. Husbands were, of course, expendable.

I was glad to agree as every minute we delayed lessened our chances of the tiger returning. Hurrying her away, with her son's body lashed to a pole

(Continued On Page 176)

'SHIKAR'

failures in retrospect

By BIMAL GUPTA

THE magnificent specimens of shikar trophies that adorn the drawing rooms are eloquent proofs of unique marksmanship no doubt. But if those that have been fired at point blank range and quite cleanly missed could ever turn up to tell that sordid story of a grand miss, the reputation of the most confirmed sportsmen would surely be at stake. It may sound just a bit blunt but is a naked truth which all honest sportsmen have to admit.

On going through my shikar diaries of last ten years I find that I have missed twice the number of animals I have bagged. May be I am quite a bad shot but I am not ashamed of calling a spade a spade. As I have already said, my failures are many and it is rather difficult to pick out the glaring ones from the less so, whether the subject fired at and missed was a docile Samber stag or snarling tiger. But from the point of view of real thrill and adventure I would like to narrate two episodes which still make my heart miss a beat whenever I come to think of them.

The first incident occurred long many years ago when I was just a greenhorn and it taught me one of the basic lessons of big game shooting, viz that a bear is an animal with whom taking liberties is to be avoided as far as practicable. He may have been depicted as "Baloo, the wise old brown beast of Sconi jungles" by Kipling in his "Mowgli Stories" but in reality he is undoubtedly a nasty customer to deal with.

I had gone out for a shoot with a friend equally inexperienced and we both belonged to that age group which makes one think that anything from a snippet to an elephant could be bowled over with a twelve bore. The efficacy of this particular weapon had undoubtedly been proved to us on the shoots before this when one Samber hind, two chital stags and a pig had fallen victim to our shots. With t above bag to our credit we went out for the Panc jungles all set for rolling over any dangerous gar that came our way.

Our host, Thakur Bhulai Singh, a sturdy old ma above sixty, at whose place we had been putting during this particular Christmas shoot, was a shika of some repute having shot scores of leopards, bea and even a couple of tigers with his mutinymak vicious looking "blunderbuss."

Over the camp fire on the evening of our arriva when the *chilam* of his *hukka* had thrice bee changed, the old veteran to our great joy announce a grand general beat next morning in his Zaminda jungles holding out big promises.

Making an early start the next morning we mad a six-mile march through hilly tract and arrived a the base of a fairly high hill strewn with big bou ders and clothed in thick shrubby jungle where th beat was to take place.

While we had been waiting for the beaters t collect, some of whom had already arrived, Thaku Saheb informed us in his casual fashion that he wa expecting bears to come out in the beat and it woul be sheer bad luck if one failed to turn up. He the gave us a vivid account of a previous beat of thi hill which took place a year back when hi honoured guests, the Collector Saheb of Banda an his Memsahib showed their fine marksmanship i bringing down two bears clean shot through th heart. Of course the Sahib and the Memsahi shot from a *machan*, as being *Saheblog* they could not sit on the ground and spoil their dress. My friend was however quick to ask Thakur Saheb if similar arrangements had been made for our beat, to which came a curt reply that he knew we were not so fastidious about our dress. This particular news wa not quite pleasing to us, but a great diplomat tha he was, my friend eased the situation by expressing

great relief at having been spared the botheration climbing a cumbersome *machan*.

By this time all the beaters had collected and e head beater informed us that they were ready start the beat as soon as we took our position. He structed one of his assistants who took us by a cuitous route to drop us at our allotted places ere the beat was to terminate. The line of sit- was along the track leading to a precipitous hill erlooking the sloping valley below. Thakur Saheb cted to sit at the first position from where the ck started its gradual rise. My friend occupied e second place half way up the track where a deep vine joined it with the valley. I was taken to the ird and the last position of the sit-up, a further ndred yards up the track on the last lap of a esome climb and was told that it was the most ght after spot of this beat. With a hasty struction as to the direction of the beat the man ampered off noiselessly to join the beaters. The ack at this place was very narrow and there was no nvenient tree nearby behind which I could take ver. The place was however littered with big ulders and I selected one jutting out near the ack to sit on. It was a perpendicular type of rock out seven feet in height on top of which I crambled up. It was not at all comfortable to sit on it hardly accommodated a space covering three et by two feet, but I still selected this just because gave a good view of the valley below as well as of e track.

I had been sitting on my precarious perch with y legs dangling and was beginning to get bored hen I heard the faint noise of shouting of the aters in the valley below. The beaters had to ver a distance of nearly half a mile to be level th us but nevertheless I was on the alert. A gene- al beat, as is known, is an uncertain affair as no one n vouch for a given place from where an animal ill pass. But it still gives quite an exciting time to e men waiting behind their guns even if nothing aterialised.

The gun I was using was a hammered one with vo and a half inch chamber, but throwing all the structions of the makers to the winds, I had queezed into both the barrels three-inch contrac- le cartridges supplied by my illustrious friend, a lf-styled expert in ballistics who assured me of eir tremendous knocking power. I had half a ind for changing them at the last moment with a roper size spherical ball and a buckshot, but I had o give up the idea as I could not open the jammed reech however I might try. This made me all the ore nervous and I only hoped the cartridges would ot let me down if the need arose. The beaters ere now visible in the valley below and they were radually closing in. Presently I saw just a glimpse f a dark object nearly a hundred yards to my right the valley and from the sound of its footsteps I ould make out it was coming straight to the track ver which I was sitting. The beaters were unaware f the presence of the animal in my front and they ept on their allotted line of advance. I pulled up oth the hammers to my gun and covered the direc- tion from where I anticipated the animal would reak cover and appear on the track. The steady "tap tap" of footsteps was quite close by now and made me wonder if I had mistaken one of the beaters for an imaginary animal because I could see some of them further down approaching from the same direction.

I was not kept on tenterhooks for long and presently I saw a huge bear dash out from the undergrowth and advance with its peculiar lumber- ng gait towards my position. I was careful enough not to let it come too close and pressing my dang- ing legs on to the sides of the rock I fired when it was about ten yards from me. The report and the recoil was so terrific that I was almost thrown off my perch and had it not been for my sideways grip of the rock with my legs I would have fallen flat on the ground. It took me a second or two to collect my wits and before I could gauge the result of my shot I had the maddened bear charge on to my rock hysterical with rage. He missed my dangling legs by a fraction of a second by which I jerked up on the rock just at the nick of the moment. Having thus failed to pull me down the gruesome beast stood up on its hind legs and tried to reach me with its monstrous fore-paws cursing me all along in his ursine vocabulary which beggars description. I sat still in the posture of the meditating Buddha on my sheltering rock which was shaking with the impact of the seven hundred pound body weight of the monster and wondered if it would stand the onslaught. It would be quite pertinent to ask why I did not fire the second shot and I very much regret to reveal that this course was out of question as both the barrels had fired with the shock of the recoil. I was quick enough in discovering this calamity from my meditating position and kept on to this process without even batting an eyelid. The beaters witnessed my feat of endurance from tree tops which they were quick to climb up and their combined shouting and clapping at long last made the bully beast withdraw from the scene whimpering dejectedly at his failure to give me a lesson.

It was not before the beaters had come near me that I got down from the faithful boulder. On examining the ground I found that my shot or shots had failed to connect and what enraged the beast was the kick it received from the splinter of a boulder whose top had been blown off by a pair of contractile bullets. There was absolutely no reason why I should have missed a pot shot except that it was bad shooting possibly due to nervousness, but all the same it was a big failure which very nearly cost my life.

The next incident took place quite recently at Maldhan in Jaspur block of Terai forests while shooting with another friend. It was the last day of the shoot and our hearts were heavy with the grim thought of breaking the camp next morning. There was no news of any fresh kill of tiger and hence my friend decided to sit over the remains of the last kill which he had sat over the previous evening without any result.

When my friend had left in the afternoon to keep an appointment, I thought I might as well take a last look at the virgin forests of Kumayun as also the grandeur of sunset over the distant snows of the mighty Himalayas before returning to the old, humdrum existence. Slinging my loaded 3.75 mannlicher rifle over the shoulder I took the motor road leading to Amangarh block which runs through heavy sal forest interlocked with patchers of ele- phant grass and Jantana bushes providing an ideal dwelling place for the denizens of the jungle. Nearly half a mile from the forest bungalow a big nala crossed the motor road on both sides of which were open glades where I came across hundreds of spotted deer everytime I came to this side during our stay. I decided to enter the glade to the right of the motor road to shoot a stag if I could get one with good horns after leaving the motor road. I got down into the nala which ran crisscrossing through the glade I selected. The nala bed was thick with Jantana and other indigenous creepers due to which going was, of necessity, slow.

I heard the deer calling when I left the motor road and following the sound I slowly edged my way to reach a vantage position for inspecting the flock without being seen. When I felt I had come fairly

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The Hunted Hunter

By SRI DHIRENDRA NARAYAN ROY, (Lalgola Raj)

A 'Shikar' story ending with a great romance for the young 'Shikari'. The girl who broke his celibacy-vow was a skilled rifle-user.

RAMEN was twenty-five — a full-grown youth of strong build, about six feet in height. He wrote poems, stories and earned a name as a successful novelist but was no less inclined to hunting pursuits. Nothing could escape his sharp eyes. He was a good marksman and whenever he would hear any talk of hunting he would stir out. He was mad about it, so to say. On the other hand he hummed songs in melodious tunes and composed songs with perfect ease. In such moments he seemed completely lost in himself. He was good at Pakhoaj and at the strokes of the skilful hand, the instrument would give out sombre sound as of the clouds.

He was the only child of his father. His classfellows were all gradually married — he was the only exception. His parents tried to get him married but to no effect. His attitude was that in everything else he was ready to obey his parents but if anybody would press him in matters of marriage, he would have no other alternative but to run away. His friends also made unsuccessful attempts. He was determined to live a free life unfettered by any tie of marriage. And was it not a wonder therefore that this Ramen had a romantic wedding! The free man was now chained up in the neck.

Ramen was awfully busy today. A distant relative had written to him that tigers were creating a havoc in a near-by village in the district of Maldah. Ramen at once made up his mind to go and reached there with his followers.

The master of the house, well advanced in age, greeted him at the gate. His name was Surendranath. Ramen said, "Your letter gave me no respite — so I hurried up. I must make the most of it".

"But then you should have sent me a wire so that a car might be sent at the station. We are setting out for a hunting excursion tomorrow. And look, as many as seven elephants have been kept ready. Amiya takes a lot of interest in hunting. She has a good aim — she is also accompanying us."

"Amiya, your daughter? Well, how old is she now? She was just a child when I saw her."

"Sixteen or seventeen. In the meantime she has managed to bag a few boars, stags and even crocodiles. I take her along with me to these expeditions. Though an old man, the hobby has not left me."

How the little child became so daring a girl! Ramen was thinking within himself. Any way, let him wait to see it for himself.

Perhaps a sign of disbelief was noticeable on Ramen's face. So Suren Babu hastened to assure Ramen that it was no exaggeration. Being a seasoned hunter himself Ramen would be simply delighted to see her performance when the time for it came.

Ramen's surprise knew no bounds. He said, "It is strange, I am not sure if any other girl of our country at this tender age has taken to hunting. She must be the first, I think, in Bengal, at any rate."

"But what's the good in having one or two? We shall have to train up a few more." Ramen showed much interest in the discourse and replied,

"Where is that man to be found?"

Suren Babu seemed flattered and spoke with determination:

"We will have to train up such persons in every home. Those who have the ability and resources, should devote their whole-hearted attention to this. It is imperative to impart lessons in lathis and swords to the girls of our country at least for the sake of self-protection. Don't you read in newspapers the horrible stories of atrocity and crime of which women are victims? Are not these diabolical acts on the increase? These considerations influenced Amiya

in handling the gun — and now it has been a hobby with her".

He stopped abruptly and remarked that whenever there was a talk of hunting he forgot everything else. Suren Babu called his servants to attend to Ramen and arranged for him an enjoyable stay at his guest house. Ramen was highly impressed by the cordiality of the reception and even to this day he speaks eloquently about it to his friends.

Next day. It was a fine morning of the first day of Falgoon. Suren Babu roused Ramen from his sleep and asked him to be ready quickly. Ramen did not lose a minute. Dressing himself in Khaki he had just started sipping from a cup of tea. On the branch of a near-by-tree, a *Bou Katha Kao* bird was warbling "Bride, speak to me". Ramen finished his cup and with a smile reflected within himself: there was the tiger they will soon have to encounter and here is the sweet bird imploring the bride to speak! Ahead, was the call of death and behind, the beckoning of life trying to hold him back. Was it the play of destiny or anything else? Hang it. Why this useless thought?

"Well, we are all ready, will you hurry up"? Suren Babu made his appearance in a jolly mood. "I am also ready", came the reply from Ramen no less inspired.

All except Suren Babu had seated themselves on top of elephants. His daughter, Amiya in breeches, was seated in a very elegant style, holding her rifle on the back of the elephant. The rays of the crimson morning sun fell upon the rosy complexion of Amiya adding more charm and grace to it.

Surendranath told Ramen, "Well, you better ascend this elephant."

Waking up from a reverie Ramen climbed the elephant and took his seat.

Suren Babu also got on top of his favourite animal and put a turban on his head closely covering his ears.

Ramen looked at him askance.

Suren Babu started smoking a cheroot and said, "You see, I am almost bald-headed, the turban will save me from the sun; further it will shut out all noise and confusion of the shooting campaign. Moreover, you know, tigers always aim at the head first."

He ordered the mahouts to march the elephants on, to the Nal Jungle.

The gigantic animals moved on trumpeting now and then and breaking way-side tree branches for use as fodder. The mahouts using their 'code' which only the animals could follow, and uttering words of vigilance and caution created an atmosphere of suppressed animation. On one elephant was seated Ramnath, the faithful servant, with all necessary food and drink, quite alive to his duties he may be called upon at any time to perform.

Surendranath was a hunting expert and no less an adept in arranging palatable food. He would brook no slackness in anything.

Ramen's eyes were fixed upon Amiya. As they met with hers, he lowered his face. She too was equally curious and off and on cast glances at Ramen. This exchange of looks — this hide-and-seek went on between them. Just by the side of Ramen's elephant was another on which was seated a friend of Surendranath, named Upendranath.

Some of the party went ahead, others fell behind. While trampling through tall straws no one was visible to the other. The elephants along with the men seemed engulfed in the jungle. As it thinned up, Ramen found Amiya just by his side.

He spoke out as if to himself — "Oh, how sharp is the straw — its pricks are unbearable."

"Hunting in these places is always attended by such hardships which one must endure. There's no way out. I am sorry that you have had to suffer so much."

Ramen was simply charmed by Amiya's free way of talking. He just managed to say, "Oh no, not so much. These are so common to these expeditions. But do you remember, you broke an air-gun of mine when you were very young? How old were you then? Six or seven, I think!"

"Quite perfectly — how can I forget it when for this offence you took me to task! Now you see, I have really started this play with a real gun."

"I have heard that from your father."

Amiya turned round and spread her feet along the body of the elephant and seated herself face to face with Ramen.

"I like your hunting tales so much. There is life in them — isn't it?"

"My play is with the lives of the forests and so life is most potent there".

"So much of life? A dictionary of life indeed!"

With this chitchat they proceeded on. Behind, a little away was coming Upen Babu. He ordered his mahout to drive the elephant quickly and covering the distance, as he drew near, he made a signal as that of a guardian —

"Your gun? What make? *My has* a loading gun".

Upen Babu pulled out an instrument and fixing it to his ear waited eagerly to hear Ramen's reply.

Ramen was amused to hear Upen Babu's English and smilingly replied:

"What do you say, a loading gun or a donkey gun?"

Amiya began to laugh heartily.

"Ah, silly girl, what makes you laugh so much? I see, you are amused to hear me speaking English— but do you know, that the District Magistrate presented me with the gun on hearing my beautiful harangue. Poor me, I can not use it — that's the trouble."

"That is quite true — there's none in this locality to excel you in English conversation."

Amiya addressed Ramen:

"Why are you silent? Is there anything to write upon?"

"Yes, just a bit — it will be better depicted in a story."

Surendranath looked back and took no time to understand what was going on there — surely Upendranath was giving a bright display of his knowledge in English. He shouted calling them,

"Come up, we have reached the vital point. Line up with me, now the jungle will be lashed out."

It was a jungle of Nal. A narrow rivulet flowed through it in a zigzag course. There were sand deposits here and there — the stream was somehow eking out its existence. Its pulse beat might still be felt though threatening every moment to stop. Now dogs and jackals could cross it most defiantly but this river, in the rainy season overflows and bursts its banks and becomes furious and turbulent. On reaching the specific spot, the three elephants carrying Ramen, Suren Babu and Amiya, stopped together. Suren Babu gave a few lessons to Amiya and then turned to Ramen. "We shall all see that you get the game — now try your luck. But if the animal comes within our range we shall not spare it".

Previously informed, a good number of Santals had gathered there. At Suren Babu's bidding they

began to whisk the jungle. Amiya was in the centre, on one side was Suren Babu and Ramen on the other. The remaining elephants and the Santals raised a great noise and began to beat up the jungle from the opposite direction.

What Surendra Nath had desired came out to be true. Whether it was sheer luck or not for Ramen, the tiger came out near him, about twentyfive yards off, and as it attempted to cross the rivulet, Ramen shot at it. Surendranath cheered up and cried out, "Well done Ramen, well done."

But a deep gloom settled on Ramen's countenance. He failed in his attempt and he could hardly utter—

The tiger came out near him and as it attempted to cross the rivulet, Ramen shot at it.

"Oh, no, no, the tiger is unhurt, I have missed it. Such a failure has never occurred in my life."

Ramen felt greatly ashamed. He had a good name in hunting. But today's disappointment specially in the presence of Amiya was unbearable. To add to his discomfiture, Surendranath came forward with words of consolation.

Amiya looked at him straight for a while. Was there surprise in her look, or was there doubt in it as to his ability or was it anything else? Ramen turned his face. Surendranath turned towards Ramen and said, "Let us stop here today — do you agree? Let us have our meals and then return home. Tomorrow we shall take another chance. Ramen thought for a while and then clearing his throat muttered:

"No, that cannot be. I must take another chance today and see what happens. I am not going to be so easily beaten."

Suren Babu's reply was as straight and simple:

"O. K. Have some food and then you may go to the nearby jungle of Nilkuthi. Tigers chased from here generally take shelter in that jungle." In the meantime other elephants and Upen Babu had arrived. Tauntingly Upen Babu said: *"The tiger in the air? Not death? Very very bad. Who fire?"*

Suren Babu retorted, "Would you stop? Rather ask for food to be brought here immediately. It's about 1 o'clock".

No time was lost in carrying out his order. Everybody finished meals on elephant-back. Only Ramen found it too difficult to eat anything.

Suren Babu asked him why he was not taking any food.

"I have not the appetite today since the morning. Moreover....."

Amiya intervened: "Then you should not — we would better take the tiffin-carrier with us."

Suren Babu enquired if she also was going.

"Yes, father, if you please."

"Well, you two then go, we shall be waiting for you under the banyan tree, myself and Upen. Well, Upi, come to my side."

One could hear almost the neighing of a horse in the throat of Upen Babu. Like a pony, he uttered 'hi hi hi hi' which suddenly came to a close. He seemed intensely pleased having been able to sit by the millionaire Suren Babu. With folded palms, in extreme modesty he bent his head so low that he was about to topple down from the elephant. Surendranath was used to this sort of things and so taking no notice of Upen Babu's gesticulations addressed Ramen: "Well, why don't you take Amiya on your elephant? But, beware. Though my daughter is a tried hand at hunting yet caution has its own value".

As the two elephants stood side by side, Ramen

held Amiya's hand to help her come over to his. Before starting, Amiya requested her father to give his good wishes —

"Father, bless us that we may return with a tiger".

Surendranath closed his eyes and showered benedictions with upraised hands. He gave instructions to the mahouts, "You will enter the jungle from the east

Like a shaft the tiger came out and Amiya's gun went off immediately.

and you, Ramen and Amiya, will wait with your elephant in the open space just on the western side. I am coming after taking some rest."

As instructed, the mahouts drove the elephants much in advance. From afar Suren Babu could see Ramen and Amiya moving on like waves with the swinging march of the elephant. Nilkuthi jungle was only two and a half miles away. The two riders now came very near each other as they were settling the details of hunting.

All on a sudden Ramen broke forth with an accusation:

"You are responsible for my missing the tiger."

Amiya was startled: "How's that. Was your gun's trigger held in my hand?"

"Certainly, though not the trigger of the gun, but surely of my mind. I cannot be expected to be the Sabyasachi of this Kaliyuga".

"Poetry is not allowed in the realm of hunting".

"When a living poetry is before me, how can I ignore it?"

"I shall make you my flatterer, then".

Ramen gave a *Kurnis* before her and spoke dramatically. "Please excuse me, your servant is always ready but I don't like to be an Upen Babu".

Amiya burst into a hearty laughter. As advised by Suren Babu, 'beating' the jungle started from the eastern side.

Amiya unhesitatingly requested Ramen, "I have never killed a tiger — if you won't object, I may try this time. Moreover, you are by my side — I have no fear".

Ramen gave a bowing nod: "As your highness pleases".

It was about four o'clock. From within the jungle, a tumultuous noise was heard — there's the tiger, there's the tiger; Amiya flashed like a lightning—her eyes glittered, there was determination in her face. She firmly gripped the gun. Like a shaft, the tiger came out and Amiya's gun went off immediately. There was a thundering noise that echoed in the jungle of Nilkuthi. The tiger gave its last roar and sprang to drop dead next moment with a heavy thud.

Ramen patted Amiya on her back and warmly congratulated her,

"Marvellous, bravo Amiya. Your father did not make the slightest exaggeration. It is a great delight to take part in an expedition like this."

"The game is yours — I am only an intruder."

"Right to a thing has to be earned — it cannot be received from others, do you follow?"

"Still it is your tiger and I have killed it. Really there is no joy in it."

Suddenly flashed in Ramen's mind the experience of the day when he had shot dead the first tiger. What enthusiasm! What an exuberance of his heart's effusions! He could not sleep a whole night. But how different it was with Amiya! This attitude of indifference even at the brilliant success of her hunting life, this self-restraint on her part charmed Ramen. She had taken away the honour which was due to him and this made her unhappy. Ramen was deeply moved. An indefinable feeling overwhelmed him. Both of them got down from the elephant and going up to the place where the dead beast was lying was glad to find that the tiger was fairly big and that the bullet had pierced its bosom.

Ramen was excited. He held Amiya's hand and murmured :

"Such a lovely hand — I wish I could place a prize upon it".

Amiya's cheeks were suffused with crimson. She

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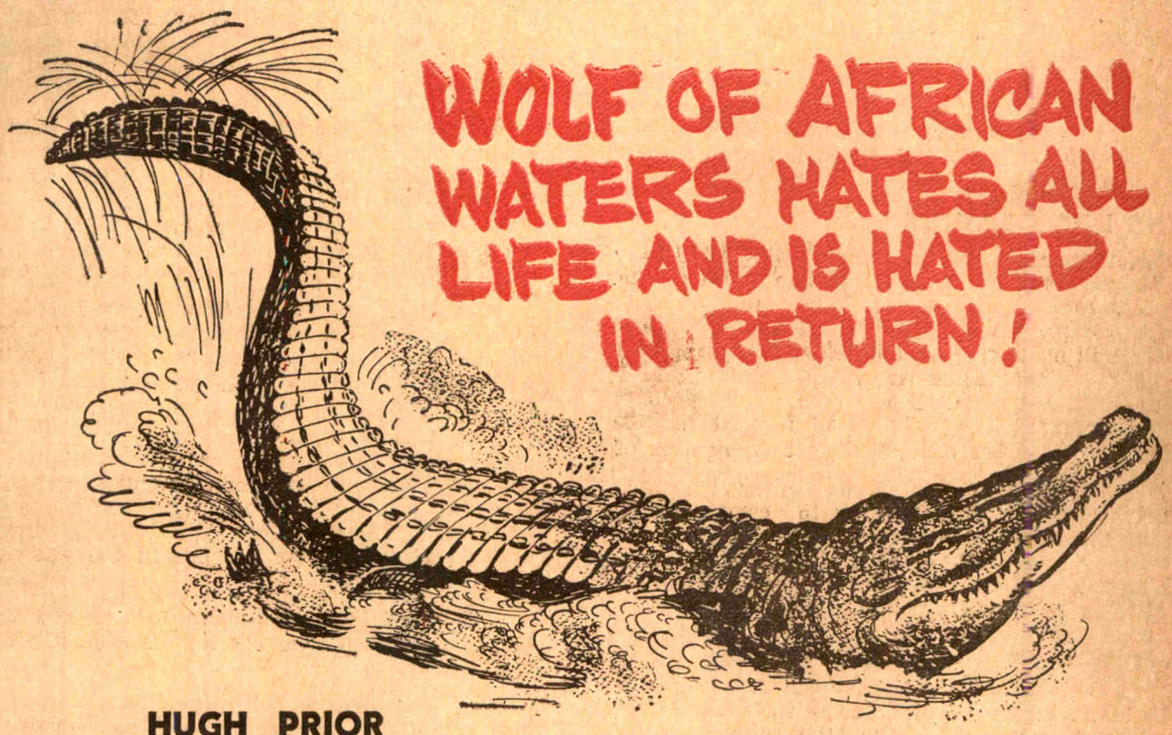

WOLF OF AFRICAN WATERS HATES ALL LIFE AND IS HATED IN RETURN!

HUGH PRIOR

The crocodile looked plenty menacing when the author's well-placed shot saved his marooned partner in Kenya.

SINCE shooting of the crocodile is invariably done at close quarters, there is little excuse for muffing a shot. But I still think it was a lucky shot that enabled me to save my partner.

We had been prowling along the banks of the Tana river in Kenya looking for hippo, and were following a well-beaten path down a wide, sweeping hollow, when we came to a long, wide sand pit stretching out into the river. At its end lay a big, dead tree, its trunk submerged, its great, shaggy mass of intertwining roots facing the bank. Between the sandpit and the bank was a 12-foot channel, filled with branches swept into the space and forming a kind of woven, sagging bridge.

There were no hippos in sight, so we returned to our camp site. While I superintended the erection of our tent my companion went back for another look over the river. Foolishly, he left without his rifle.

While the raucous voices of the boys were temporarily stilled, I thought I heard a faint shout from the river. I held up my hand for silence, and in a few seconds the boys told me that the other "bwana" was in trouble and calling for help. The hearing of natives is almost magically acute.

Grabbing my rifle, I rushed down the little valley. From the edge of the high river bank I looked down on an extraordinary sight. Out at the end of the sandpit, at the very top of the miniature jungle of tree roots, was perched my partner. And 20 or 30 feet from him lazily sprawled an immense crocodile, quite motionless, tail and rear half in the water, front half up on the sand. The terribly long jaws were slightly open; the yellow, evil eyes fixed unwaveringly on the figure up on the roots out of reach.

I knew, roughly, the vulnerable spot of the ugly water beast. But the position in which he lay gave me only one shot, the armpit and I was far from sure of that. To get in line for it I had to get down from my 12-foot elevation on the river's brink. I slithered down to the edge of the narrow branch-bridge — the safe side — and there I squatted for my shot, Boer-fashion with elbows braced on knees.

Almost with the crack of my rifle, the saurian jumped with electrical speed, so quickly that my eye could hardly follow his convulsive backward move. As he cut into the water he turned sideway. There was a flash of a yellow-white belly, a faint movement of a short foreleg, a quick-up-and-down movement, and the brown waters of the Tana closed over the carcase of one of Africa's most repulsive living things.

My scared partner wriggled down through the tree roots with breathless explanations. The crocodile had caught him as he made his way down from the top of the tree trunk, which he had mounted to get a better view of the reed flats. He had raced for the bank, but the crocodile was at the narrow branch bridge long before him. He had room to chance the bridge, but its sagging structure meant slow progress, and the movements of his pursuer were anything but slow. He turned and hared it back for the tree trunk, but again the crocodile had easily beaten him to it.

The see-saw race was repeated several times, with the crocodile always yards ahead at the finish. My partner knew enough to keep out of reach of the long, deadly tail which, with a lightning flip, could have swept him into the water. Finally, by a desperate curve toward the other side of the split,

he got ahead of the crocodile and reached the top of the dank old smother of roots and began to yell for help.

He had put up a good show. Still, it was the crocodile's reliance on age-old strategy that saved him — the use of its tail to gather in its prey from the water's edge. The big saurian could easily have climbed up on the sand and got him — for crocodiles are very swift on land — if it had not been so sure of its victim.

RHINO IN CROCODILE'S JAW

When hungry, the crocodile will tackle any living thing that comes down to the water's edge. Often big animals, too, as this story, told by F. C. Selous, one of the greatest of African big game hunters, will make clear. Selous was wandering about the banks of that same river, the Tana, mostly a broad, sluggish stream. It was just after the long, rainy season, and the waters had receded for 100 yards or so on either bank, leaving a slimy area of mud.

Selous was on his way back to camp, when suddenly, a couple of hundred yards from where he stood, he saw a rhino making his difficult way down to the river to drink. The big beast could not see him, for a rhino's vision is limited to less than 100 yards, so the hunter did not have to move from his favourable position.

Curious to see what might happen, Selous watched the lumbering beast slither down the muddy slope and dip his great muzzle into the brown water. Finally, the rhino turned to climb back up the slippery slope, and retire to his jungle.

As the big beast turned, Selous saw a foamy swirl behind him, and then the jaws of a crocodile fasten on a hind leg of the rhino. There was an angry snort, a sharp turn of the big, shapeless head, and the rhino's huge feet began stamping in the mud. But, for all his three-ton weight, Kifaru could not get a purchase. His snorts became louder; when a rhino is really angry his snorts sound like blasts from a shunting locomotive. And that enraged beast was thoroughly angry.

Up in his grandstand position Selous looked down on a battle such as few men have been privileged to see, a life-and-death struggle between a crocodile and a rhinoceros. For nearly two hours the strange tug-of-war went on. Neither powerful beast would yield. The rhino dared not, and the crocodile apparently was willing to fight long, and hard for at least a couple of weeks' succulent provender.

At each pounding plunge of his free feet the rhino dug a hole, which immediately filled with water, and when leverage was applied became slippery mud again. Inch by hardfought inch he was drawn into the river. Finally his three feet were under water and all but useless for braking or propelling purposes. The water rose along his heaving body, until at last his thick, short legs were beating the brown Tana into swirling foam that was to be his shroud. The broad snout, blowing little cascades of spray, was the last of Kifaru that Selous saw.

EYE-JABBING TECHNIQUE

Less than a week after my friend's escape on the sandpit, while we still followed the course of the Tana, I saw a Kikuyu boy act with extraordinary alertness and courage.

Near a small native settlement we ran into an excited crowd of men, women and children. They were trying to haul ashore the floating carcase of a hippo, shot somewhere upstream by a hunter. hulk to the surface, and presented them with the material for three-day feast.

Suddenly frenzied yells turned all eyes to one side. At the water's edge lay a screaming native, his arms clamped around a small sapling leaning over the water, the jaws of a crocodile fastened on one of his legs.

Before we could move, a squat, semi-naked Kikuyu had raced down the steep bank. There seemed to be no sense in his mad move, and we shouted to him to get out of our line of fire as we hurried after him. He took no notice, and in a matter of seconds was bending over the crocodile's head, cutting off the target for our two rifles.

One after another his brown arms rose and fell, and at each fall we saw a thumb dig into an eye of the crocodile. At each jab the visible part of the reptile jerked and quivered, but the jaws held their grip.

We stood spellbound, and when we finally spread out, to get a line on the head on either side of the boy's shoulders, we saw the craggy jaws snap open. A roll of water arose above the swirl made by the submerged tail, and the head cut back into the water, leaving scarcely a ripple in the wake of the roll.

The eye-jabbing technique, I found out later, is known to most natives but few have enough courage to apply it.

The crocodile is evil personified — in appearance and habits as well as in disposition. He seems to hate everything that lives, even his own kind. His fighting is confined to combat with his own species, for all other beasts he attacks are simply prey, not antagonists.

"ABODE OF EVIL SPIRITS"

When the great ugly saurians decide to fight, often over some mass of carrion, they lie parallel to each other, on a sandpit or perhaps the ground bordering a river. They fight in reversed position, the head of one at the tail of the other. Thus ranged, by mutual consent, each smashes at the head of the other with his massive and immensely powerful tail. The heavy, slapping thuds of the lashing tails can be heard for long distances in the African silence.

In the shooting of a crocodile there are two main spots in which an accurately placed bullet will invariably prove fatal. One is directly through the middle of the shoulder, the other just at the back of the eye. The shoulder shot will effectively cripple the beast and tear into his lungs. The eye shot will reach the brain which, it should be remembered, is very small.

If you are shooting from above, which you so often have to do on the deeply banked African rivers, and you aim at the exact middle of the back, close to the head, you will get the spine. Then the water-wolf will wallow at your mercy, and you can photograph him — about the only chance you may have for a good close-up—and study him at close quarters.

The crocodile often grows to a length of 20 feet; a hunter killed one which he reported was 24 feet long. His life span is generally believed to be over 150 years.

I have never heard of a white man eating the flesh of a crocodile. Some natives do, but they are few. Most of them regard the ugly beast as the abode of evil spirits, a belief by no means hard to

THE HUNTED HUNTER

(Continued From Page 172)

unclasped her hand and admonished him: "Don't be too greedy. Look, they are all coming."

Ramen was not so easily to give way. He placed a solid demand:

"Then, present me with the gun with which you have snatched away my game — I may rightfully claim it."

Amiya blushed. "Why should it be so? The gun belongs to my father."

Ramen put his hand around Amiya's shoulder in great confidence and remarked, "Certainly. But my right extends not only to the gun but also to its present owner".

In sweet bashfulness, Amiya tried to ward him off saying "Ah me. Don't be too bold. Father is so near, don't you see?"

Her words poured honey into Ramen's ears. They sounded like the quivering strain from an Esraj—the most melodious note of Raga Iman.

Suren Babu from the elephant back congratulated Ramen, "After all, Ramen, you have succeeded in bagging the game.

Upendra was no less enthusiastic. He craned his neck and extended an ovation. He shouted. "Excellent. *Who tiger kill?*"

Amiya hung her head down, Ramen pointed to her.

You have been successful, and doubly so as you have bagged two at a time— one dead and another half-dead.

Suren Babu's bosom swelled with pride. He glanced round once towards Upen, then to Ramen and then perhaps towards himself signifying thereby : Look here, how I have trained up my daughter.

He immediately got down from the elephant and examined the tiger and then ordered it to be tied up and carried on one of the elephants. Suren Babu was delighted beyond measure. He told Ramen, "You proceed. I have to give *baksheesh* to these people. I shall follow. But one thing, you have not eaten anything so long, why don't you finish it now?"

Ramen begged of him to be excused: "It would be better to do it after having washes at home."

The evening sun was bidding goodbye to the earth. A red gleam fell upon Amiya's face and added a special attraction. A gentle breeze was blowing— Ramen's voice bespoke a tender affection for her. "You wanted blessings from your father so that you might return with the tiger. You have been successful, and doubly so as you have bagged two at a time— one dead and another half-dead."

Amiya's eyes widened with awe: "Are you a tiger?"

"What else? Many wanted to hurt me — but couldn't — it is you who have succeeded."

Suddenly she became frivolous. Snatching the handkerchief from Ramen, she wanted to turn the course of their conversation— "How — sweet is the scent — tell me, what is it ?"

"Scandal scent—I like it very much."

"What a peculiar name!"

"Not only peculiar but it has been very appropriate".

"Why not ? Didn't you see what scandal was today's affair)?"

A loud laughter filled the silent jungle.

On their way back the 'Bou Katha Kao' bird chirping 'bride, speak a word' was ceaselessly pouring a melody. Ramen turned round in ecstasy and sweetly whispered in her ears,

"Do you hear — the bird is so naughty — it also demands, *Bou Katha Kao*".

An ineffable dream descended on Amiya's eyes. Love glowed on her face !

* * * *

The first night of their union. Like Gouri, shining with austere penance, Amiya bore on her limbs a radiance of tranquillity. Her eyes bespoke deep devotion. She put a garland round Ramen's neck and then playfully remarked:

— "The bullet no doubt struck the heart of the tiger."

"Oh, what a stroke it was, else how could a hunter, after so many escapes, be so beautifully hunted?"

SHIKAR

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close I climbed the steep bank with the support of an over-hanging branch of a tree and saw a part of a scattered flock in which there was no warrantable stag. Keeping still leaning over the trunk of the tree under which I stood I heard the calling of the other members of the herd some distance away and not visible from my angle of vision. It was evident that the deer had been disturbed due to some reason, but it was obviously not due to me as the ones nearest to me were not looking in my direction. From the call of the unseen members of the herd I could make out that they were on the other side of the nala which had taken an abrupt bend towards left, a little distance from the spot I climbed up.

To go after them directly meant retracing my steps back to the nala which I wanted to avoid due to the tiresome going involved. So risking my exposure to the deer visible to me I slowly advanced along the bank some twenty yards and stopped at a spot from where it was impossible to proceed without being seen. I had now come to a point directly opposite the main band of the flock on the other side of the nala but still not visible to me. Here the nala had sufficiently narrowed down, but the Jantana creepers covered both the banks in the form of canopy making it almost impossible to see the sandy bottom. I had no alternative but to cross it to get a view of the flock standing close by. No overhanging branch of a tree was near at hand by the support of which I could get down. There was not much time to lose as light had started to fade.

ANOTHER BIG MISS

Putting on the safety catch of the rifle and holding it firmly with both the hands I jumped down the bank hoping for a safe landing. The landing was indeed a perfect one, but what I saw immediately after made my hairs stand on end. Not even ten feet from where I stood lay a massive tiger hunched up in doglike fashion, his mouth slightly agape with astonishment which clearly depicted the expression "What the hell do you mean"? For nearly half a minute, which seemed ages, I stood there like a statue gazing at it as if under a hypnotic spell. Then all of a sudden my fagged brain revived functioning which made me go back a few paces purely by reflex action. This sudden movement instantly brought the tiger in a crouching position and lashing its tail from side to side it gave vent to vicious coughing growls. It will be futile for me to express in words the feeling I had at that moment and I feel only those who have had the experience of a close proximity with an annoyed tiger can adequately realise the nerve-splitting situation I had fallen in. A tiger, except the rare man-eater, attacks only when provoked and the one now faced had every reason for attacking due to my uncalled-for intrusion on his privacy. I had lifted my rifle in firing position the moment I started moving backwards and decided not to shoot if I could help it. But as bad luck would have it, I could not move more than a few paces as a thick set cluster of thorny bushes blocked my backward passage. My forced halt further enraged the beast and from its looks I felt I was in for a headlong charge if I did not take immediate action. Although reluctant, I had no other choice than to shoot, if for nothing else, at least to ward off an imminent charge in trying to save my own skin. Throwing off the safety catch of the rifle already shakily held in firing position I pressed the trigger. The bang of the rifle, the thud of the bullet hitting the ground going off the mark and the loud

A MAN-EATER

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and carried by the men, we set to work find place for me to spend the night. There we suitable trees and the only solution was two rocks on the side of the road and about t feet from the kill. Between these I laid the bl and drawing some twigs and dried grass int entrance, I settled down and directed Barum to return to the town, taking the lantern with

Every shikari knows the uncanniness of s over a human kill. My exposed position an fact that I could be attacked from behind, me thoroughly uncomfortable, but I determin sit it out.

THE MAN EATER IS DEAD AT LAST

Fortunately, I had not long to wait. F an hour had elapsed since Barum Deo had lef when I noticed an animal coming down the of the road. At first I was puzzled. A ti knew, approached its kill, especially a human with extreme caution. This animal was c visible in the brilliant moonlight and it seem be progressing in a series of spasmodic jump watched it intently and when it finally stood v a few feet of the corpse, I realized the cause extraordinary method of progress. Its right paw was withered and dead, hanging useless the side of its body.

The sight of that withered limb filled me a burning fury and I cursed the miserable cc who had fired that crippling shot and had then too cowardly or too indifferent to follow the trail and put an end to the animal. At his I laid the burden of death and suffering that followed in the wake of that wounded and inca tated animal, a trail that ended here where the of his latest victim lay.

Cautiously I raised my rifle and sighted the barrel. The massive head offered a spl target but I was taking no chances and as the a crouched down to begin its ghastly feast I s lifted the sights till the head rested on the de sion between its shoulder blades, and pressed trigger. As the crash of the explosion died a the animal's body quivered, then rolled over g and lay still.

The Man Eater was dead.

"whoof" of the tiger scrambling up the bank o nala in one big bound were so co-ordinated tha appeared as if all those actions took place at and the same time with a clocklike precision.

A danger when threatening life is kind en to paralyse the nerves which enable one to bra somehow, but as soon as it is over, the tremer strain is sickeningly felt when the nervous sy starts functioning once again. The disappe tiger, no less frightened, crashed through the j causing a stampede in the herd of the spotted I was after, but try as I would to convince m that I was now out of harm's way, I could not an inch for a long time and stood where I was ing extremely weak at my knees. Only when I sufficiently recovered from this peculiar physical ability, did I venture to creep up the memorable and rejoin the forest road.

Here again the cause of my missing the was the same as that made me miss the bear alr described. But supposing that even in spite of perfect aiming the bullet had failed to kill it right, would not the story have been thorou different?

Modernism in Indian Art and Art Criticism

By ASIT K. HALDAR

INDIA is now being rapidly drawn towards revolutionary changes in every phase of her activities. But in the cultural field, alas! our modern art can only be compared to an orphan whom anyone standing by can patronise or criticise. Naturally, any unsuccessful journalist can nurture it as his own pet and flourish his pen without the least hesitation. They do not also feel like putting up some efforts to learn the peculiar ideologies and philosophical meanings underlying the art of the different countries. They, on the otherhand, measure the art of different countries in the same breath and outlook and write about it in a confused and indifferent manner. Sometimes critics deliberately use such philosophical terms and jargons as, perhaps, they themselves do not understand. We can give here a concrete example of a typical journalist-cum-art-critic examining an art object—a sandal wood carving. He at once takes the small object in hand, and begins turning the reverse side and declares it to be a most unworthy and unfinished art-work he has ever seen. Evidently, such a critic is indeed at a loss to understand how a young artist of our country could still produce such a remarkable thing of beauty; and, apparently, just to please his own vanity (as an art-critic), made such an irresponsible remark. Moreover, the critic wants to show his highly strung nervous system, specially cultivated to adjudge the aesthetic value of fine art. For this he had nothing to bother about, and the only thing that is required of him is to walk down into a book sellers' shop and find out some modern literature on European art by European authors. He can then sit comfortably at his table and write essays on Indian art imposing the same kind of critical analysis which could apparently please his own whims.

INDIAN ART CRITIC'S DUTY

An art-critic of our country, nevertheless, has a most responsible profession to follow. He has got to have a long-term objective and a catholic outlook to view his own country's art. For this he should stand on his own soil and study, first of all, *Shilpa Shastras* such as *Vishnudharmottara Shastra, Mahomath Shastras* along with the philosophical interpretation of image worship of our country which baffles the Christian minds of the West. Otherwise, mimetic ways and means would lead our art nowhere.

Ideologically, Western art has nothing in common with our art, as tradition finds no meaning to western mind. Realistic rendering has become possible with the invention of photography and life-like art-form has lost its meaning. Moreover, just as the metaphysical aspects of the Upanishads can never be understood by the West owing to different religious traditions, so, self-realisation through art, attained by our traditional *sadhana*, can never be realized by them. A good Christian cannot see the soul permeating the animal world except in a man who too must be a Christian like him. But the soul, *atma*, for a Hindu, pervades not only humanity but the universe also. Beyond *atma*, only *Paramatma* can be metaphysically conceived and cannot be touched by the five senses.

ART IN EAST AND WEST

Finalism is, at present, on the other hand, sought by the Western scholars. A philosophical interpretation of life's processes in terms of their end or purpose and their sense is carried over into the psy-

hology of analytical schools. They, therefore, find he seed is the essence of a tree and a child mind is he seed mind of a man, whereas Indian art stands pon the fertility of imagination, *Dhyana*. Accordg to tradition, imagination in Indian art is always reative and not imitative. It is intuition that is equired to be developed in Indian art. Such imagiation can be developed to re-create from the past erpetual experiences, and also self-initiated and selfrganised ways and means.

Our Indian art-critics misconstrue art criticism nd they unwittingly cultivate a taste for western rt instead of knowing about the principle of true aluation and essence of creative art of all countries nd appreciate them, they become desparate faultinders. Therefore, unknowingly they decry their wn country's work of art. The famous fight beween Ruskin and Turner need not be repeated here.)bviously, Piccasso could not have brought his surealistic type of scribblings to the fore-front in this cience-invaded, materialistic world unless the cholar critics with aesthetic-cum-psychological anaysis could initiate people into the mysteries of his nfamiliar and unimaginative child-like drawings. The new doctrine preached by the art-critics has almost captured the imagination of the present journalists and artists of the world. In Europe Christian radition of the medieval days does no longer exist but has been turned into a secular aesthetic speculation. In other words, emotionless patterns have become the ultimate objectives of the artist and the fundamental difference between a picture and a pattern does not exist anymore.

INDIAN FOLK ART

Such problem in India never arose. Folk art has been continuing since long before the advent of the European surrealistic or primitive art in India, and, if compared even to-day, it will appear astonishingly 'modern' according to the critics of the West. So much so that an Indian student who went to learn modernism of the West in Paris was, I am told, turned out by the surrealist master artist Piccasso, who asked his prospective student to return home to find out such primitive novelties from the hearth and home of the villages. Surrealistic art has, of course, a commercial value and quaint and curious primitive motifs and forms are the only criteria; and only as such surrealistic art differs greatly from the higher phases of art cultivated in India continuously for over three thousand years.

In India, a great seer is called *Paramahamsa*, which literally means a great swan. As a swan leaves out the dirt and takes the pure water through his beak so the saint takes the essence of the best of this world of misery and purifies his soul. The artist of India has got the same task to accomplish. An Indian artist is far from being a 'Bohemian' and should have the intuition of a 'Yogi' and know the same metaphysical secret of acquiring the best from the worst happenings of this mortal world.

HAVELL AND COOMARASWAMY

True interpretation of their work is only possible when we really sympathetically understand the inner meaning of Indian art. It was men like Coomaraswamy and Havell, two pioneer critics who opened up to us the true significance of our art form. Too much traditional refinement and sophistication of Indian art hardly found favour in the hands of modern art-critics in India and abroad and any attempt to revive such interest is misunderstood and misconstrued by them. The general appeal for primitiveness in art by the European aesthetic-minded art-critics is new. They no more decry primitive art as barbarous. Even Indian sculptures to the Western scholar critics like Westmicot or Birdwood in the 19th century were of "debased quality, deprived of all interest as a phase of fine art, devoid of proportion and acuteness in execution". And critics of the same country after the First World War began to please themselves in chaotic, unsophisticated, *tamasic* art for the sake of aesthetic speculation. Christian concept of art as a form of devotion became a history of the medieval past. Herbert Reed while studying Negro Bushman's art, said; *"We are led to an understanding of art in its most elementary form, and the elementary is always vital." Now this kind of vitality which he points out in primitive art can be challenged and we can boldly assert that the same type—perhaps better type—of metaphysical, perennial vitality exists in the highly sophisticated art of India specially in Nataraj as well as in the conception of Buddha.*

THE DANCE OF SIVA

From the works of Havell and Coomaraswamy and also some of the modern European art-critics like Rowland, Shaldon Chainy we come to know that Siva's Dance of destruction is "the personification of all the vital forces and powers of the cosmic system in operation, the movement of energy within the universe. In Him they have their dayspring and in Him their death." Similarly, highly sophisticated image of the Buddha which was once decried by Birdwood as a 'lump of pudding' has been re-valued by the above-mentioned critics, in the following terms:

"While Western art sought to make an aesthetically beautiful form by portraying human figures which are models of physical perfection and athletic vigour, in Indian art human form is idealised and no anatomical muscular aspect is emphasised. Indian art started with abstract spiritual concepts which had to be translated into physical shape. A proper likeness of the Buddha had to show his achievement of the final Yoga state of serenity and complete mental equilibrium and in addition to it had to incorporate all the 'Lakshana' or 32 major signs of super-human perfection distinguishing the body of a Buddha from those of ordinary mortals." If the early critics found in it any primitive incompleteness and brutal forces unattainable by them the present day critic of the world could at the same time find deeply inspiring religious ideas and spiritual experiences and entirely unselfconscious creation of the artist.

"PRIMITIVE" VS. "MODERN"

Art is never a static phase in the creation in the cultural field. In every period and in every kind of art of different countries some primitive trend will exist. Egyptian, Babylonian, Assyrian and Byzantine art is called typical primitive art. The Art of the Italian Renaissance is also called primitive by the critics of the West. Our critics will do well to understand the significance of such pet words "primitive" and "modern" before he starts to criticise art of our country. In several countries we actually find a variety of cultures developed from really primitive types of the highly developed sophisticated art. Cultural development of all countries cannot always have a gradual course and for that reason cannot always be brushed aside even if it developed into a sophisticated dogmatic art. The landscape of China, the realistic art of Europe, and the idealised form of Indian art are entirely different from one another and reflects the ideology and widely distin-

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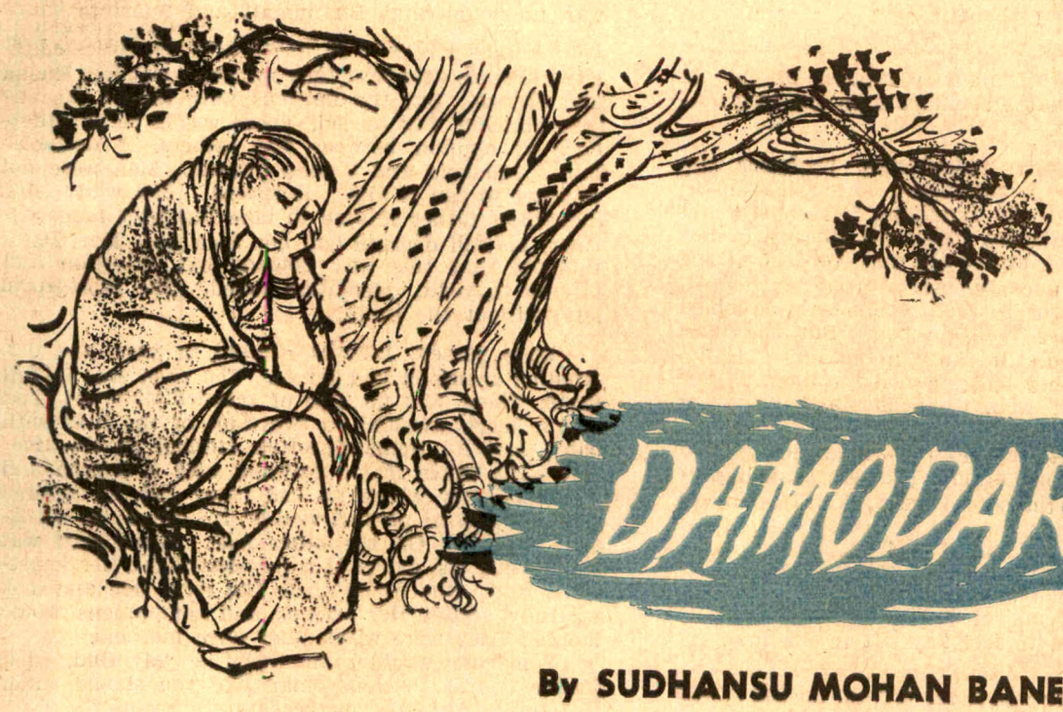

DAMODAR

By SUDHANSU MOHAN BANERJEE

IT was the hour after the sunset. The evening darkness was just deepening into a mellowy dream. Sailani was resting in her favourite deck chair. The day's toil was over. On the teapoy in front, rested a cup of hot tea as yet untouched by her lovely lips. She was feeling at ease, happy with herself and the world. She was actually humming a soft tune when the telephone bell rang.

Her maidservant came running. What a nuisance that some one should be wanting her on the telephone at this time! She got up a little upset by this intrusion and went to the telephone — Hallo, what number do you want, Yes, Miss Sailani speaking — Yes, who are you please? What's the name?— Can't exactly follow — what is it you say? — Yes, I know Bhanumati Devi of Bankura — She belongs to village Bakultala — Yes, I call her grandma, not exactly my own—but she is more than that, but who are you please? — Engineer Parimal Ganguly of DVC — I see, wasn't your picture in the papers the other day — just returned from the Tennesse Valley —I see.

She now became interested as well as respectful also — What — what do you say — Bhanumati Devi has met with a serious accident — hovering between life and death ? Oh, it may not be as bad as that. Her tone definitely betrayed anxiety. The telephone on the other side went on saying — Yes, while coming last night over the new canal road, my car suddenly misbehaved and I had to stop. While I was looking into the car and setting it right, I heard some commotion. People came running and informed me that there has been an accident. An old lady had fallen down the embankment and had been seriously injured. I went there at once and I was told that she used to come every day to the river side. She would sit there on the bank, vacantly look at the river and curse her. This was her daily routine — Now that the river was being trained and tamed she would in glee address her — How now, how do you like this bondage? I took her in my car and admitted her into the hospital.

Sailani was getting impatient over this long recital and cried — Please, tell me, how is she now?

Parimal did not reply directly. He said — You know, she is old, nearing eighty and anything at this age might turn critical. But she is having lucid intervals — moments of returning consciousness. I asked the people there whether she had any relations. Nobody could say anything but one of the village women said that she had an adopted grandchild in Calcutta — no real relation, but —

Big tears were rolling Sailani's cheeks by then on the other side of the phone. She thought — Yes, blood might be thicker than water, but love and affection are greater bonds.

Parimal continued — The woman brought me a small box and told me that the old lady used to keep her valuable possessions there. I might find there some letter or address or indication. I found there a photo and an address with a telephone number. The photo was that of an exquisitely pret-

would envy a calligraphist. I asked her whose address it was but she could not throw much light but suggested that it might be of the daughter of her adopted child. I thought as I was coming to Calcutta I might try the address or the telephone number to find out if anybody related to the old lady was there so that I could pass on the information of the accident.

Miss Sailani, the redoubtable professor, the heroine of a hundred platforms, a most admired lady speaker in all social functions, felt choked and silent. Only two sentences continued to ring in her ears — an exquisitely pretty girl and she had a nice handwriting. She unconsciously stared at the reflection in the mirror in front. She also scribbled a few lines with her fountain pen. But the telephone was not dead. It rang up again — Hallo, Yes —— Probably they had jammed the line and the connection was cut; well, what do you say — you may be returning tonight. I could come with you if I liked — Well let me see — No, I am not worried about fetishes or convention. I have no such prejudice. All right; thanks so much, I will be ready in an hour.

Though she did not express so, even an up-to-date modern girl like her was somewhat electrified. In her thirtytwo years of perfect maidenhood she had not an occasion to feel any rift in the lute.

In an hour there was a car driving up the hostel gate and at the wheel sat a nice well-groomed young man not more than thirtyfive years of age. Sailani came down and by way of introducing herself said — I take it you are Mr. Ganguly — I am so grateful — I hope I have not upset your plan.

Parimal smiled and said — Why not postpone this thanksgiving for the present? Let us wait till we reach there and then you can thank me to your heart's content and if you like with interest added to it. Well, in any case I could not have stayed beyond early tomorrow morning. I am cutting it by a few hours only. Hope we would be there by 2 O'clock.

They looked at each other and for a second their eyes met full in the face. Sailani felt a little embarrassed and made herself busy to get into the car and sat in the front seat by his side. Parimal pressed the accelerator rather absent-mindedly.

In a few minutes they crossed the Bally bridge and by that time they had settled down to a normal drive. The night was pleasant, the atmosphere quiet and the road deserted. There was, however, a touch of monsoon in the air — the car was speeding to its destination over the polished macadam. Occasionally a few lorries and trucks passed, their headlights staring others in the face with their glare. The star-lit sky above silhoutted a picture of white coloured bulbs. Sirius, Horus and a million others looked at the poor earth.

They talked. It centred mainly on the old lady. Sailani was the speaker. Parimal listened.

Bhanumati Devi was not a Brahmin. She belonged to a good 'Kaibarta' family and in her younger days was a girl of some beauty. The whole locality felt proud of her and she was the cynosure of her father's eyes. Considering those days she was married at a very late age. Her father Mati Patni did not want to give her away except to a really deserving boy. He spurned many offers which others considered good. Ultimately the marriage was fixed with Mani Samanta's only son Sumanta. They be- [illegible] the Damodar and the match was by all means a deserving one. Sumanta was the very embodiment of youth, strong, supple erect. His father was also a man of means. There was no doubt that Bhanumati and Sumanta made an adorable pair and it was a case of love at first sight. People said that they matched just like Radha and Shyam. But the heavens were falling. An unseen thunder was hurled. There was a small difference of opinion between the fathers. It deepened into a squabble and then a quarrel. Men were not wanting to fan it and it spread like wild fire. Sumanta's father refused to take the bride home because his full demand had not been met. Mati Patni thought that this was nothing but extortion and refused to yield. Mediation failed. The bridegroom left without the bride.

Days passed, months elapsed, a year was out. Another monsoon had set in. The river was in full spate. There was no sign of reconciliation yet. Two young hearts awaited on two sides of the river with bated breath. Sumanta often strolled on the river side. His whole frame quivered with a tension and an expectancy which he had never felt. He wanted something to be pressed against his breast. He wanted somebody. On the other side Bhanumati was also feeling the pangs of a new sensation. Her heartbeats rose. She would go to the river side and look wistfully across. Her friends and companions would laugh. They were wives, they were mothers.

Some one would sympathise: — "My God, what justice is this that a woman like you should suffer like this? Ah! are you becoming a recluse".

Others would curse — Two old fools.

Another would say — But what of that young fellow; Is he a real man or an incompetent fool? Does he not appreciate; does he not feel?

Bhanumati would only listen with tears in her eyes and a pang in her heart. Her auntie (she did lose her mother in childhood) used to scold her — Why do you spend so much time on the river side? Don't be silly and don't forget that you are a young woman and a girl like you should not be moving about so freely particularly after dark. That day that old hag was saying — She stopped and did not finish her say.

Bhanumati felt a little taken aback and hurt. After all it was not her fault. What had she or he had done. Nothing; yet there stood between them a big gulf not only in the shape of a quarrel between the parents but an untamed river as well.

But even that river was no bar to love's triumphant march. It was evening, the red glow of a vanishing sun was throwing its last embers over the deepening gloom. There was a shadow and a footfall. Bhanumati looked and blushed. A full blooded man's inviting arms had been thrown around her. She felt dazed as if collapsing but whispered — Don't don't — Are you mad, what would others say if they see us thus.....

Sumanta said nothing, loosened his grip but looked straight at her. He had a determined look put only one question — Do you still sleep with your auntie under her fostering care?

She did not reply but nodded negatively with a provoking smile.

Both Mati Patni and Mani Samanta used to be away from their homes on Saturday nights. That was the day when they would take their goods to Calcutta. So many such Saturdays had come and [illegible] and nothing unusual had happened but on the

next Saturday after their meeting Bhanumati was feeling restless. It was full moon night. Over the wide expanse of the river the queen moon presided. Sand beds shone like glittering silver, white 'kash' flowers bedecked the intervening space. Water courses were not swollen. Giant trees on the bank were moving as if in response to a signal. They were almost beckoning and reckoning. Bhanumati was sitting outside almost moonstruck. She was reminded of her old playmate — Lachmi — the pointsman's daughter. She used to sing such lovely 'Kajri' songs in such lovely nights. Where is she now? Nobody knows where. She had left without notice with a sweetheart — in a sense had eloped. Everybody had cursed her including herself but today she felt sympathetic towards her. Suddenly she felt fiery arms encircling her in a rich hot, passionate embrace. It was so sweet, so charming, so soothing and so possessive.

Yes, me, would you have been happier still if it were some one else?

Everything in her succumbed in that tumult of senses, in that riot of right. Her only expression was — You?

Yes, me, would not have been happier still if it were some one else?

She nestled round his breast, put two fingers on his lips and replied 'Hush'.

She lay there in perfect collapse in that happy consciousness as if her whole existence was ebbing, moving and throbbing.

She whispered — Why do you come like a thief in this surreptitious way? Can't you come boldly?

Love has to overcome shyness, hate and fear—He said.

But supposing somebody spies — What will they think, come.

She took him inside. That was the night of nights and her only night. In such a night as this, she lived and loved and loved and lived.

In the morning her auntie found her asleep in the verandah. She had a fairly pungent tongue and she was wild. She started at her hard and cried — What had happened to you? Which devil did possess you? What an audacity that you, a young girl should sleep in the open while people were moving about!

The whole day she looked at her from time to time and tried to assess the situation.

As soon as her brother returned, she ran to him and said — You are a thrice blessed fool, a blind man, can't you see that she is growing — she is now a ripe woman; shouldn't she now go to her father in law's, live with her husband? At least invite the son-in-law?

Mati Patni was adamant—No, nothing doing. Mani Samanta is the devil's own creation, otherwise now could a man refuse such a nice girl just for the sake of a few rupees. Let him come himself or send his son and take away Bhanu — won't go or send her. That scoundrel of a miser!

Bhanumati heard everything. Each word was a bloody stab for her. Tears rolled down her cheeks.

Another Saturday came and Mati Patni was again away. It was raining hard. The river was rising. There was an atmosphere of tense suspense. This was just the time when in the hills above, rains splash down the catchment area.

There were heavy showers throughout the day with gusty winds. Bhanumati was off and on looking at the sky — would not this cursed rain stop? Would not the gods take pity on a lovelorn girl? The gods laughed and the heavens thundered.

Auntie was talking and spinning She remarked — Well, Bhanu, it looks as if we are getting a high flood; a bad omen.

Bhanumati sat quiet as if thunderstruck. Auntie's words did not reach her. She continued — You fool, don't you see it was knee-deep water in the morning, now it is waist deep. God be thanked that your father has not to cross the river. He goes by the light railway.

Bhanumati sat still — she was looking at the

dark pall of the still darker night — if she could tear away the veil and set everything right.

Water rose and rose and by midnight it had broken its banks and entered the village. Bhanumati lay awake but a complete black-out seemed to engulf her senses. Even the rumbling sound of rushing water was lost to her. But by the morning the news was out. The swollen and drunken river had receded but not without taking her toll and the main price was none but Mati Samanta's young son. Apparently the young man was crossing the river and had been swept away. None but a fool or a lunatic would attempt that on such a night as this. What was he after? After all he was not coming to his father-in-law's and were they on good terms? No.—The body was entwined in the roots of the big banyan tree by the side of which Bhanumati used to stop and look out into the river.

Auntie fainted. The two fathers and their host of relatives came running and weeping. Oh Sumanta, Sumanta, my son .... Bhanumati sat as if crucified. There was not a drop of tears in her eyes. Reconciliation came when it was of no value. In the midst of life came death.

Time is a great healer. Days passed on — Memories faded. People began to talk, particularly the women folk. They spread the rumour first with a suggestive shyness. 'Sister, have you seen Bhanu lately?'

No, what is the matter?

The other would answer with a foxy smile — Oh, nothing much. Perhaps there would soon be an addition to their family.

What? Good Lord! What is the society coming to!

Sister, didn't I tell her auntie repeatedly not to allow her to go out here and there and with everybody — Now — My God.

Auntie in her turn was also worried. She often held confidential talks with her brother. One day she sent for Bhanu and declared—Bhanu we had not been to any holy places for a long time. Let us go to Nawadwip.

Her auntie was a devout Vaishnavite. There was nothing wrong in her desire to go to that place for a pilgrimage. But Bhanumati was not a silly girl. She could understand, she could reason, she could add two and two. So she decided to take into confidence Radhu Pandit the father of a girl friend of hers. He was a widower and was living alone after his daughter's marriage. He was not only the village teacher but a friend, philosopher and guide to all and sundry who cared to consult him. Moreover he was a man of deep spiritual susceptibilities and used to while away his spare time in that pursuit. The Pandit listened carefully, questioned and understood. His advice was specific and pointed. She should not go to Nawadwip or elsewhere. She had not done any thing wrong. To be a mother is a great privilege. The whole centre of gravity of creation rotated round it. It is the course of the Eternal Whose desire always is to multiply. That is how the One becomes many—She was bound to succeed—She has the Promethean fire. Let her not worry,—everything will come alright.

He talked to her father and aunt and wrote a letter to her father-in-law — 'The scion of your family is coming. Your son is being reborn. A new dawn is being heralded. Take care of her'.

The father-in-law was half agreeable but the mother-in-law vetoed it. She could not forget that her son had staked his life for a woman and that woman was not she. She was another and in distress. She hurled her choicest billingsgate on her, even throwing slur on her character.

Pandit Mahasay when he heard this did not speak but took his string instrument and was humming a tune when Bhanumati came and fell flat on his feet. Oh, Sire.....

He simply drew her close and said soothingly— My daughter.

From that day onwards the Pandit became Bhanumati's adopted father and she his daughter. She spent most of her time in the Pandit's hut. She took up without asking all his household work; used to listen to his readings, looked at his puja and prayers. She used to go everyday to the river side where the dead body of Sumanta was discovered by the side of the big banyan tree. People saw her throwing stones at the river. That was the one eccentricity which she had developed. One day she was found lying there in an unconscious state. She was brought home, but Nature took back her gift. Her motherhood was prematurely ended. Everybody was happy: A ticklish social problem was solved.

One day the Pandit was reading to her from Mahabharata. She was listening intently to Karna-Kunti episode when suddenly she heard the rumbling noise of the rushing water in the river. She was at once wild — she was muttering nonsense.

What was the matter, the Pandit asked.

Oh, Father, is there no means of taming this shrew. She has taken my husband, she has taken my child. I hate her. I curse her, she is my enemy number one. If I am a devoted and chaste woman, true and honest, that river yonder would be controlled and I won't die before it is done. Can't anything be done, father?

He replied — My dear, I have heard that in other countries such rivers are tamed and controlled by big dams. With capacity for destruction curtailed and her water resources scientifically harnessed, there could be programmes for prosperity, not only flood control, but schemes of irrigation to bring life-giving water to aid barren land, generation of hydro power for rural electrification and other multipurpose developments. She could not follow entirely; canals and reservoirs she could understand but electricity was a thing unheard of yet. She was definitely enthused however, her eyes shone, she answered — Can't this be done in our country, father?

Pandit Mahasay became absorbed in his own reverie — Yes, perhaps not now but in the far future a new hope may arise, a new faith, a new creative urge. A new temple of eternity will arise in human breast.

Bhanumati looked at that sunlit face as if he was looking at the beyond. She fell at his feet — Oh, my father, if I had a son, I would give him for doing this work. The devil of a river like this must be controlled. She has taken my all.

Her prayer was heard and fulfilled in another way. A son came to her by the grace of God. There was a cholera epidemic; her girlhood friend, the Pandit Mahasay's daughter, became seriously ill and died leaving a new born babe. The son-in-law follow-

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A Woman & a Serpent

An intriguing love-affair of a cripple, his wife and a she-snake and the tragic climax of the jealousy of the "co-wives".

By
TARASANKAR BANDOPADHYYA

SHEIKH, the cripple, was pulling out bricks from the kiln. His real name nobody knew, probably he himself didn't remember it. He had been known as the cripple since he had broken his left leg in his long lost childhood. Not only was his leg broken, his nose too had been eaten away by vile diseases grown out of youthful excesses. A gruesome hollow had now taken its place. Afterwards he got pox and the marks left by it gave his ugly face a savage look.

He was working intently.

A little away, Adai alias Owahed Sheikh was driving up his cart. Wrenching the bullocks' tails he burst into a song — a vulgar one. But it slipped out of tune abruptly. All on a sudden the bullocks stopped startled. Shaken with a jolt, Adai interrupted his musical rapture and burst up — 'Bloody beasts, you need some beating....'

Enraged to a degree, he raised the staff to punish the animals who were restless and breathing heavily. But hit he could not, instead he cried out — 'Snake, snake !'

Right in front of his cart a young serpent was mildly swinging its expanded hood. Adai jumped down and lifted a brick.

From the other side the cripple rushed on limping, 'Don't, don't kill it,' he pleaded, 'let me come.'

The brick in Adai's hand remained as it was; he exclaimed, 'Lo, what a beautiful snake ! The mouth bright-red as vermilion. And how wonderful is its hood-ring ! But — it's fleeing, running away, come sharp !'

The reptile was now escaping speedily. But it was actually heading towards the cripple. Anxious to run away from Adai, it did not notice the other man.

'Just throw me that whip of yours, Adai,' the cripple shouted....'Oh, it's gone into the kiln. Udainag, that's the kind; a rare find, that snake. Could I catch it, I'd've earned something.'

The cripple was a snake-catcher by profession. Not a catcher alone, he played the snakes as well. In every nook of his hut were always found large tight-mouthed earthen pots hanging from the thatch. All his snakes were confined within these pots. When seized with age, they were set free in a distant field. Many died too. When he had a stock of snakes, he wouldn't care to work as a labourer. Those days he would be going about with a drum and a flute to show snake-play. And small won't be his earnings. But then his ration of hemp and opium went up as well. Sometimes he indulged in liquor too. All this luxury invariably resulted in his coming out again with the day-labourer's equipment soon as the stock of snakes had emptied. He would then knock well-to-do houses and ask, jutting out part of his beastly face, 'Want labour?'

When he laughed — and it was always a sycophantish laugh — his loathsome odious face grew all the more loathsome, all the more odious. He worked hard at a job if he chanced to get one; there he would deceive none. The day he got no work, he begged, the basket on his shoulder, ofcourse. With whatever he could collect he bought some hemp and opium; and if a few coins were still left, he bought himself some fermented liquor and poured them through his gullet. Back home, he would shed copious tears, holding Zubeda's feet, ''cause you married me, there's no end to your misery, dear,' he bewailed. 'I'm starving you to death.'

Zubeda would laughingly caress her husband's head and say, 'Come, come — don't you rave, set me free — let me see if I can procure some rice.'

This would worsen the situation. Snivelling

lavishly, he now clung an arm round her neck and sobbed, 'Couldn't ever give you a new piece of cloth. Old rags — that's what you've always worn.'

However, that's a different story. Early next morning the cripple appeared before the brick-stack, a small stick in hand, a small basket under arm. A reddish splendour had just begun dyeing the eastern horizon. Perched on the thick of trees, the birds were chirping ceaselessly. The sound of gongs and conchshells was drifting along from a temple in the village. Sitting on a raised mound, the cripple spied all around with sharp vigilant eyes.

The scarlet hue on the eastern skyline was gradually growing deeper and stretching its circumference. The brilliance of that colour turned the burnt bricks in the stack redder. Even the cripple's dirty wear seized the reddish tinge.

'There, ain't it there ?' He rose to his feet.

A little away in the broad field, a young serpent — possibly that very one — was playing on all alone, swinging its hood, raising its face up to the eastern sky. Bathed in crimson radiance of the morning sun, its complexion looked crimson. Against that deep-red background the deep-black ring on the hood looked magnificent. It was as fascinating as the black designs on red wings of a butterfly. The snake-catcher became spellbound. 'Excellent'. His soft-toned exclamation was spontaneous.

Then he stepped forward stealthily. The young snake was enrapt in felicitating the young sun — so much so that even the sound of his steps did not interrupt its play. But hardly had the cripple come too close when it turned back startled. The next moment it snapped with a sharp hiss. But the hood it could not raise again. The quick-handed cripple had, ere it could bite, pressed down its head with the stick in his left hand, and holding its tail with the right, he gave it a jerk or two; then examining it closely, he observed, 'It's a she-snake !'

Six months later. Returning from the hemp shop, the cripple told Zubeda, 'See what I've brought.'

'What ?' she asked, sweeping the courtyard.

Unknotting an end of his cloth, he brought out a very small glittering thing and placing it on his palm held it before his wife. A minute drop — a trinket for the nose.

'What will you do with such a tiny nose-drop ?' Zubeda enquired.

'I'll deck Bibi,' he replied with a grin.

Zubeda was astonished, but the cripple merrily went into the room. Soon he came out with a snake coiled round his neck. That very snake. She had by the time grown somewhat bigger — but had lost her erstwhile spirit. Slightly raising the mouth, she was slowly moving about the cripple's shoulders — subdued, spiteless.

'Don't do that, I say,' Zubeda warned. 'How very tamed she might be, one can't be too sure of their kind.'

'One can't be too sure of their fang,' he answered with a smile, 'otherwise, they also love, Zubeda. True, she hasn't her venom-tooth, but has the others alright; but me she doesn't bite, you know ! See how like a good girl my Bibi is moving about!' So saying, he pressed the serpent's lips together and gave her a kiss.

This act did not take his wife by surprise, for it was nothing new to her. But she sang out indignantly, 'Pshaw, for shame ! Have you lost all your sense of distaste ? I've so many times forbidden you, haven't I ?'

'Don't do that I say', Zubeda warned, 'How very tamed she might be, one can't be too sure of their kind'.

The cripple turned a deaf ear to all this. 'Look and see,' he exclaimed, 'how she's coiled round my hand ! D'you know when a he-snake and a she-snake mate, they wind round each other just in this fashion ? Have you ever seen that ? Ah, what a lovely sight, that sport, marry !'

'I've no business to see that, you've seen and that'll do. But your sport too this devil of a snake will put an end to, I tell you !'

The cripple had meantime busied himself in piercing the snake's nose with a needle. He pressed her tail under his toe and gripped her mouth in his left palm. Holding a needle in his right hand, he pierced her nose and released her after the nose-drop had been fixed. Raging with pain, Bibi bit him again and again, hissing furiously. Shielding himself with the lid of the basket. he resisted her persistent attacks and tried to coax her 'Don't get annoyed, darling, don't. Just see for once how beautiful you look ? Please, Zubeda, hand the mirror and let her have a look of her own face.'

'I won't.' Zubeda refused flatly.

'Please, please, I beg of you, hand it for once. Let's see what she does seeing her own face.'

Zubeda could not ignore this entreaty of her husband. She went inside to fetch a looking-glass.

'An' bring some vermilion also', he added.

'Why, what for ?' she asked from within.

'That you'll see presently,' he laughed merrily. 'I'mn't going to tell that beforehand.'

Zubeda brought a mirror and some vermilion and placed them at a distance. The cripple very skilfully caught hold of the reptile and taking some vermilion on the tip of a stick drew a red line on her head. Then he announced with a loud laugh, 'I've married her. Zubeda, she's become your co-wife.'

He now addressed the snake, 'Lo, Bibi, how handsome you look, just see !' Releasing the snake, he held the mirror before her. Then he began to sing in his shrill nasal voice, beating a drum.

A few months later.

One day in mid-monsoon it was raining in showers. The cripple had gone somewhere and could not return owing to the inclement weather. Zubeda felt the room was emitting a strange odour — an odour that was mild but sweet and of a variety not experienced before.

'Lo, lo,' he exclaimed, 'how she's coiled round my arm !'

She moved about everywhere but could fixed nothing.

The cripple returned after a couple of days. Flinging a vulgar slang at the god of rains, he said, 'Pray, give me something to eat, Zubeda, I'm so hungry.'

Zubeda served him a dishful of stale rice. Scarcely had he entered the room after washing his muddy feet when he asked. 'What's this smell of, Zubeda ?'

'God knows of what. It's here in the room all these days.'

Nothing more he said, only tried to ascertain the nature of the odour by drawing in long breaths. Looking up here and there, he stopped before the snake's basket. At the sound of steps, the snake inside gave out a sharp hiss.

'Hum', the cripple nodded.

'What's up, tell me,' Zubeda grew curious.

'The smell is of Bibi's skin. She's a female, you know, it's time for her to meet a male, and that's why — ! This very smell allures the male.'

Zubeda was surprised. 'May be so, your affairs you know better', she said. 'Now, let it go and finish your meal.'

'She must be set free in the field,' the cripple said, gobbling a mouthful of rice. 'They mustn't be held back during this period.' He ended with a deep long sigh.

'That's better, I should say', said Zubeda, heaving a breath of immense relief. 'She's my eyesore. So many snakes die, why doesn't this one ?'

Meal over, the cripple took out his Bibi from the basket. Clasping her mouth, he fondled her with many a loving word.

'Take care,' Zubeda cautioned. 'She hasn't been pared for some time, her fang has grown anew. And, why waste your affection, dear ? Go and set her free'.

'Lo, lo', he exclaimed, 'how she's coiled round my arm !'

That afternoon the cripple was sitting dejected — he had released his Bibi in the jungle nearby.

'Why sitting thus ? Why don't you smoke your hemp ?' Zubeda tried to cheer him up.

'Oh, how my heart's pining for Bibi !'

'Death to you,' Zubeda reproved him smilingly. 'When you say such foolish things, I feel —'

'No, Zubeda, my heart is weeping sorely.'

Zubeda now sat by her husband and winding her endearing arms round his neck, said, 'Why, darling, don't you like me ?'

Giving her an ardent kiss, the cripple muttered, 'It's you, Zubeda, that's keeping me alive yet. You're to me more than my life.'

'Look, look,' Zubeda shouted, 'Bibi is back. Look there, in the ditch.'

Bibi, her hood raised up, was actually crawling along the water-outlet.

'Wait, let me seize her,' the cripple tried to rise up.

'No,' Zubeda clung to her husband with all her force. Then she cried out shrilly, 'Get out, get out— het, het,' and with her left hand hurled a cowdung-cake at the snake. Furiously hitting her hood upon the ground several times, the reptile slowly crept out along the ditch.

It was possibly midnight when Zubeda screamed, 'Get up, get up, something has bitten me!' The cripple hastened to light a lamp and found that

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DAMODAR

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ed and Pandit Mahasay was left with the little charge. He came back and placed the little orphan in Bhanumati's care. He remarked — Here is your son, my dear, take him. It is God's gift.

Yes, she mothered this orphan boy with all the sacred yearning of a mother. That babe was my father.

What! cried Parimal who was listening so long to the story without interruption.

But her tenor of life was not to be even. Her aunt had never liked her mixing too much with the Pandit. It came to a climax when he brought that baby. Ultimately she decided finally to leave her father's protection altogether. Up to now she was spending all the day in the Pandit's but used to return to her father's shelter for the night. That too ceased over the issue of the baby. Everybody was critical. Whose baby was that? The story of the Pandit's grandson was discounted. People had a habit of flinging mud. When the crisis came, she at once made up her mind; she crossed over to the Pandit s finally and her whole occupation was the baby i.e., my father. I call her Grandma but she was more than a mother to my father. She began to dream, she began to plan his future. She began to save every pice that her son 'Biswajit' (i.e. how she named him — he would conquer the world) could become an engineer and all with the subconscious resolve that he would one day become big and somehow tame the river.

The Pandit would say—Do you know what it costs to bring up a boy as an engineer?

It was another uphill task. It was a veritable 'tapasya' for her. Whatever she had, a few ornaments, she turned into liquid cash, began the money-lending business, saved every pie and reared up my father with the one and sole intention that he would become an engineer. She came to be known as the most atrocious money-lender.

On his death bed Pandit Mahasay gave her a warning — You are spending every pie on Biswajit, suppose in your old age he does not support you. After all he may think that you are not his real mother in flesh and blood. Even the mention of it was a blow to her. It was a grim reminder that Biswajit was not her own. That such a contingency could even happen was a thing beyond her comprehension.

My father's education went on as planned. Bhanumati sent her son to Roorkee. He was a meritorious boy and soon attracted the notice of the professors. He passed with credit, was sent abroad with a scholarship and secured a good job on return. One of his old professors was my mother's father. He planned to get his daughter married to this brilliant young man. My mother was also accomplisned, up-to-date and educated. But the poor grandma pining for her son and waiting for his return was not consulted. By that time my father had come to know of his real parentage. As a matter of fact it speaks a lot for my grandma that she herself told him everything before he left for Roorkee. My father felt a little weak. He wanted to tell my grandma about it but my mother's father intervened and said — You are a grown up young man, adult and educated, able to take your own responsibility. You can decide for yourself what is the best for you. After all, she is not your real mother. Of course she should be kept informed. We shall certainly send her an invitation card. She was informed and she sent her blessings. But I wonder whether she had on that day felt a little pang for her Biswajit. Did she on that day go to the riverside and pray?

The wheel came full circle. My father was

Here is your son, my dear, take him. It is God's gift.

naturally separated from my grandma. He v now a big Engineer, a man with status and p tion. Did he ever dream of his foster mothe resolve—how to train a wild river. My father k up some semblance of a relationship—had been see her twice or thrice, used to make her ren tances now and then but my mother had ne been to that place. My grandma naturally wan to see her, wrote to my father several times my mother always avoided it for one reason a another. Her last request came when I was bo Since then she stopped worrying my father ab it. My mother died at a comparatively early a and my father became more and more a reclu He gave up going down to Bengal. As I grew I saw him in his grand isolation. Here was towering personality, a man of heart as well as he but in one way nursing a frustration. I did know much about this grand old lady. My fath was reticent. He would not say much and I co piece the whole story only after his death from diaries and letters. I could visualise how and wh she had suffered, what she did for my father, h aim, aspiration and inspiration. Perhaps she w a little self-centered and broody over her pet id But her love for my father was more than ev a real mother's; she might be an uncultured, u educated, rustic woman of no significance but wh a character, what a personality and what a drea It is on dreams that nations rise.

Well, as I came to know of her, I went do to see her at the village home. She had ne expected this—she was so glad. I had to bre her gently the news of my father's death which w more than a blow to her. I stayed for more th a month, closed my establishment in U. P., to up a job here in Calcutta to be near her and h been staying with her whenever possible. I ha tried to make her last days happy up to a poi She would still dream and talk of the active ste

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RABINDRANATH'S MUSIC & ITS TREND

By RAMESH CHANDRA BANERJEE,

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IT would be essential to give a general impression of the aesthetics of Indian music, before going through the theme of Tagore's music. The most prominent traits of Indian music consist of multifarious melodies and rhythms, which developed through century-long efforts of the greatest composers and musicians. Cultural exchanges in the field of music with Persia and other countries moulded and enriched the lustre of Indian music. Foreign intonations paved its way into our melody and the master musicians of the medieval ages had broader outlook in following the principles of give and take, casting aside the narrowness and conservatism, which are but hindrance to the full growth of an art.

This is our classical music which originating in the Vedic ages, went through a process of gradual evolution till it reached the summit of its glory and achievement in the 16th century. It was mainly cultured and developed in the North-Western part of India. Thus, we see the outgrowth of two main types of music, one 'Karnatic' in South India and the other called 'Hindusthani' the latter being acclaimed as the ideal and the most refined form of musical art by the whole of India excepting the South. The 16th century was the glorious age of Indian music. It was the period of Tansen, the greatest creative genius, whose magic rendering at once brought to light the emotional sentiment and the very quintessence of Indian melody. Tansen had the vision of a progressive thinker. The world is progressive and music as an art cannot lag behind. It must have its dynamic force and march on with its progressive ideas at par with ages. The cosmopolitan views of Tansen and his patron, the Emperor Akbar, marked a distinctive change in Indian music. The narrow limits and orthodox ideas of the art were gradually lost in oblivion and Tansen lived to see the remarkable change. Particular emphasis was laid by Tansen on the emotional aspect by introduction of special types of intonations in Alap and Dhrupad types and it is a fact that this great tradition had been acknowledged as the best and ultimately followed by all schools of Hindusthani Music. Music in the best form, must be expressive; it is the outcome of the artiste's inspired soul. No amount of restraint in the form of convention can set back its endless flow. Gradual evolution of music reveals that sometimes it has been necessary to relax the rigidity of convention.

A Raga or melody is something, which is pleasing to the ear. Though the technique cannot be totally ignored for the sake of ornamentation, the aesthetic sense of a Raga must be more valued. The inspired artiste, during his performance, is often bound to forget the rigid forms of grammar and techniques. Some people nurse a wrong notion that the art of music must follow conventions. But it is not so. Actually, it is convention which follows a progressive art. For, the more natural the rendering, the more beautiful and inspired the music.

Nature is the greatest source of inspiration to music and the different melodies are relative to the phenomenal changes of nature. This is the psychological background of the creation of Ragas or melodies. Music is intuitive. It is the artiste's own self, revealed through melodies.

Indian classical music going through its gradual process of evolution lost sight of the deep significance of poetry, while laying stress on the melody rhythm and variations. It was the exuberance and the richness of melody that were responsible for this. A song becomes all-round appealing when it is a mingling of good poetry and melody. A song loses its major significance when its words and their sense are not taken into consideration. In instrumental music and Alap, the melody is supreme but a song becomes effective when poetry and melody are combined. If this aspect, i.e., the value of words is ignored, a song, though highly refined, loses its major appeal to an intelligent listener.

Music composers of Bengal were influenced to a great extent by the ideal of Kirton which was the main source of Folk, Ramprasadi and other types of regional music. Though it is a fact that the original trace of Kirton's rhythm and melody is attributed to Hindusthani music, yet by gradual process of evolution and specially the devotional appeal, there resulted some fundamental changes in that particular style of music. Its melody, its rhythm became distinctly Bengal's own, reverberating the deep sense of Vaishnab literature and religion. Kirton gained wide popularity, when Mahaprabhu preached throughout the length and breadth of India His universal doctrine of love and devotion.

Thus, in the Bengalee compositions of 18th and 19th centuries, there is a marked influence of classical as well as Kirton, with the exception of Tappa compositions of Ram Nidhi Gupta and Sridhar Kathak in which the accurate intonations of Panjabi Tappa of Sori and Gulam Nabi were adopted. These songs had wide appeal among the mass.

Introduction of Brahmo Sangeet by the great Raja Ram Mohan Roy is a new phase in the history of Bengali music. He reinstated the pristine glory of Indian music which was practically on the verge of decay, by making it a part and parcel of his congregational divine worship. (Brahmo Sabha). It is said that in this unsectarian worship of God Gollam Abbas, a noted singer, used to sing hymns composed by Ram Mohan. Just to revive the original form of classic music Ram Mohan introduced the traditional form of Dhrupad and Kheyal in his compositions of Brahmo Sangeet. Thus, Ram Mohan is the pioneer, as regards revival of classic music in the modern age.

The age of Rabindranath is the age of renaissance in music, not only of Bengal but of the whole of India. History repeats itself and it is the same golden age, as it was during Tansen. The Poet's creative genius, his unparalleled contributions of various types of music, added a new and glorious chapter to the History of Music. In his compositions we find the encyclopedia of Indian music from the middle down to the modern ages. His wonderful adaptation of the old classic and his new colouring to it is unique. His classic and devotional compositions bear resemblance of famous musicians of India, such as Baiju, Nayak Gopal, Haridas Swami, Tansen, Sadarang, Aderong, Natal Kishore, Anand Kishore, Sori, Sanad, Kader and Jadu Bhatta. Not only popular Ragas and Tals, but many obsolete Ragas and Tals are found in the Poet's compositions. He was dead against the intricacies, born out of technical show of music, sometimes resulting in musical feats with utter neglect of the aesthetic sense. Music must be expressive and as such there should be a harmonious mingling of the melody and sense of the words. The Poet's new creation of melodies, just suitable to the theme of his lyric in my opinion,

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A WOMAN AND A SERPENT

(Continued From Page 185)

really a drop of blood on a toe of her left foot was quivering like a drop of water.

'Bibi,' Zubeda shrieked again, 'your Bibi has bitten me; look, look there.'

The serpent was moving lazily encircling an earthen pot. The cripple hurried to catch the biter and enclosed her into a basket. 'If Zubeda doesn't live, I'll kill you too, I will,' he cried.

But Zubeda did not live. Daybreak saw signs of the death appearing on her body. Hairs rustled out from her skull soon as pulled. The exorcists left. His repulsive horrific face looking pathetic, the cripple remained anchored at her head — stone-still.

'You too would have gone,' one of the exorcists remarked, 'you've escaped by the skin of your teeth. So grudgeful they're, these snakes. You to bite she came perhaps.'

Raising his tear-laden eyes up at him, the cripple shook his head and said, 'No.'

The cripple had taken to mendicancy. His homestead had turned into a heap of ruins. A beaten path had passed close by the cripple's hut, it now lay closed, none dared tread it. Swarmed in by snakes — they said. And the snakes were of a very dangerous type — Udaynag. As the sun peeped through the skyline at dawn, red-skinned snakes could be found playing — swaying their spread-out hoods.

The cripple could not do away with his Bibi. He had set her free. 'You alone are not to blame,' he had said, 'it's in the blood of women-folk. Zubeda also hated you as much.'

(Translated from the Bengali by Sourin Choudhuri)

DAMODAR

(Continued From Page 186)

that are now being taken to control the river—her life's ambition and frustration.

Sailani stopped. In her exuberance she had forgotten that she was pouring out her story to an unknown man. She blushed when she realised this.

Parimal kept quiet. He looked at her and sped on. Then after an interval he put a very simple question—You seem to love your grandma too much. Isn't it?

Sailani did not reply. She merely looked at him. Night was getting old. There was a pang in the air. It was past two when they reached the hospital. Parimal was a high official and known to the hospital authorities. So the doctors and nurses were all attention. The latest news was not reassuring. The condition of the patient was deteriorating. She had however regained her senses and had asked that Sailani should be informed.

Parimal and Sailani tiptoed into the ward. They stood side by side by her bedside. Her eyes were closed. Was she still dreaming, the dream she had nursed for sixty years or had she gone back to her night of nights when her real knight came and claimed her.

Sailani whispered...Grandma.

She woke up, she saw Sailani, her face beamed. She said softly, 'Saili.'

Then she turned to Parimal, looked at her hard, and said...Who is he?

Sailani looked at Parimal and Parimal looked at her.

(Continued On Next Col.)

MODERNISM IN INDIAN ART

(Continued From Page 178)

guished artistic talents and achievements of all those countries.

Indian artists were actually striving for rendering the vitalizing structure and essential nature of the human body—proportion and form—without the muscular exuburance. Such art is characterised in India between 1st and the 9th century A.D. The West has already noted that in India folk art has continued to thrive in an unsophisticated state, side by side with the highly advanced stage of Hindu-Buddhist culture up to the present era.

Civilised India has never deprived herself of such primitive culture and so folk art can still be found flourishing without much change of character. Folk decoration which is called *alpona, rangoli, chowkapurnam,* etc., in the different States in India, condensed all objects to the barest essentials and in an abbreviated form. There is a picture in line of 'Shakti' the Mother Infinity, in *alpona* which has brought out the essence of the ritualistic decoration to a most simplified form. Piccasso of the modern world will vie with it and will certainly leave his old brush to paint such primitive symbolic forms.

NO MORE OF BORROWED GLASSES

So, we always request our art-critic to know himself before he can 'pickpocket' the ideologies of other countries' art and not to see his own things in borrowed glasses. Self-realisation is a golden rule in both art and religion. The art critic has to study his country's art in all its aspects, passionately, starting from the old master-pieces. All English writers had to study and follow the line and standard of the early masters to chalk out their own path. Similarly, in India Kalidasa followed the footsteps of Valmiki and other Sanskrit poets in earlier days. Our great Poet Tagore had followed the same tradition in his literary and artistic creations. Art without tradition is like building without foundation. Secular aesthetic creation is a new scientific approach of the modern European art. To follow the footsteps of the West, our traditional life-spirit and devotion to art as the only enlightened way will have to be abandoned for ever. Let us, therefore, think compassionately for a moment, if we could afford to embrace only the aesthetic in art and discard the religious bias—a vital life-expression which metaphysically could touch the soul of the universe. In other words, art in India is a religious expression and in the West it has become an aesthetic analysis. War-stricken West thinks of art in terms of emotionless, unromantic aesthetic speculation.

(Continued From Previous Col.)

Sailani said — he is one of the engineers who is taming Damodar...Haven't you seen how the river is being controlled?

The old lady lapsed into a reverie of reminiscence. Her dream .. yes, that is now being fulfilled. Her vow, yes, that is now being redeemed. Sailani and Parimal, they were the embodiment of her youth, her dream and her vow—let them live together happily.

Faintly she muttered—You two suit each other nicely, my blessings to you.

Then she fell into a sleep, her last and final sleep.

'Grandma, Grandma'—Sailani cried.

Parimal drew near her and took her hand.

(Translated by the author from his original in Bengali)

But I also possess powers to turn any metal into gold.....Tell me, have you any silver?

Naiver

By
PREM CHAND

SILVER white clouds were gamboling in the firmament. They collided; they embraced — it almost looked like a game of hide and seek. Sometimes there was shade; sometimes the radiant sun came out again. It was one of those dry spells of the rainy season when there is no breeze and the humidity is high.

Outside the village, some labourers were busy making an embankment for a field. Tanned bare bodies, dripping with perspiration, were digging the earth with a spade and putting it on to the embankment. It had rained some days ago and therefore the soil was soft. Gober said, twitching his blind eye, "My hands refuse to move now. Let's go and eat some food." Naiver laughed, "Complete at least this portion of the embankment before you go. I came before you and am still working." Deenu said, picking up the basket, "Naiver dada, you were brought up on plenty of pure ghee. One cannot even get that much pure water these days."

Naiver was a short, dark, thick-set and agile man. He was over fifty but in hard work beat even the best among the young men. As recently as two or three years ago he used to wrestle and gave it up only when his cow died because on purchased milk one cannot wrestle.

Gober teased Naiver again, "Naiver dada, it is impossible to understand how you can live without smoking. I for one can do without food but not without at least a pau of tobacco every day." Naiver was engrossed in his work and did not show any interest in this flippant talk of the young. Deenu tried again to drag him into conversation, "You have even to cook your food dada. Why does'nt your old woman do any work? I couldn't pull on with such a wife even for a day." This attempt succeeded.

Naiver's sunken face covered with a thick growth lit up. He smiled and said, "Son, the youth has been spent with her. Can it be helped now that she is old and cannot work."

Gober said, sitting down and wiping the perspiration off his brow, "You have spoiled her otherwise there is no reason why she should not work. All she does is to sit on the charpoy the whole day and quarrel with people. You have become old but she still looks a young woman."

Deenu added, "She even beats young women. Look at the way she dresses. She is always in a coloured saree. And jewellery on top of that. You are a simple, harmless sort of a fellow and can pull along with her. With another man she would have been on the streets long ago.

Gober had recently turned out his wife because she shirked work.

Deenu said, "I feel angry at her concern only for dressing up. She needs the best to eat and the best to wear but won't touch any work."

Naiver replied, almost to justify himself, "You don't know son; you were not even born when she came to my house. I had seven ploughs then and there were servants to work for her. She used to sit like a queen and order. And she came from a well-to-do family also. What if the times have changed now! She still has the heart of a queen. Even if she sits in front of the hearth for five minutes, her eyes get red and she develops a headache. I cannot stand around and be a silent witness to all this. One has to give and take in a marriage. It is not all a

water and cook some food ; then she will eat a little. If I were alone there would have been nothing to worry about. Like you I could have also managed on a few handfuls of flour and a bowl of water. Since our daughter died she has broken down completely. It was a great shock for her. We cannot appreciate the intensity of a mother's love. Before that I used to rebuke her at times but now her condition is really pitiable."

When he reached home, Naiver picked up the bowl and the string and started for the well for a bath. His wife said, "Why do you come home so late? One doesn't have to give one's life for the sake of work. After all everyone gets the same pay. Why should you kill yourself ?"

This genuine, heartfelt concern of his wife filled Naiver with an indescribable pleasure. It was a mixture of anxiety, love and reproach. No wonder that Naiver was ready to sacrifice even his life for her sake. Who else, beside her, cared whether he was alive or dead or what happened to him.

"Budhia", he said with pride, "Surely you were a goddess in your previous life."

Budhia reproved him indulgently, "Away with these compliments of yours."

Naiver went happily for his bath. His fatigue had been removed in a moment by Budhia's sweet words. Coming back he cooked a few thick chapatis and they both sat down to eat. Budhia said, with repentance in her voice, "I am completely useless. You haven't had any comfort from me I wish God would take me away soon."

"When He comes," replied Naiver, "I shall tell Him to take me first. How can I ever live in this lonely hut without you ?"

Budhia repeated the sentiments. "I feel darkness all round me when I even think of the prospect of having to live here alone," she said.

Many a time this topic had been touched and every time it had been left at the same stage. Strangely enough, however, Naiver had somehow convinced himself that he would be the first to go when the call came. And he wanted that when he was gone Budhia should live in comfort. That is why he worked hard and wanted to put away a little money. The most difficult jobs he volunteered to tackle. The whole day he spent wielding the spade. Even at nights, especially in the sugarcane season, he took jobs to look after fields or to crush cane. But out of all he earned there was precious little to save.

Today's conversation brought Naiver face to face with an ugly thought. Supposing Budhia did die first ! If Budhia did die first, he thought, he must have enough money to give her a good funeral. He must give her a funeral fit for the kings. But where was the money to come from ? Even after all the hard work that he put in the saving was meagre. Work there was plenty but the wages were so low that they were barely enough to live on.

One day a Sadhu visited the village and encamped under the peepal tree very near Naiver's hut. Villagers soon started gathering round him. Some brought wood, some blankets. Poor Naiver had nothing to offer the Babaji and volunteered to cook his food. Soon the Sadhu settled down and hymns began to be chanted to the tune of the *dhole* and the *majra*.

Within two or three days the Sadhu was the talk of the town—how learned he was, how selfless, how

His wife said, "One doesn't have to give his life for the sake of work..... Why should you kill yourself ?"

unconcerned about worldly possessions. It came to be known that he even ate very little—perhaps only a glass of milk and a couple of spoons of rice during the whole day. And yet his face had a glow almost celestial, and his tongue had such sweetness. Simple Naiver was soon an ardent admirer of the Babaji, hoping in his heart of hearts that perhaps the Sadhu may help him to find a panacea for his ills.

It was past midnight. The devotees had all dispersed. Naiver was shampooing Babaji's legs. The sadhu said, "This world is a mirage, son. Do not get entangled into it."

Naiver replied, bowing his head respectfully, "I have a wife Maharaj and she is completely dependent on me."

"Do you think that you look after her ?" asked the Sadhu.

"There is no one else", replied Naiver.

"So God is nothing," observed Babaji, "you are everything."

Realisation came to Naiver how wrong he had

been to think that he looked after Budhia; how foolish to forget the Maker who looks after the whole creation.

"Please," he said, "forgive my ignorance. Initiate me into the ways of the Almighty."

Babaji said, pleased, "God's ways are inscrutable. He can do everything. He can make a millionaire out of a beggar and can remove the world's worries in the twinkling of an eye. I am only an humble servant of His. But I also possess powers to turn any metal into gold. You are a simple, straightforward and pious man. I want to help you. I have now seen the whole population of this village. There is not even one among them who has real faith. Tell me, have you any silver?"

To Naiver it appeared as if the gates of paradise were being thrown open to him. He replied, "I may have a few odd coins, Maharaj".

"Haven't you got even old broken ornaments?" asked the Sadhu.

"Yes, there may be a few of the wife's ornaments", observed Naiver.

"Bring here tomorrow night all the silver that you can collect and see the miracle. I shall seal it all in front of you in a vessel and put it in the fire. Remove the vessel the next morning but mind that you do not spend that gold on drinking, gambling or any other such vice otherwise you will become a leper. Go now and sleep in peace and don't talk about this to anyone, not even to your wife."

Naiver got up happily to go. All night he could not sleep due to excitement. Next day he borrowed silver rupees from a number of people and soon managed to collect fifty. People trusted him because he had never cheated anyone even of a pie. Twenty-five rupees he had in his savings. The only problem was the jewellery. Budhia would ask a hundred questions. At last he thought of a way.

"Your ornaments have become old," he said, "put them in imli and water overnight and tomorrow I shall take them to the jeweller and get them re-strung."

Budhia did not suspect anything because she had implicit faith in Naiver. When everyone was asleep, Naiver put the rupees also in the same pot and took it to the Sadhu Maharaj. The other devotees had by then left. The field was clear. Babaji took the pot from Naiver with the utmost detachment, muttered a few words and put it in the fire. Turning to Naiver he said, "Come tomorrow, son, and take the pot away before dawn."

The whole night Naiver spent in utter impatience and in building all sorts of castles in the air. Early morning he went to the Babaji's camp. On the way he was saying to himself, "Tomorrow this hut will not be the same hut nor will Budhia live in it in this condition. Tomorrow a well will be sunk here in Budhia's name and a temple will be constructed." Suddenly he noticed that the Babaji was not in his seat. Perhaps he has gone to the river for a bath, he thought. Since he had instructions to remove the pot before sun-rise, he went straight to the spot where it had been buried. The pot he found but it was empty. The ground sank under his feet and he started running his fingers furiously through the ashes.

"Perhaps the Babaji has kept the gold safely somewhere", he thought and ran towards the river. But there was no sign of the Sadhu anywhere. Disappointed he came back. The devotees had started arriving and were wondering what had happened to the Sadhu. Even the blankets were missing. One of them said, "These sadhus are nomads. They do not stay at one place for long lest they should get entangled again in the whirlpool of worldly desires."

"He was quite an enlightened fellow," observed another.

A third said, "Where is Naiver? He was one of his ardent admirers. Babaji must have left a word with him." But Naiver was nowhere to be found. Just then Budhia also came out of the hut calling out for Naiver. She was crying and cursing him.

While Naiver was running away from the village like a fugitive, in the village stories of his dishonesty began to be told. One said, "He borrowed five rupees from me and promised to return them by this evening". Another said, "He borrowed two from me."

Budhia was crying and cursing him. "He has taken away all my jewellery and even the twenty five rupees that we had saved up."

One from the crowd reprimanded her, "Why are you abusing him like this? He was prepared to give even his life for you. He can never turn dishonest. The Sadhu must have played some trick on him."

Once the suggestion was made, others corroborated him. "He must have hidden somewhere out of shame," said one.

"He may have jumped into the river", observed another. Tempers rose high against the Sadhu.

Three months have passed by. In the Jhansi district, on a hilltop, a Sadhu has made his abode. He is a dark, short-statured and thick-set man. He is Naiver in the garb of a Sadhu out to take his revenge, to swindle the world—the same honest, simple and straightforward Naiver who had never in his life even looked with temptation at others' belongings—the same Naiver who had always lived by the sweat of his brow and was ready to sacrifice himself for others. Determined as he was to replenish his loss, in all these months he had not even for a moment forgotten Budhia, his hut and the village and often wondered if he would ever be able to return to the old life with all its minor worries and simple hopes. How peaceful was that life—everyone was his own, everyone respected him; after a hard day's work Budhia comforted him with her sweet talk. He often wondered how Budhia was and the thought that he had lost not only a life's savings but also Budhia's jewellery filled him with renewed anger. If he could have laid his hands on the Sadhu he would not have left him alive.

Among Naiver's many devotees was a young woman who had been turned out of the house by her husband. She was the daughter of a military pensioner who had married her to an educated young man. The boy was however, completely under the influence of his mother and the young woman could not please the mother-in-law. She therefore wanted to live separately; the husband was not agreeable to separate living. How could he forget the innumerable sacrifices his mother had made for his sake. The bride soon came back to her parents and since then three years had elapsed and she had not been called back nor had the husband come to see her even once. The young woman wanted to regain the husband's favour and was convinced that only a man of God could perform the miracle.

One day she narrated to Naiver her sorry tale. Naiver at once smelt the prey he had been looking for and said to inspire con-

'No' the conscience said: You cannot do this to this helpless victim of cruelty.

fidence", I can neither work miracles nor do I want to have anything to do with worldly matters. But your devotion has made me take pity on you. God willing, your desire will be fulfilled."

The young woman's hopes revived. Bowing low she said, "Maharaj, I am certain that you can do everything."

Naiver said, "I am nobody. God's will be done."

"Only you can help me," insisted the woman, "I know of no other God."

Naiver observed, as if moved by her entreaties, "But daughter this work requires a lot of ceremonies to be performed and the ceremonies cost a lot of money. Whether your wish will be fulfilled or not I do not know but I shall do my best. For the rest, trust in God. I do not even touch money but your sorry state compels me to help you".

The same night the woman brought all her jewellery, and placed it in front of Naiver. He opened the basket and looked at the ornaments in the light of the moon. His eyes popped out of their sockets. If he played his cards well, thought Naiver, all this jewellery could be his without difficulty. The woman was entreating him to take it. All he had to do was to put it aside and shower his blessings on the girl. And next day he would be far away—as far as his legs would carry him. But somehow he could not get himself to do this simple task of removing the basket and placing it under his blanket. There could not have been an easier task and yet his hands refused to move. It seemed that he had no longer any control over them. He thought that he still had control over his tongue and wanted to say, "Please put it under my blanket." But the tongue was equally tied. Even a mute sign could have done the job but even the sign could not be made. The King, heart, was helpless in spite of so many helpers. The cow was tied down firmly to the post yet the hand with the naked sword refused to sever the head. A fierce fight raged inside Naiver.

"No," the conscience said, "you cannot do this to a helpless victim of cruelty. She is like a helpless cow. You cannot do this to her even though it may mean losing your own head in the bargain."

The opportunity that he had been waiting for so long was in front of Naiver and yet his conscience was making a coward of him. He started shaking like a soul in peril. Ultimately the battle ended and he said to the girl in a tone which reflected victory, "Take away the basket, daughter. I was only testing you. Your wish will be fulfilled."

And saying this he got up slowly and moved off, wondering why he had ever thought of running away from the house. Perhaps it was the fear of being disgraced. Now he was happy that he had discovered himself. The implicit faith and trust of a helpless woman had helped him to *find* himself and get deliverance from the diabolical intentions of revenge. Like a man freed of his fetters he moved lightly on, his soul filled with a new glow and his heart with a new zeal. The ashes and the Tilak were hateful.

Across the river lay the land of his dreams! On the eighth day he reached his village. As soon as the village boys saw him they ran forward to greet him and began dancing round him. One of them said, "Where have you been Naiver Dada; the sister died three days after you left."

Naiver's heart sank. He stood pinned to the ground, unable to utter a single word. Then like a mad man he ran towards his hut. It was lying open. Budhia's cot was there as it had been always. In a corner some brass utensils lay. Soon the whole village gathered round the hut. Questions poured from all sides. "Where have you been all these days?" "She died three days after you left and cursed you day and night."

"The rascal of a sadhu has not been seen here since then otherwise we would have killed him." Naiver did not reply. He only looked at the crowd with vacant, disappointed, hurt eyes almost as if life had taken leave of him. Nobody saw him laughing or weeping since then though he continued to work as hard as before to earn his living.

Translated from the original Urdu

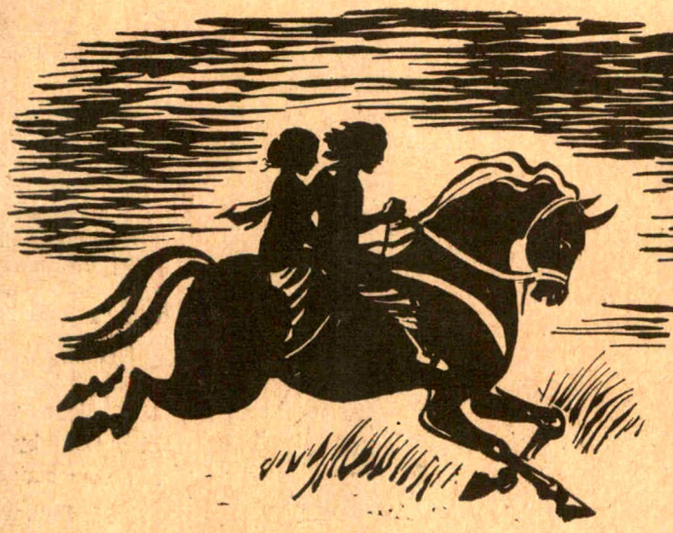
By MADAN GUPTA

RABINDRANATH'S MUSIC & ITS TREND

(Continued From Page 187)

cannot be called unconventional. Herein lies the true spirit of Indian music. In vocal music, we cannot at all ignore the value of words and their meaning.

Conservatism hinders the growth of music. The demand of the age cannot be in any way ignored. Music, like all other arts is progressive. Changes in the outlook is needed for those who are within the narrow confines of musical circles. Tagore's creation constitutes a glorious chapter in the annals of Indian music. It is a new form glorious with the past lustre of great Indian tradition. His music is the light which enlightens the whole musical world.



The Shrine of Rai Rayan

By MANOJE BASU

FOR miles around there is no other village. The marsh spreads far into the horizon. Even in mid-summer it is only a vast swampy stretch where will-o'-the-wisp flickers at night. There is not a trace of human beings anywhere around. Only a few betel-trunk canoes and palm-tree dug-outs may be seen left drying in the sun.

But when the rains come the marsh looks different. From one end to the other it is a vast sheet of water. Cork plants and tall reeds appear here and there. Hundreds of small boats and canoes rush to and fro. The villagers of the neighbouring areas have to go to the market off Killabari now and again. Trekking along the road off the marsh is quite a bother. It is more convenient to row across.

As the canoe leaves the hamlet behind and glides along for a couple of miles further on, one comes across a highland emerging from the water. It is green and calm with a cluster of palm trees at one end, some towering above others. One gets into a mood and keeps on listening to the wind whistling through the reeds and the current gurgling by.

Look out, someone cries. 'Might hit the rock!'

What rocks? One just cannot help feeling it is rather unusual. You don't have rocks in marshes!

A submerged hillock, or what?

No, they tell you. It's the ruined shrine of Rai Rayan.

A crystal clear sheet of rippling water stretches as far as eyes can see. Thick clusters of hyacinths and waterlilies are afloat here and there dotted with red, purple-blue, white and violet flowers. Early in the morning it is indeed a lovely sight.

And under the water, where it is shallow, pieces of broken sculpture and masonry are strewn about, clearly visible to any peering eyes.

It must have been a lovely shrine, one cannot help thinking.

Oh dear, who could have desrtoyed it all!

Why, Rai Rayan did that himself, they tell you. It was many, many years ago.

Far, far away from the shrine there was a small village. No one today cares to remember its name.

Early one morning a boat reached the village. It was dark and drizzling. The wind was gusty. The rain-swept roads were dangerous and difficult. Everyone in the boat had asked the man not to land but to stay on till day-break. But he paid them no heed.

He was Rameshwar, a merchant who used to trade in mangrove timber. For seven days he had not been back home. His wife was there all alone except for his little step-brother. That day, when he was leaving, his wife seemed most reluctant to let him go and did not know why. He remembered her tears at the time of parting.....

He reached home after a difficult journey along a lone, slushy and slippery village track. He thought of springing a surprise on them and quietly climbed up on the ledge of his mud-brick hut. Then he pounded at the door.

He knew there would be a frightened query. A flickering lamp would appear. And then a sweet smiling face would greet him .....

But it did not at all happen that way. The door gave way and he went down sprawling on the floor.

There was no one in the house.

He called out. No one came. Not his step-brother. Nor his wife.

"Madhukar! ..... Madhukar ..... !!".....

The dark house was empty and silent.

Next morning the little step-brother

He had been given shelter by a distant relative. But the young wife had disappeared. No one was able to tell him where she had gone. Friends and relatives called upon him day after day. They offered sympathies and tried to give him some consolation.

Rameshwar found that he could not put up with all this any longer.

At last one dawn he awoke his little brother, hoisted him up on his shoulder, picked up his long staff and disappeared beyond the star-lit bridge across the hamlet-brook.

** ** ** **

Twenty years passed by and then he reappeared. He was now Rai Rayan Rameshwar, a person of distinction. With him came an army and a large retinue of servants. These twenty years had been years of bitter struggle for riches and success. His battle scarred face was now furrowed with unpleasant memories, but success had come. He was now back with the grant of an estate from the Moghul Emperor at Delhi.

But in course of taking possession of this estate he crossed swords with Bharat Rai.

Bharat Rai's fort was on the southern bank of *Bhadra*. For a couple of days his cannons boombed. And then they went dead. His men opened the dyke and flooded the ditch around the fort. No one outside was able to guess what was going on there inside the fort.

That evening Rai Rayan was pacing up and down near the bank of the river a little away from his camp. Suddenly he heard a soft sound. It could have been the on-coming tide. But he felt a little suspicious. He peered through the darkness. At first he saw nothing. But after sometime he was able to make out the dark form of a boat passing stealthily by under the cover of darkness. Heedless of his personal safety he approached the ditch. When he came near he saw the boat stopping behind the fort at the mouth of the narrow water-course. Some small luggage were hauled up into the boat and the next instant it turned round and disappeared beyond the bend of the water-course, carried away by the swift current.

Rai Rayan rushed back to his camp. He came in with such a hurry that his brother Madhukar who was playing on his lute stopped and looked up with a start.

"Come. We've got to go at once," panted Rai Rayan Rameshwar.

"Where?"

"To the mouth of *Ranai*."

It was nearly thirty miles away. Here the river was joined by three other tributaries. The chief- ... of Bharat Rai. If the boat were heading for his fort it would have to take the turning to the right near the mouth of the river. Rai Rayan thought of reaching there overland first.

He jumped on his pet war-horse, Kundal. Eight footmen followed him along with Madhukar. When they reached their destination, there was a pale moon just above the horizon. They hid themselves inside an abandoned fishing boat.

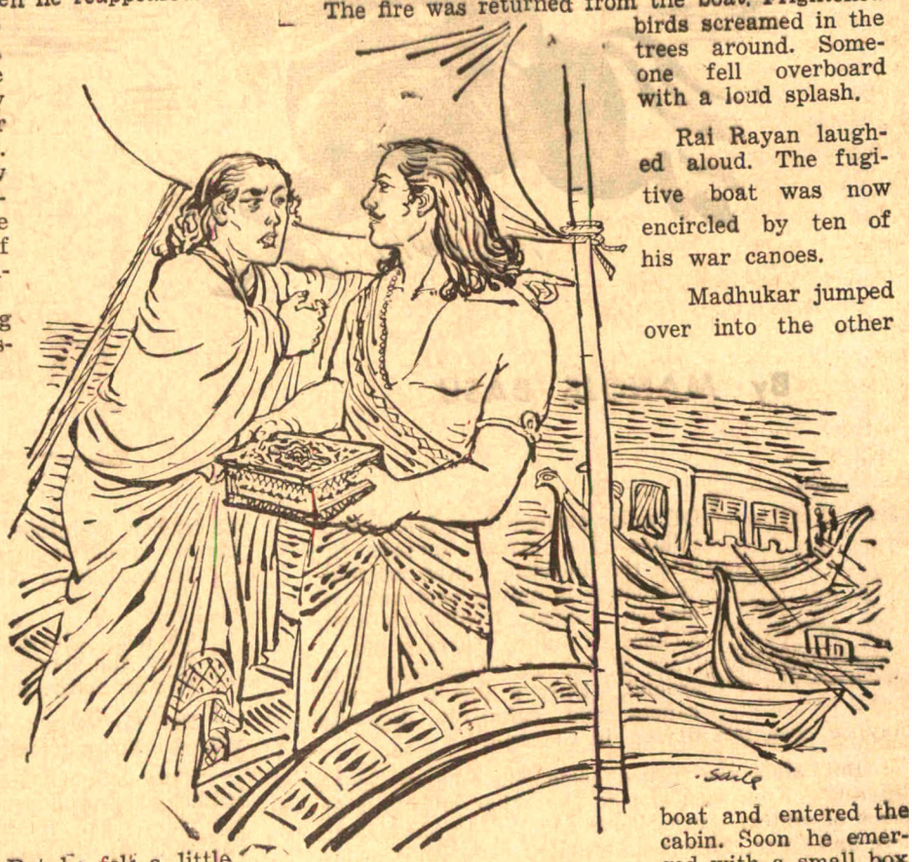
Hours passed. At last, sometime after midnight the dark form of the fugitive boat was seen rowing by.

And they opened fire.

The fire was returned from the boat. Frightened birds screamed in the trees around. Someone fell overboard with a loud splash.

Rai Rayan laughed aloud. The fugitive boat was now encircled by ten of his war canoes.

Madhukar jumped over into the other boat and entered the cabin. Soon he emerged with a small box in his hands.



There is nothing else.' 'Is it all you have found there, asked Rai Rayan. Yes, elder brother, I have searched the cabin.

"Is it all that you've found there," asked Rai Rayan.

"Yes, elder brother. I have searched the cabin There is nothing else."

Rai Rayan was about to enter the cabin. But Madhukar stopped him.

"The ladies are inside," he said. "Bharat Rai wife and daughter and their attendants."

"What about the men," Rai Rayan thundered

"There's no one," replied Madhukar. "Their on male escort was Bharat Rai's son. He's been sh dead. We've seen his body tumbling overboard. must have been carried downstream by the curre The ladies appear to be frightened out of their se ses. You don't have to go in there, if you please."

Rai Rayan had the box opened. What he fou inside gave him immense satisfaction for it co

tained gold and jewels. He felt quite pleased and went back to his camp with his fugitives.

Next day the battle for Bharat Rai's fort was over by nightfall. His cannon kept on shelling the fort and at last it crumbled down in ruins. His men crossed the ditch and entered the fort but they found it empty and abandoned.

Flushing with the joy and pride of victory Rai Rayan Rameshwar returned to Ramnagar.

It was a new fortress town which he had just founded and named after himself. He had not been able to do much yet for he was too preoccupied with battles and other affairs. But he felt quite proud about what had so far been done. Whenever he stood in the balcony of his palace and surveyed the panorama of the newly built town he felt quite satisfied with himself.

One afternoon he was surprised to find a lone girl standing under a tree in the courtyard.

"Who is she," he asked, turning to Madhukar who had just entered the room.

"Bharat Rai's daughter," he replied.

"Really!" Rai Rayan felt amused. "Why is she there? I suppose captives are usually kept inside the prison."

Madhukar looked embarrassed. He fumbled for words and most awkwardly tried to impress upon Rai Rayan that close confinement of female captives was neither safe nor convenient. He said he could not help allowing them a little freedom of movement.

Rameshwar was still smiling.

"They have been weeping so much that....."

Weeping? That girl! Rai Rayan turned round with a start. He suddenly remembered a poor man's mud brick hut where a beautiful girl had been weeping some twenty years ago.

He suddenly laughed his day-dream away and asked, "Is this girl very beautiful?"

Madhukar blushed.

"Yes, sort of," he murmured and left the room.

Rai Rayan felt that it was all rather amusing. He was still smiling.

** ** ** **

One day he saw the girl standing alone and looking across the paddy fields. He quietly came and stood before her.

"Who are you", he asked.

She turned round.

"I am Manjari," she calmly replied.

"Oh yes, you are Bharat Rai's daughter. I have heard about you. Perhaps you know that I had an occasion to enter his fort the other day. But it was my misfortune that I did not have the honour of meeting him. Would you perhaps care to tell me where he is?"

He seemed to burst with the pride of his recent victory.

She lowered her eyes and didn't care to reply.

"Come on, tell me something," he said. "I want to meet your father really. If I am informed of the present whereabouts of the great hero, I shall try to send you back home. You needn't worry. We shall not accompany you."

His words had a sharp edge and tears filled her eyes.

Rai Rayan enjoyed seeing women in tears.

"Don't be cross with me," he said. "It has been really fortunate that we have met. Or else where could you have taken refuge?"

"In the waters of *Bhadra*," she replied, lifting her eyes. "And that would have been far better. I just couldn't imagine that you are so....so...."

In her temper she failed to find an appropriate description and left her sentence half-way.

Rai Rayan said with a loud laugh, "Couldn't you? What did you think we are? An advance party from your father-in-law's house coming up to welcome the bride and firing crackers?"

"Pirates," hissed Manjari. "That's what I thought you were. Couldn't suspect it was you." She wiped her tears and continued, "Rai Rayan, everyone in the land knows what you are. Do you suppose anyone likes you? You will always remain an outcaste here. You may build a fort but it will not help you win anybody's heart nor will it save you from anybody's curse. You would better drown yourself in that ditch."

Her bold words shocked him. Still he kept his smile and said, "Really!"

"Do you think no one knows how you have secured this estate? All other chieftains in the land hate you. They will never ask you into their crowd. They have built their principalities with their swords, not by acting as procurer for the harems of Emperor's noblemen."

"That's quite a speech, isn't it," said Rai Rayan Rameshwar. He smiled a menacing smile and was about to move away when he suddenly turned and said, "I think it would be interesting to find you a place in some nobleman's harem. Don't you like the idea? Well, I don't like to disappoint you. I shall endeavour to live up to your estimation of me. Next Wednesday I shall be seeing you off. Understand? So, please get yourself ready."

** ** ** **

But he did not seem to have meant what he had said. Wednesdays came one after another and went by and she was left alone. He was too busy with the construction of his new town to be concerned about anything else. In daytime he moved up and down among the masons and labourers, supervising the work here and suggesting an alteration there. In the evening he was seen on the balcony quietly surveying the impressive panorama of a half-built fortress town. His prisoners were left in charge of Madhukar who in daytime attended to their comforts and at night, when everyone slept, retired to a lonely spot and played on his flute.

But Manjari was not forgotten after all. One day Rameshwar came to her again.

She looked up at him.

"I wanted to tell you," said he, "that I am not

about me is not true. They are lies spread by my enemies."

She was quietly moving away but he stopped her and asked, "Don't you believe what I have said ?"

"Leave me alone," she said. "You don't have to explain your conduct. I am not the keeper of your conscience."

He saw her eyes were sparkling.

"Will you marry me," he slowly asked.

She tittered with obvious amusement. She had been trying to keep it back from the beginning but now she could not.

He lost his temper and said, "Don't you know I can send you to Delhi right now ? Would you care to find out what that means ?"

"Send me to Delhi? Could you," said the audacious girl and walked away ignoring his blood-shot eyes.

From then on he tried to meet her often. But she persistently avoided him. One day he caught her by her hand when she was passing by. But the next instant he released her and said, "I have strength enough to keep holding but my mind is weak."

His voice grew heavy and his eyes were wet. With a quivering voice he continued, "You know little of me and of the life I had. Believe me, I am fed up with all these battles and intrigues. I want to live in peace."

She quietly listened and did not try to go away. He slowly unfolded his past, his dark years of struggle and adventure. He told her of the wife he had lost and of the unbearable loneliness that he had suffered all these years. When it was over he stopped with a deep sigh.

It was then that Manjari waited no more. She quietly moved away.

In the evening she sent him a mirror. Alongwith the mirror there was a short note. It simply said :

"Rai Rayan, twenty years have passed since you left home. You were so busy fighting your battles that you did not have time to look into a mirror. So I am sending you one."

He went through the letter and remained menacingly silent for a long while. Then he hissed with a threatening frown, "So, that is that !"

Everyone, as well as the girl's mother, came to know that he was very angry with her. They were in great fear for he could be dangerous and mercilessly cruel when angry. Her closest ones were in great anxiety for her safety. But she remained placidly unconcerned and braved it all with her brightest face.

The raging chieftain could not at last help stealing a look at his face in the mirror. What he saw was a face with deep lines touched up by twenty struggling years. Its fearful aspect seemed to curdle even his own blood. That it would keep off any decent girl was quite understandable. The heartbroken youth who had left his home twenty years

He lost his temper and said 'Don't you know I can send you to Delhi right now? Would you care to find out what that means'?

mirror. He clutched his hair and recalled those days with a heavy heart.

In the meantime excitement over an alarming news ran through the town. Bharat Rai, the girl's father was reported to be marching on Rai Rayan's incomplete fortress town along with four other chieftains.

That silent night Madhukar's flute was not played on in the balcony. The council of war was in session inside. Madhukar wanted to lead an attack on the enemy. The night was dark. There was no moon. He thought that it afforded him the best opportunity to take the enemy by surprise.

But Rai Rayan shook his head. He thought that the plan was too impracticable to be carried out. Five of Bengal's most powerful chieftains had joined forces. Rai Rayan's raw recruits would be swept away like straw.

His diwan, Jivanlal, had been out on a mission of peace. He rode back panting and reported that the chieftain of Devganga had demanded the return of the ladies of Bharatgarh. It was only on their submission that no ill-treatment had been done them that the terms of truce would be considered.

Madhukar jumped up and shouted, "No conditions. They shall not be sent back. Let me call our people and get ready."

But Rai Rayan did not approve of his uncompro-

mising attitude. He made him resume his seat and turned to his diwan.

"Jivanlal, how long should it take us to complete the fort," he asked.

"Just another six months," Jivanlal replied. "We shall then be able to keep off even fifty chieftains, not to speak of five. But now there is no other way out—."

"Yes, I'd better accept their terms now and lie low until my fort is complete," said Rai Rayan.

"And I give you my word of honour," Jivanlal added, "that we shall have our revenge."

After some further discussions it was agreed that the ladies of Bharatgarh would be allowed to leave the town next morning. Rai Rayan asked Jivanlal to arrange for palanquins and escort.

The morning came. Rai Rayan stood in the shade of the tree in the far end of the courtyard and watched the departure of his fair prisoners. Manjari paused before entering the palanquin and then turned and came near him.

She softly said, "I have come to take leave of you."

He turned his face away.

"We were quite happy and comfortable here," she went on. "I shall tell father of your kind hospitality."

He thought she meant very little of what she had said and was most probably taunting him.

"Yes, you'd rather," he said trying to appear as rude as he could. "I wish I could sink your boat midstream. Only if Madhukar did not keep me from doing it. —"

He turned round and was surprised to find tears in her eyes. He looked again to make sure. Yes, those were tears all right.

For a while he remained silent. Then he spoke softly.

"All this estate and royal honours have come like a dream. Now if I lose them again, I don't suppose it would matter."

"You are a brave man," said Manjari, "You can win everything back."

"No, I don't think I can," replied Rai Rayan with the ghost of a smile flickering on his mouth. "That day I stood before the mirror and found myself too old to start doing things afresh. I was born in a hut and now I wish I could exchange my palace for it. By the way, please don't forget to tell your father that I was almost about to send you to some harem in Delhi."

"Why should I tell a lie," said the girl, "I know you would never have done that to me. That is why I have come to touch your feet and say goodbye."

She blushed somewhat and continued, "Father has come with an army. I know I have got to go. Or else you might be in trouble. But, will you please bring me back here when your fort is complete?"

"Bring you back!" Rai Rayan Rameshwar stared at her with great surprise. "You are not joking, are you," he said slowly. "I am an old man, Manjari. I have little strength of mind."

She dropped down on her knees and laid her head on his feet. For a long while she remained in this posture of reverence. When she raised her face at last and smiled her cheeks were wet with tears.

"Yes, please bring me back here," she said. "Every year on Janmasthami night we go to the temple of Krishna outside the fort with no more than fifty armed guards accompanying us. It is still six months off and please have your fortress completed in the meantime. That night I shall wait for you below the Gulmohar tree beside the river."

With these words she went back to her palanquin.

From the next day the number of men employed in the work of construction was quadrupled. People said he was mad for revenge.

Jivanlal had accompanied the ladies to the camp of Bharat Rai. He returned late at night and reported that the chieftains had agreed to withdraw their forces. But they had expressed their firm determination not to allow Rai Rayan to build a fort here in Bhushana.

He advised Rai Rayan to retreat into Islamabad and start everything afresh with the help of the Portuguese there. It would not be difficult to procure a firman from the Emperor at Delhi. But Rai Rayan seemed to lack interest in the proposal. He made Jivanlal go alone and study prospects in Islamabad.

The word spread that the defeated and humiliated chieftain had retired from active life. Most of the time he remained indoors worshipping his god Krishna.

One day Jivanlal came back and reported that the Portuguese had agreed to help him found a new principality. But Rai Rayan shook his head and said, "Take Madhukar with you. I shall get you the emperor's firman. As for me, I shall build a shrine here and spend my last few days in peace."

So he commenced the building of his shrine right in the centre of a raised land in the middle of the

It is still six months off and please have your fortress completed in the meantime. That night I shall wait for you below the Gulmohar tree beside the river.

vast marsh of Pakshi. The work proceeded over day and night. Stone was set upon stone and a magnificent shrine was fast brought into shape, decorated with pillars and domes with exquisite engravings on them. He invested his entire hoard of gold on that shrine in the marsh of Pakshi.

Who was the goddess to be enshrined there ?

People asked one another. But no one knew.

At last the appointed night came—the night of Janmasthami. It was the month of August.

The night was dark after a heavy shower. Rai Rayan mounted his famous horse, Kundal, and galloped away.

Manjari also had not forgotten. She was waiting below the Gulmohar tree besides the river, just outside the temple.

When he saw her, he rushed towards her and in an instant she was behind him on the saddle. The guards were taken by surprise and he rode away with her before they could think of trying to do something. In the distant sky thunders rumbled in the thick clouds and then the rain came down in torrents.

They reached Ramnagar at dawn. She was dead tired. Her eyes were closed. He slowly lifted her from the saddle. The sky was clearing now and a pale moon had appeared. A faint moonlight fell upon her face. He carried her inside and laid down on a soft bed.

Then he called Madhukar. "Let her rest over the day tomorrow," he told him. "After nightfall I should expect you to arrange for a boat and bring her over to the shrine. You will find me waiting there at the entrance."

He mounted his horse and rode away to the marsh of Pakshi. He now felt quite happy. The ignominy of his previous defeat was gone. Now there was only one more thing left, the ceremony of placing the gold pitcher on the crown of the temple,—a prelude to the enshrinement of his goddess in her shrine.

The whole day he was busy. The gold pitcher was duly placed on the crown of the temple, the floor of the hall was decorated with sandal paste, thousand lamps were arranged all over the place to be lit at night. And boatloads of lotus from the marsh of Pakshi kept on arriving throughout the day.

At last it was midnight. All arrangements were complete. But there was no sign yet of Manjari's boat.

Rai Rayan went to the waterfront and came back again. The lights went out one after another. The empty shrine looked lurid in the thickening darkness.

Slowly a storm rose and beat against the stone walls of the shrine. Tired and anxious, he fell asleep.

Suddenly he felt the touch of a cold hand. He woke up with a start. He sat up and wiped his eyes and looked.

No, it was not Madhukar. It was his diwan, Jivanlal.

"I thought you were in Islamabad," said Rai Rayan. "When did you arrive ?"

"This morning," replied Jivanlal. "Everything has been arranged over there. We have already laid the foundation of a small fortress."

"It's no use telling me all that," he said curtly. "Go and tell my brother."

"He has already left for Islamabad. I have come only to give you the news."

"So Manjari has come with you," Rai Rayan stood up in haste.

"No, sir. She also has left with her husband. That's the news your brother has asked me to bring you."

It was too dark for them to see each other's face.

Minutes ran into hours and they remained standing like two statues.

At last Rai Rayan resumed his seat. Suddenly he laughed aloud and asked, "So, what did Madhukar say ?"

"He said that they had been engaged for a long while." Jivanlal slowly replied. "Eight months ago they exchanged garlands. And, no one but you would have been able to rescue her from her father Bharat Rai. Your brother has asked me to convey his respects and let you know how grateful he is for all that you have done for him."

"I am glad to hear of it."

Rai Rayan roared with laughter and echoes rumbled over the marsh of Pakshi.

"And Rani Manjari ? Didn't she have anything to say ?"

"Yes, sir. She has asked me to tell you that she could not help the little act that she had played. She hopes that you will understand and forgive her."

In the morning Jivanlal came back to bid his master goodbye.

Rai Rayan was gazing across the vast stretch of water all around. At the sound of Jivanlal's footsteps he looked up and said, "See the water there. The reflection of the shrine and everything are shivering. So, I have grown quite old, have I ?"

He did not seem to be in his normal senses.

Jivanlal took his leave and left with a heavy heart.

Rai Rayan called his men back. The gold pitcher on the crown of the temple was brought down. Then he ordered them to pull down the shrine.

At first no one would move, for they were not sure that he had gone mad. But when he brought out his gold and distributed all among the men, they did as they were told. Rai Rayan himself picked up a hammer and led them on to it.

So stones and bricks and pieces of sculpture kept on falling down all over the place.

But one man stood still. He was the chief architect, the old Ratandas. He was wiping his eyes all the time.

Suddenly Rai Rayan's eyes fell on him. A pleasant smile spread across his face. He came and stood before nim.

"Why are you weeping," he asked. "Is it because your hair is white? Come along with me....."

Before anyone could realise what had happened he jumped into the dark water of the lake beside the shrine. And hundreds jumped after him and went to his rescue.

** ** ** **

All that happened many many years ago. Those days of chivalry are now gone. The formidable chieftains of those days are dead. Today's Bengal is quiet and peaceful. The old cannons are lost in the river beds. Perhaps you would find one almost buried in the soil near a huge banyan tree where the cowherd boys now come and sit and play on their flutes.

And on full moon nights when moonbeams peep through the palms and peepuls beyond the marsh of Pakshi and the wind whistles through rushes and weeds, you might hear the sighs of Rai Rayan amid the broken masonry. It would not be safe, no, for one to row by the ruins of the shrine, for the moonlight would make everything look misty, the will-o-the-wisp in the lonely marsh would mislead you far far away and you might never find your way back home.

(English rendering from the Original Bengali, 'Rai Rayaner Deul', by BARIN DASS)

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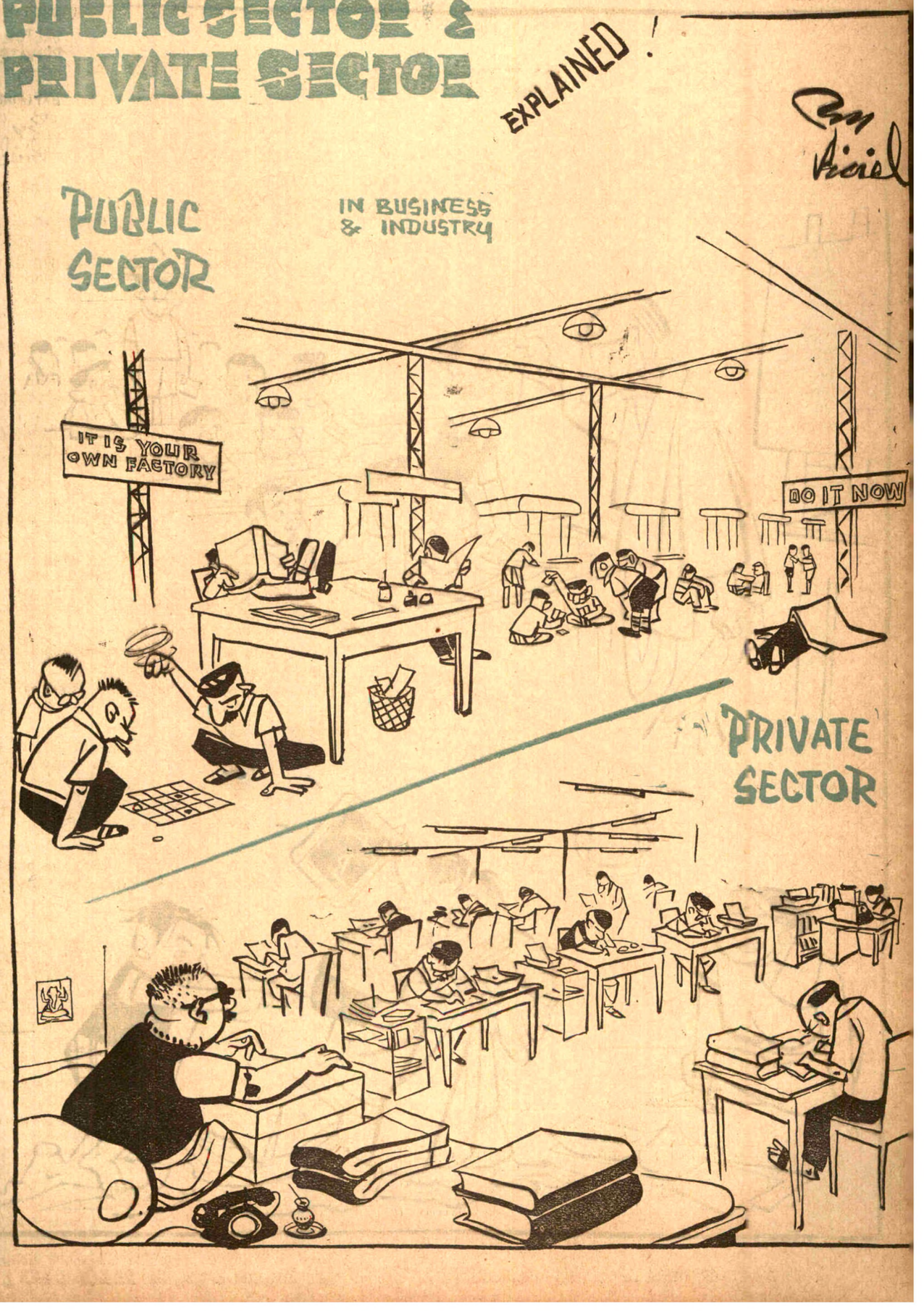

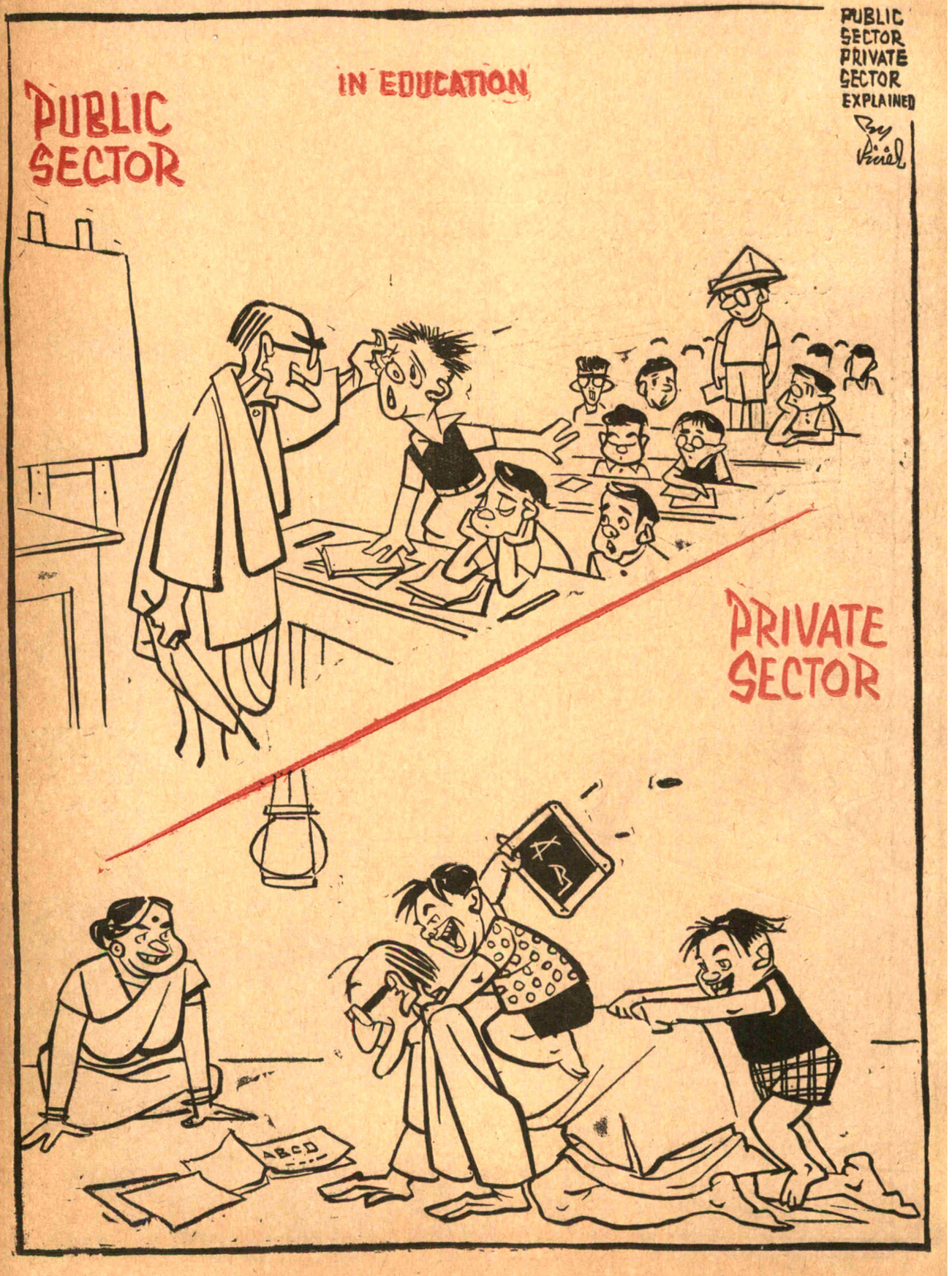
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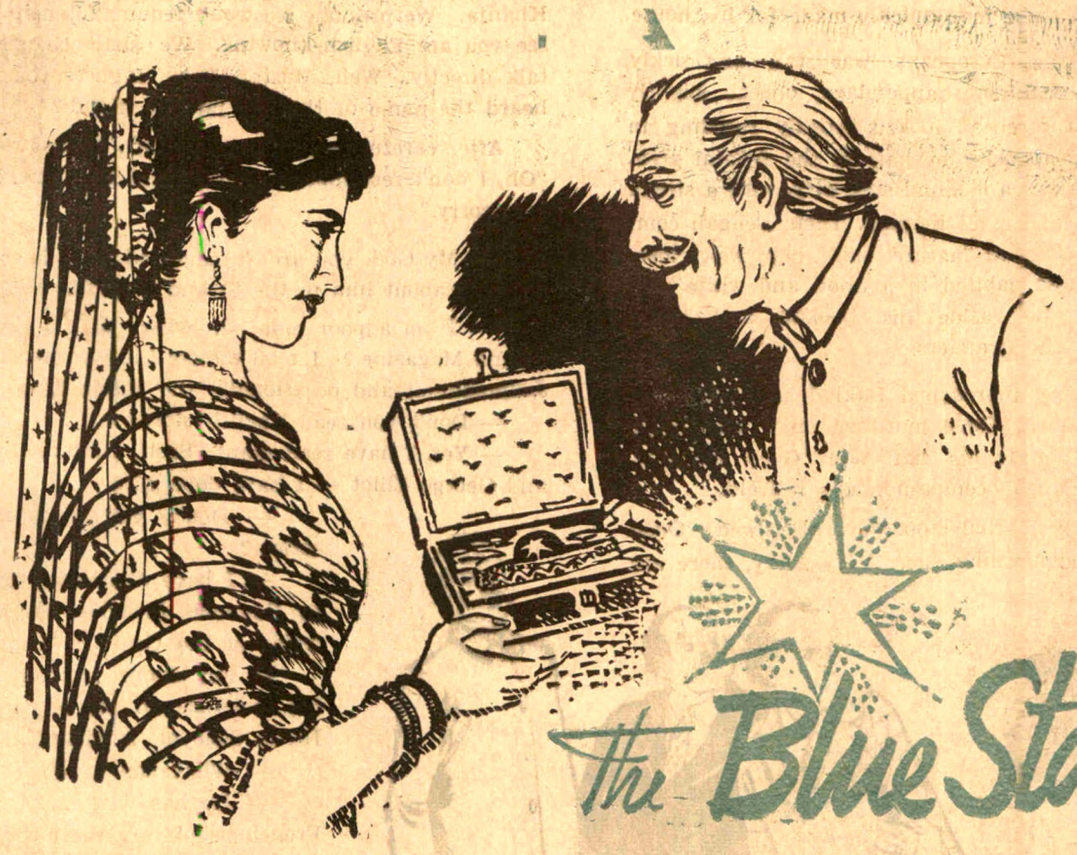


The Blue Star

By PARASURAM

THE story relates to a period sixty years back — during the reign of Queen Victoria. Electric lights, motor cars, radios and loud speakers were not then in evidence in Calcutta. Nor did any aeroplane fly in the sky. Rabindranath did not yet gather the halo of fame. Hemchandra was then rated as the premier poet. But Rakhal, the school teacher, thought himself to be a poet of a far more precious rank. He thought that he could write better poetry than the "Wailings of the Despondent." He would confide to his obedient pupil Naran, "What a gem of verse I have turned out to-day, will you hear it ? — 'The boisterous wind laves the body with dust.' Will you hear another more ? 'Withered trees feel not sway of stormy gust.' Can any one write like this ?"

Rakhal Mustafi passed only the Entrance Examination but he was a learned man. He browsed over extensively on Bengali and English books. At that period one could carry on the profession of a teacher even without passing many examinations. Besides the composition of verses, he had penchant for music and chess-playing. At his early age, he worked as a third teacher at the Behala Jubilee High School. Thereafter by a stroke of good fortune, he fell into the good graces of Raja Bahadur Rouppendra Narayan Roy Choudhury, of Rupchandpur and acted as his Private Secretary for two years. For some reason or other, he had to give up that job and leave that place. Then ten years glided away. Now Rakhal was glued to his parental homestead at Behala and was again serving as a teacher in that Jubilee School.

At the time we are speaking of, Rakhal was nearly thirty-three years of age, well-favoured, but careless about his look, hair was unkempt and beard unshaven, with some tangled twists. The neighbours conferred on him the appellation 'Mad Master". At that age the people would marry early but Rakhal was still then a bachelor. Alone he lived in his house. His mother passed away two years ago.

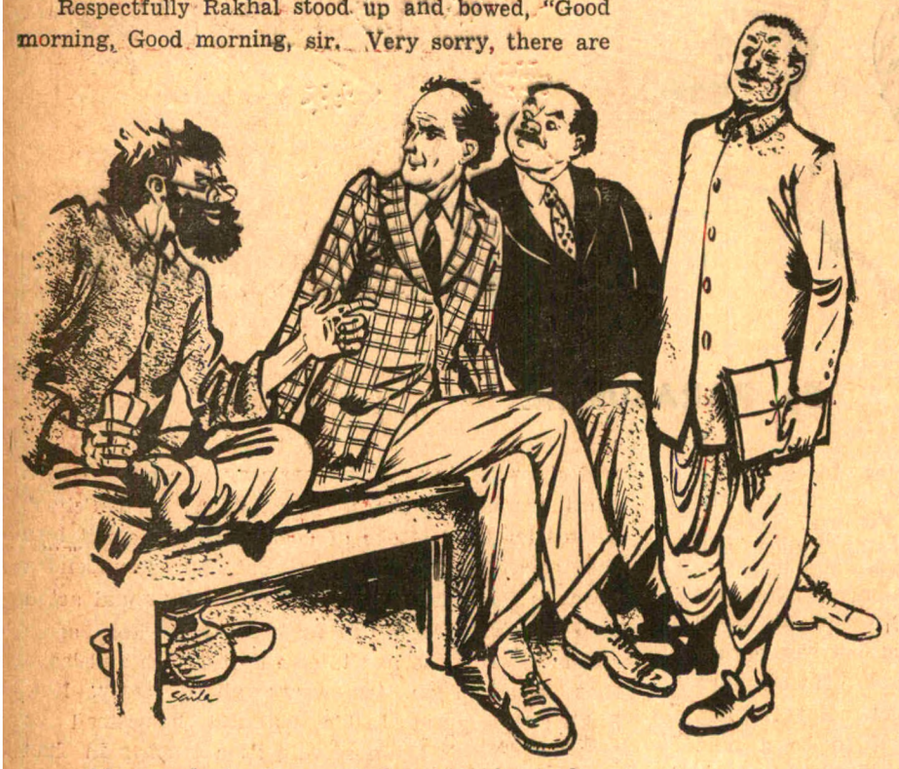
It was Sunday—8 A.M. Seated on a bed-stead in the front verandah of his out-house, Rakhal was having pulls at his hookah and was turning out verses. Nearly at a distance of one hundred yards from his house, a half macadamised road meandered

in a zig-zag way. Rakhal espied that a hired Phaeton carriage halted on the road and two Europeans and a Bengali alighted therefrom. The carriage stood there and the three men quickly made for his house.

One of the Europeans was tall and sickly, cleansed of any hirsute appendage, cheeks slightly puckered, the forehead looked broadly receding in the context of paucity of hair in the frontal area. The other one was a medium size, wiry, with a streak of moustache and a bit limping. Their Bengali companion was dark, of mature built, hair was close-cropped and was habited in a dhoti and white drill coat. Rakhal put aside his hookah and gazed surprisedly at the strangers.

The tall one approached Rakhal and taking off his hat addressed "Good morning, Sir." The other one without doffing his hat said "Good morning, Babu." The Bengali companion was reticent.

Respectfully Rakhal stood up and bowed, "Good morning, Good morning, sir. Very sorry, there are



— You took Lanka yesterday. — Lanka? You mean Ceylon, the island of Ravana?

no chairs in my house. Please be seated on this bed-stead—this wooden platform."

The tall one darted back "That's all right. We are taking our seats. Please take yours. Am I talking with Mr. Rakhal Mustafi ?"

"Yes."

The two Sahibs handed over their individual cards to Rakhal and took their seats. Rakhal also sat down. The stranger Bengali gentleman kept standing. He could not share his seat with the Sahibs.

The moustache-wearing Sahib threw away the cigarette he was smoking and said "This Bengali gentleman is our interpreter, Mr. Banchharam Khanja. We presume we won't require his help. We see you are English-knowing. We shall be able to talk directly. Well, Mustafi Babu, I guess you have heard the name of this my famous friend ?"

After careful perusal of the cards, Rakhal replied "Oh, I don't remember to have heard his name. I am very sorry."

— My God, you are an educated man, have you not read about him in the Strand Magazine ?

— I am a poor man, sir, where shall I get the Strand Magazine ? I read merely the Bangabasi, the Janmabhumi and occasionally the Hindu Patriot.

— Don't you read English stories ?

— Yes, I have read many—Scott, Dickens, Lytton and George Elliot — I have done with.

— Don't you read crime series ?

— I have read many novels by Reynolds including the Mysteries of the Court of London.

— For shame, Mustafi Babu, his books should not be touched. He is disloyal, a wicked fellow.

— What has he done, sir ?

— He has written that the French people are the most civilised nation, that no great man like Napoleon was ever born. And the British Ministers are so worthless that they contrive to catch hold of all the German rascals and marry them with our English Princesses. Let that pass. Then you don't know anything about this my famous friend ?

Rakhal put in a bit anxiously "I know this much that he is a stranger to this country but you are not so."

The tall Sahib was surprised "That's fine ! What more do you know, Mr. Mustafi ?"

— Last night you could not sleep well.

— Very, very good. What more ?

— You took lanka yesterday ?

— Lanka ? You mean Ceylon, the island of Ravana ?

— No, No, not that Lanka. It is called Mirchai in Hindi, I can't just recollect what is its English equivalent. Red and green pod — yes, yes, I remember — chilli, red pepper, capsicum — it is a very hot spice.

The longish Shahib confided to his friend "Well, Watson. You see this Bengali gentleman is at home

The girl was uncommonly beautiful and was roughly sixteen.....

Our late lamented Raja was a scoundrel, a debauch and drunkard.....

with the science of deduction. Pshaw! Sherlock Holmes will have no following in this country.

Watson put in the query "Mustafi Babu, do you practise Yoga?"

Rakhal replied "Joga text? No. I am not familiar with it. My father was a Kaviraj practising the Indian system of Medicine. I learnt something at his feet. It has become my habit to guess out the reason of anything by radical scrutiny of all relevant features.

Watson interrogated "How could you find out that we could not sleep well last night?"

Sherlock Holmes rejoined "Elementary, Watson, it is very easy. We bear the marks of mosquito bites in our faces. We did not use any curtain. The punkha-puller made himself scarce at dead of night. But how could he detect the other two items?"

Rakhal replied "Very easy. As soon as you came, you doffed your hat and addressed me as 'Sir.' The sun-dried Shahibs never show such courtesy to any ordinary native. This led me to prognosticate that you are a new-comer from England. Doctor Watson did not take off his hat, he addressed me as 'Babu'. This showed that he was a pucca Shahib, no new-comer here and quite conversant with the usages of the country."

— What about taking of the chilli?

— Your finger-ends are coloured with tobacco. The mere sight is convincing that you are an inveterate smoker — of cigarette, cigar or the pipe. Doctor Watson held a cigarette between his lips but you had none. Occasionally you were lolling out the tip of your tongue — discovering thereby that there was burning sensation in the tongue. The inexperienced chilli-taker behaves in that way — he can't smoke. Dr. Watson is an experienced man, chilli has no effect on him.

Holmes laughed out "How wonderful! At the word of that Watson, last night in the hotel I took Mulligatawny soup, chicken curry and Bengal Club Chutney —— all these three courses are terribly pungent. Well, can you divine something about our companion, Mr. Khanja?"

After regarding Banchharam, Rakhal opined "He belongs to the Police cadre. It is decipherable from the cut of his hair, the twirl of moustache and the drill coat. Besides, his under-chin bears the mark of the tape of his hat. Banchharam spoke in his mother tongue "You seem to be very clever. Let us hear something more."

— You hail from Panchakote. Recently you were toughly belaboured and were hurt in your shoulder and in your hand by a stick. It was of the "Mirzapuri type wound with wires. Your skin still bears its impress.

— You only notice the scar on my skin? Do you know, Master, how roundly that rascal of a betel-leaf seller Baldeo, was thrashed and pommelled?

Holmes snapped in "Mustafi, from the face of our friend, Khanja, I guess that your reading about him is correct. Well, were you smoking tobacco? By the mere smell of the smoke rings I can discriminate sixty-three kinds of tobacco — Virginia, Turkish,

Manilla, Java, Cuba, Coimbatore and the like. But I fail to distinguish your brand. Smells good.

— Its name is Da-Katta tobacco, very cheap and hard.

— Dakota ? It smells better than my shag. Where can I get it ? I want to take some quantity with me.

— I can afford to give you two or three seers, it is home-made. But it cannot be smoked by the pipe. You require a hubble-bubble of this type — a Hookah or a Gargara. You will have to master its trick. It is a beautiful scientific invention, sir. The smoke comes out all refined through the water. There is no burning sensation in the tongue.

— I will learn it from you. Well, let us now talk business. We presume you understand the purpose of our coming here.

— Are you, too, police people ?

— No, I am a private detective. But if necessity arises, I help the police. And my friend, Dr. Watson, is my co-worker.

— You have been sent by Kumar Swarnendra Narayan of Rupchandpur? I tell you beforehand that I do not know anything. You won't get any information from me.

Holmes said "Mr. Khanja, your assistance will not be required. Better get into the carriage."

Banchharam batted his eye at Rakhal and said "Well, sir, don't flurry so much. I warn you, you will be entrapped by your own examination before the Shahibs."

When Banchharam faded out of sight, Holmes said "Mustafi, rest assured that it is not my purpose to harm you in any way. You are likely to be benefited by my efforts."

Rakhal inquired "Does Kumar Bahadur want to suck out a clue from me by bribe through you ?"

— He wants to achieve his end by any means, good or bad but my policy is different. I want to serve both his interest and your good. I know that you are a man of simple character, educated and honest and there have been many oppressions on you. I am your well-wisher. You need not divulge anything. I am going to tell you everything, what I have heard before I came to this country — and what I have learnt here after inquiry. If there is some slip, just brush me up.

"Well, Please go on."

Sherlock Holmes continued "About a month ago, Mr. Griffith, the agent of the Kumar of Rupchandpur saw me in London. He told me that Raja Rupundur—.

Rakhal corrected "Rouppendranarayan"

—— Yes, yes. It's difficult to articulate that jaw-breaking name. I will merely call him the Raja. What Mr. Griffith told me is this : It is now a year that the Raja is dead. While his one wife was living that old man took to another young girl as his wife. Just to wangle his new queen, he gave her many, many ornaments and the most precious among that bally lot was a big star sapphire brooch.

Rakhal hastened "It's name is Neel Tara — blue star. It is a very valuable gem. It confers immense good on the person possessing it. Two hundred years back, one ancestor of the Raja purchased it from a Portuguese swindler. That gem is reputed to have been looted from a temple in Ceylon.

— That's right. Have you seen that gem ?

— No, I have merely heard description about it. What's next ?

— After some months of his second marriage, the Raja sustained fracture of his leg and waist-bone by a nasty fall and was bed-ridden for nearly eight years after which he died.Thereafter suddenly the new queen disappeared. Kumar Bahadur, the rightful heir of the Raja made extensive searches but he could not get the blue star nor could he get any clue of the fugitive queen. There was advertisement in the papers asking the queen to come back and to live in dignity in her own 'mahal' in the palace with plenty of pension. But it produced no effect. The police here failed to scent any clue. Am I right, Mustafi ?

— I have heard something like that. But bridal affair of the Raja is still more complicated.

— I know that. I have resolved all mystery. Hear the rest. Kumar Bahadur is not at all worried over his step-mother. He wants only the salvage of the gem. When the blue star passed to the new queen, sometime afterwards, the old Raja sustained the injury and died after suffering for many years. Thereafter occurred the disappearance of the new queen. Many kinds of mishaps have fallen to the estate — there is failure of crops, no collection of rent, the estate has lost three big suits and there has been riot by the tenantry and there is dyspepsia of the Kumar. It is his belief that all this is due to the disappearance of the blue star.

— Don't you think so ?

— No. However precious the blue star might be, it is a mere stone — an ingot of alumina. It can have no influence, beneficent or baneful. In our country too, there is superstition about gems. Mr. Griffith, the London agent of Kumar told me that the blue star was not the dowry or the 'stridhan' of the younger queen. It was the property of the Raj Estate, heirloom, ornament to be worn in the headgear. He who will be the Raja will be owner of it. Kumar Bahadur is soon going to have the title of "Raja" This is why he is entitled to have the blue star. The younger queen stole it and fled away.

Rakhal replied "It is a canard. The old Raja had absolute power of disposal over all his property which he could gift away or transfer at his will. Whatever has been given to the younger queen is her 'stridhan'.

— I have taken the opinion of the Advocate-

General here. He too, is of opinion that it is 'stridhan' but one cannot say what will turn out at the end after the decision of the High Court and the Privy Council. Be that as it may, I have been commissioned by the Kumar Bahadur to salvage the blue star.

— Kumar sent a man even to me. I was also threatened. He is under the belief that I know the whereabouts of the younger queen. Have you been able to cull any information after your arrival here ?

— As soon as I arrived here, I went straight to Rupchandpur. On inquiry I learnt there that our late lamented Raja was a scoundrel, at once a debauch and a drunkard and a great tyrant to boot. Ten year ago, one Ramkali Roy was an employee in his estate. He was childless and he brought up an orphaned niece named Savitri. The girl was uncommonly beautiful and was roughly sixteen years of age at that time. Her marriage was settled with a good groom of that village Rupchandpur. There was distant relationship between the families of the groom and the bride and there was some intimacy too, due to close neighbourhood. The bride learnt her lessons from the groom. When the Raja came to know about the marriage proposal, he sent for Ramkali, the maternal uncle of the girl and warned him not to give her in marriage elsewhere as he himself would marry the girl. The maternal uncle was a man of guts. He did not pay any heed to the word of the Raja and made all arrangement for the marriage with the proposed boy. When both the parties, of the groom and the bride, were present for the occasion and the maternal uncle was ready to perform the ceremony and the priest was about to recant the nuptial texts, the Raja appeared with all his retinue. None dared to offer any resistance for he had tremendous influence. And the sub-inspector of Police accompanied his party to keep peace. The retinue bound the hands and feet of the maternal uncle and the bridegroom and removed them. Both the parties of the bridegroom and the bride took fright and were scattered. Then the Raja took the seat of the bridegroom, his own priest recited the mantras and a hanger-on posed as the uncle of the bride and gave away unconscious Savitri in marriage. After marriage, Raja took his new wife to his palace. The maternal uncle deserted his village and the groom came away to Calcutta taking his mother with him.

— Do you know details about that bridegroom ?

— I am just talking with him. His name is Rakhal Mustafi, a school master and he rates himself as a very great poet though up till now not a single poem of his has seen the print.

— Is it blameworthy to think high of oneself ?

— It is so with the fool but not with the intelligent people like you and me.

— Then go on with your narrative.

— The new queen Savitri was ailing for many days. The Raja spared no pains to bring her under his control by making her happy. He loaded her with ornaments including the blue star, allotted separate apartment and surrounded her with bunches of male and female servants. Sister Theodora of the Mission School was appointed for her education. But after five months of his marriage, the Raja fell down while tipsy and sustained injury and was bed-ridden. The new queen passed her time with her teacher.

— Please tell me where Savitri is at present.

— Don't be in a hurry. I unfold the story step by step. After the death of the Raja, strict guard was clamped down on the new queen. She was quick in the uptake and took counsel with Sister Theodora for arranging a flight. One mid-night she stealthily left the palace taking some cash, ornaments and a faithful maid-servant along with her. She had no wish to take the blue star with her but had to take it at the insistent request of Theodora. Thereafter she came to Calcutta and boarded with one Christian Bengali lady, Miss Cecilia Banerjee by name. It was Theodora who made that arrangement.

— Have you met with Savitri ?

— Oh, yes. The queen said "After my release from the palace, I am free. I have secured a job too,

Holmes took out a box from his pocket and laid it bare.....it was blue star set in a gold frame.

here, in a girls' school. I don't want to keep the blue star. You take it and make it over to the Kumar." To which I replied "Why should you return it for nothing ? Better give it back after taking compensation for the oppressions heaped on you and Mustafi." The queen replied "I have lost all stamina of mind to decide anything. The maternal uncle and the aunt are no longer in the land of the living to whom I could have referred for exhortation. Please talk with Mustafi. I shall abide by his decision." Mustafi, she has great regard for you—great regard.

— Is she a convert to Christianity ?

— Sister Theodora tried for it but the queen was not at all agreeable.

— Please don't say queen, say Savitri Devi.

— Very well, Savitri Devi, the Goddess Savitri. Look here, Watson ! If one falls in love, one's outlook suffers a sea-change into something rich and strange. It augments the magnifying power of the mind. I noticed, it happened to you before your marriage.

Holmes took out a box from his pocket and laid it bare — it was a blue star set in gold frame, in shape like a nut but pretty bigger, in colour, light unblended bluish and in the inside of it, there was a bright star-like point which radiated six beams in six directions.

Holmes continued "Billions and billions of years ago, in the bowels of the earth, the heated molten alumina went through the tardy process of solidification and this gem was evolved. It won't fetch good price in the market — at best ten thousand rupees. But as the Kumar believes in its uncommon efficacy and has become eager to have it back, he must pay dearly for it. Mustafi, tell me what I must exact ?

Rakhal prattled "My head is off. You yourself do the settlement."

— Poets are impracticable people. Of course. there is honourable exception, as for instance, Lord Tennyson. Just listen, Mustafi, I will extort four lakhs of rupees—two lakhs for Savitri Devi, two lakhs for you. If I demand more, he might stagger and falter. Besides, he will have to foot our bill for travelling expenses and our fees. Savitri has an account with the Bank of Bengal. As soon as the Kumar deposits rupees four lakhs in that account, the blue star will be delivered to him. He will see me today evening.

— What is the address of Savitri ?

—No. 3 Cornwallis third lane. Mustafi, meet her this afternoon. I presume, you are free from prejudice. Are you inclined to take the betrothed bride as your wife though she is a widow ? — Then where's the snag ? Go, woo, and win her. See me the hotel, to-morrow morning. Good bye.

Watson let fall the suggestion "Excuse m Mustafi Babu, shave off that goatee. Good bye."

At four in the afternoon, Rakhal hastened Savitri and came back when the clock struck eig at night. His pupil Naran waited for him in t verandah. Rakhal snapped "Who is there ? Naran ? Trim up the hurricane lamp.

Naran obeyed and trimmed up the light "Y are, sir ! You are completely changed !"

— I shaved off the beard. Why are you here, late at night ?

— But sir, have you forgotten it ? You told m that you would teach me the battle of Sedgemo to-day evening.

— Away with Sedgemoor. It would be take up another day. Will you hear what I ha composed to-day while coming by the tram ?

"Down pours the rain,
cooled is the earth
Parched trees
defy their water-dearth
Sap is sucked in
by their roots a-thirst
Leaves will sprout,
blossom will burst"

Can your Hem Banerjee, Nabin Sen versi like this ?

(Translated By Satyendra Mohan Mookerjee)

You are Sir ! You are completely changed !

(Top) Now start Mr. President, don't get nervous ! We are by your side.
(Below) The next morning—Baby President's address being read all over the city.

THE CONCEPT OF RAGA IN INDIAN MUSIC

By SWAMI PRAJNANANDA

HE conception of the Raga is a grand and wonderful thing that had ever been produced in the domain of Indian music, nay, in the whole realm of Fine Arts of the world. It is the result of mind's direct mode of apprehending beauty *par excellence* as distinct from other things Or it can be said to be the product of intuitive perception of abstract aesthetic beauty which was again metamorphosed into a concrete idea or concept. This idea or concept is really the motive force behind the evolution or construction of a tonal structure having in it a succession of tones and microtones impregnated with soothing and entertaining propensities. Concept or percept is the means by which conception or perception is constructed. In fact, a concept is a general idea or meaning bearing no distinct reference to any concrete object of sensing. It can otherwise be called a thought-construction, carrying with it the idea or notion of a general nature or meaning that may apply to an individual or object. The concept of a Raga is therefore a product of thought or idea of settings of musical notes—the abstract ideal being transformed into the concrete real.

WHEN DID THE RAGA EVOLVE?

From our historical survey we find that probably the form of Raga was evolved in the beginning of the Classical Age, *i.e.*, in 600-500 B.C., and it was evidently used in the time of Ramayan-Mahabharata (400—200 B.C.) with its definite form and pattern. Narada of *Shiksa* (1st century A.D.) mentioned the name 'Raga' in connection with the seven Gramaragas like *shadava, madhyamagrama, sadjagrama, panchama, sadharita, kaishika* and *kaishika-madhyama.* Bharata (2nd century A.D.) used the word 'Raga' at least five times in *Natyasastra* and his eighteen Jatis were no other than eighteen parent Ragas with ten specific characteristics or *dasha-laksmana.* All the ancient, medieval and modern writers on music are of opinion that Jatis or Jatiragas of *Natyasastra* are the precursors or forerunners of all the Ragas, Gandharva and Deshi..MM. Ramakrishna-Kavi of Madras is also of opinion that Bharata dealt with the Raga system in his *Natyasastra.* He said: "Among the ancient works on music the Ragas were classified into eighteen Jatis which simply show the main characteristics of Ragas that come under each Jati." But it is a fact that Bharata did not give any definition of the Ragas for which Matanga (5th—7th century) had a sympathetic complaint against Bharata and other authors on music contemporary to Bharata: *"Raga-margasya yad rupam yannok-tam Bharatadibhih."* It was Matanga who really defined for the first time the word *'raga'* in his *Brihaddeshi.*

DEFINITION OF A RAGA

Matanga defined a Raga as,

(a) Svaravarna-vishesena dvanibhedena va punah,
Rajyate yena yah kaschit sa ragah sammatah satam.

(b) Yo'sau dvani-vishesastu svara-varna-bibhushitah,
Rajjako jana-chittanam sa cha raga udahritah.

(c) Ityevam raga-shabdasya vyutpatti-rabhidhiyate,
Rajjanajjayate rago vyutpattih samudahrita.

The word *'raga'* has been derived from the root *'ranja'*—to tinge. As a sheet of white cloth is tinged by some colour, so minds of men and animals are tinged (impressed) by pleasing vibrations of sweet music, and then it is called a 'Raga'. A Raga is therefore the sumtotal of vibrations of tones having a pleasing and soothing power.

CHARACTERISTICS OF RAGA

A Raga may be called as *anuraga* which means sympathy or sympathetic attitude of the mind. It is a colourful and attractive modal form of the mind that creates some sentiment which impresses and affects the minds of the listeners. Every sound is a combination of sensible feeling or *sensibility* with agreeable or disagreeable vibrations. All sounds have a power to create impressions upon the mind. A Raga is a combination of agreeable and pleasing sounds with a tonal value. It may be said to be a living and dynamic force or energy which creates the sentiments and moods of joy and pleasure in the mind.

But one note or a single monotonous sound has no power to attract and please anybody. What then is it that pleases and soothes the aching hearts of all living beings? It is the combination of notes or succession of agreeable tones which has a power to please and soothe everybody. Well has it been said by T. V. Subba Rao in his Readership lectures on the *Seven Lamps of Sangita*: "A simple tone by itself has little or nothing to please, but in combination with or in close succession to, certain other tones, its power to delight is high. A compound tone is always agreeable on account of the presence of the upper partials. These upper partials are produced by the vibration of the string in aliquot parts along with the vibration of the whole string; and these notes agree with the note of the entire string. In this

agreement lies the secret of the pleasurable sensation in music. * * * Every note that is used in music must have at least a fair measure of concord with the fundamental. It must also agree with the note that precedes it and the note that succeeds it. Though our system of music is melodic and produces its effects by a succession of notes rather than by a super-imposition of them, yet it must so far be conceded that the foundation of melody is harmony. The notes are derived on the basis of harmony ; but they are applied on the principle of melody. That the pleasure of harmony may be sensed by the ear the sadja and panchama are always sounded in the drone so that all the notes used may be perceived to agree with them."

PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESS

What is the psychological process behind the perception of a Raga? A Raga is a psycho-material principle or object. When we say we appreciate a Raga, we mean we appreciate through our mind the ideal aspects or features of grace and sweetness (*lavanya* and *madhurya*) of the Raga. Modern psychologists say that all the activities of our bodies and all organic functions are no other than the result of reflex actions. When we hear a sound, sweet or noisy—pleasant or unpleasant, it at once enters our ears and produces an impression. That impression is again translated into a kind of feeling, and immediately the mind reacts through the reflex action and then we pay our attention to the effect of the sound. But this process being automatic is mechanical. So we have to admit the existence of intelligence behind the process. The intelligence really governs and detects all the psychological processes and through this intelligence we appreciate everything which comes in contact with our senses.

In other words, it can be said that psyche or mind is the reservoir of all kinds of impressions. When an object comes in contact with psyche through the gates of senses, it is transformed into impressions. The shining intellect then animates the impressions and they are at once translated into a sensation or feeling of the mind. That is, the mind is then conscious of the object with its value and intrinsic nature.

This process really happens during the perception of the succession of musical sounds which is known as the Raga. As soon as we come in contact with the beauty, grace and sweetness of the Raga, these qualities go at once to the core of the mind as impressions. The mind receives those impressions in its bed and realizes them through the shining light of intelligence. They are again translated to the senses and then we appreciate the Raga materially in the outside world with its form and qualities. (*saundarya, lavanya* and *madhurya*).

The Ragas evolve from the *thatas* or *melas* (scale). Now, what do we mean by a *thata* or *mela*? A *thata* or *mela* is a composite body of seven notes in ascent and descent series (*arohana* and *avarohana*.) A *thata* always contains seven notes and innumerable Ragas may evolve by the permutation and combination of these notes. The *thata* may be called as a dynamic force-centre from which hundreds and thousands of Ragas may come out with their specific nature and special forms. Pandit Ahobala (1700 A.D.) said : *"Mela svara-samuha sad-raga-vyanjana-shaktim,"* i.e., a *thata* or *mela* is a combination of notes and it has a power to create the Ragas. Therefore every Raga has for its basic ground, the *thata* or *mela*

PRECURSOR OF THATA

Murchhana was the precursor or forerunner of *thata* or *mela*. The use and practice of *murchhana* was current perhaps from the beginning of the Classical Age. It is probable that when Brahma or Brahmabharata created the Gandharva-Gana out of the materials of the four Vedas, the use of *murchhana* was prevalent in the Ragas (i.e., Jatiraga and Gramaraga). In Ramayana, Mahabharata and Harivamsha (400-200 B.C.) we find the use of *murchhanas* in the Ganas. *Murchhanas* have been vividly described in *Naradi-shiksa, Natyasastra* and other ancient treatises on music. Probably from 1st-2nd to 15th-16th century A.D. *murchhanas* were recognized as the dominating principle that determined the nature and form of the Ragas, both Gandharva and formalized Deshi. During the times of Narada of *Shiksa*, Bharata, Dattila, Yastika, Matanga, Parshadev, Shrangdev, Narada of *Makaranda*, Somanath, Ahobala and even Pandit Damodara Mishra (17th century) the Ragas were known by their *murchhanas*.

What is a *murchhana*? A *murchhana* is a succession of seven notes in ascending and descending order. Etymologically it indicates 'swooning' (*murchha*) and increasing or elevating and by the method of *murchhana* the Raga is made to emerge prominently. It is mainly divided into four kinds, *purna, sadava, audava* (or *audavita*) and *sadharana*. A *purna murchhana* is so called because it is sung or presented with seven notes. A *sadava murchhana* is sung with six notes, and *audava* with five notes and a *sadharana murchhana* with *kakali-nishada* and *antara-gandhara* notes. Matanga said that a Raga is called a *murchhana* when it is presented in ascending and descending orders of notes : *"murchhate yena rago hi murchhanetyabhisanjita."* From this it can be taken that a Raga is no other than a *murchhana*.

Pandit V. N. Bhatkhande said,

"Melah syan-murchhanadharo gramadhara tu murchhana,
Svarebhyo grama-sambhutih shrutayah svara-janmabhuh,
Mela svara-samuhah syad-raga-vyanjana-saktiman."

That is, the basic ground of the *thatas* or *melas* is *murchhanas*, or it can be said that the *melas* get

their origin from the *murchhanas*, the *murchhanas* from the *gramas* (ancient scale), the *gramas* from the series of tones (notes), and tones from the microtones or *shrutis*. Therefore the *melas* are no other than the cluster of tones or notes, from which the Ragas originate. As for example, we see that the *murchhana Uttaramandra* (of the *adhara sadjagrama*) consists of the notes sa, ri, ga, ma, pa, dha, ni; the *murchhana Rajani* consists of ni, sa ri, ga, ma, pa, dha ; the *murchhana Uttarayata* consists of dha, ni, sa, ri, ga, ma, pa, etc. It is a fact that a Raga also consists of successive notes to form its skeleton. The structure of *tana* is also of the same nature. The only difference between a *murchhana* and a *tana* is that a *murchhana* is known by its notes in ascending and descending order (*arohana-avarohana-gati*) whereas a *tana* is recognized by notes in descending order (*avarohana-gati*). The text of the *Brihaddeshi* (Travancore edition) is incorrect in this respect and it has been correctly mentioned by Pandit Somanath in his *Ragavibodha* (vide chapt. 1.44). Now from different variations of *murchhanas* numerous Ragas of different forms were evolved and those variations were mainly of nine kinds or *jatis:*

1. Ascending with 7 and descending with 7 notes,
2. " " 7 " " " 6 "
3. " " 7 " " " 5 "
4. " " 6 " " " 7 "
5. " " 6 " " " 6 "
6. " " 6 " " " 5 "
7. " " 5 " " " 7 "
8. " " 5 " " " 6 "
9. " " 5 " " " 5 "

In the present system of Northern Hindusthani and Southern Karnatic music the *murchhanas* have been replaced by the *melas* or *melakartas* and the Ragas have their origin from the melas or *melakartas.*

We generally get the mention of three ancient scales like *sadjagrama, madhyamagrama* and *gandhara-grama.* But in the Mahabharata-Harivamsha we also get the reference of six *gramaragas* (*sadgramaragani*) which were no doubt the products of six ancient scales or *gramas.* In *Naradi-shiksa* we find the description of seven *gramaragas* which certainly corresponded to the seven ancient scales and they are supported by the rock inscription (7th century A.D.) of Kudimiyamalai in the Padukattai state in South India. But it is surprising to note that Bharata of *Natyasastra* mentioned only two *gramas, sadja* and *madhyama,* and from this it will not be difficult to find out that during second century A. D. *gandharagrama* was out of practice. We further see that by the time of Somanath, Srinivasha and Pandit Ahobala *madhyamagrama* was also obsolete and from that time (17th century A. D.) the basic *sadjagrama* exists as the ground of *melas* or *thatas* and Ragas.

APPEARANCE OF MELA OR THATA

The *murchhana* was replaced by the *mela* or *thata* probably by the time of Pandit Ramamatya (1550 A. D.) and it was confirmed afterwards by Pandit Somanath (1609 A.D.) and others. Ramamatya said: *"Svaranamatha vyksate ye mela ragahetavh."* He formulated twenty basic (*janaka*) *melas* with Mukhari at their head as the *shuddha* scale. After him Pandit Somanath mentioned in the *Ragavibodha: "Atha kathyante melah kramarupasti bhavanti"* etc. In his commentary he defined the *mela* as: *"milante vargi-bhavanti ragah yatyeti tadashrayah svara-samsthana-vishisa melah. 'Thata' iti bhasayam."* It is interesting to note that though Kallinath (1446-1465 A. D.), the commentator of *Sangit-Ratnakara* did not mention the term *'mela'* yet he used the name *'melana'* in the sense of using in musical parlance. Govinda Dikshit (1614 A.D.) mentioned that he adopted his system of *mela* following the fifteen basic scales advocated by Vidyaranya Swami (14th-15th century). From this we can assume that from the fourteenth-fifteenth century the replacement of *murchhana* by *mela* or *thata* began. Therefore by the times of Ramamatya and Somanath the *murchhana* as a determining principle of Ragas completely disappeared giving full place to the *mela* or *thata.*

Some are of opinion that Lochana-Kavi (middle of the seventeenth century) of *Ragatarangini* was the first promulgator of the system of *mela,* but that is not correct, because Pandit Lochana really followed the path of his predecessors.

The Ragas are classified into three main categories, *shuddha* (independent), *salaga* or *chhayalaga* (dependent) and *samkirna* (mixed or compound). The *shuddha* Ragas are formed independently of other resources. But Kallinath's definition of it is though different, is yet new and novel. He said that the *shuddha* Ragas are those which do not violate the prescribed rules of the Vedic *shastrageya-gana.* The *salaga* or *chhayalaga* Ragas always depend on other Raga or Ragas for their constitution and nourishment. The *samkirna* Ragas are an admixture of both the *shuddha* and *chhayalaga* Ragas. Sharangdev and Somanath described these three classes of Ragas in their *Ratnakara* and *Ragavibodha* explicitly.

The authors on music classified the Ragas again into three *Jatis, sampurna, sadava* and *audava.* The *Jatis* are determined by the numbers of notes of the Ragas. As for example, Ragas are *sampurna* when they contain seven notes to constitute their forms. They are *sadava* when they consist of six notes and are *audava* with five notes. Further they can be divided into nine classes being mixed with each other and they are: (i) *audava-audava, audava-sadava, audava-sampurna;* (ii) *sadava-audava, sadava-sadava, sadava-sampurna;* (iii) *Sampurna-audava, sampurna-sadava* and *sampurna-sampurna.*

A *thata* or *mela* is always in a heptatonic form. But the Ragas although born of the *thata* did not maintain the same number of notes. For example,

Continued On Page 236

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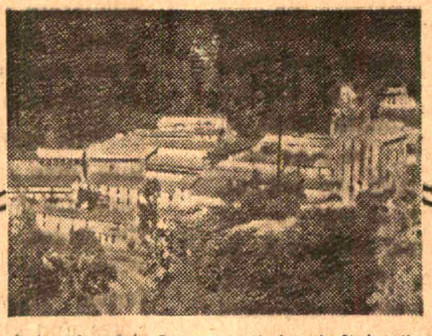

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INDIAN FOLK SONG

By ADAM ADIL

THE folk song which Rabindranath Tagore described as the spontaneous creation of the subconscious mind of the people is an integral part of the Indian village life and it truly represents the *elan vital* of the spiritual heritage of India. Indeed, a search into the treasure house of the folk lore of India will lay bare the simple wisdom of ages, uninterruptedly handed down from generation to generation.

A few years ago, Prof. Devendranath Satyarthi of Santiniketan carried on an extensive research into the folk songs of the Indian village which he aptly called "the nest of singing birds". The outcome of his research added a fund of new knowledge to philologists, anthropologists, litterateurs, philosophers, educationists, artists as well as common men and women. The folk songs revealed the rich unity of Indian life and thought and of the wide diversity which one observes if one travels from Kashmir to Cape Comorin.

In fact the folk song has touched every fibre of the Indian village life. It is deeply associated with various religious rites and social ceremonies as well as with all festivities of joy and glee. Again in recent years the political aspirations and economic ideals of the village - folk have found expression in the spontaneous upsurge of new folk songs, which are as rich in literary imagery, facility of words, beauty of music as the older songs.

Indeed, the origin of the Indian folk-song is lost in antiquity and this fact justifies the claim of Radhakrishnan that Indians are "among the few races still remaining on earth whose traditions run back to gods and the divine origin of things".

It is true that some of the ancient folk songs have been lost during the passage of centuries. But many still remain and are symbolic of the life of the age they were born in and bespeak of the progressively widening consciousness of the people from age to age.

The general diction of the folk-songs reveals that they were composed by ordinary men and women, and represent free and unfettered throbs of the life of the common humanity. Thus, each folk-song is a rhythm of real life and this fact compelled the famous Irish poet W. B. Yeats to remark that "Indian Music is not art, but life itself!" It is because of this quality that the Indian folk song has a touch of eternity about it.

Nature is deeply rooted in the Indian folk-songs. The beauty of the green fields, the sweetness of the song of birds, the fragrance of the lotus, the freshness of the dawn, the stillness of the night, the majesty of the ocean and the grace of ever-flowing rivers, the fierceness of the storm, the terror of thunder on the night-seas, nay every phase and every mood of mother nature as well as every pulsation of love, beauty and youth find its place in the rhythms of their cadence. The folk-songs also speak of the joys and sorrows, of the hopes and desires of the triumphs and defeats, the religious beliefs and spiritual cravings as well as of the glories of the past and dreams of future.

"The folk songs are the very heart-beats of India. Through them vibrates the music of India's soul. Nothing of India can convey more forcibly and clearly to our minds the manners, habits and psychological depths of her inner life than an insight into these songs," said an eminent writer.

A few songs from different parts of India will give us a revealing insight into the simple thoughts of our various people.

FOLK SONG OF RAJPUTANA

Here is a Rajput hero of the 12th century out to start for a battle. His lady love while instilling courage in his heart sings:

"Three things only will be in the field of battle,
A stout heart, a well-sharpened sword, and the hand to wield the weapon
Which of these three will be by thy side,
There in the field of battle my love?"

Again :

"Thy horse neighs at thy door,
Look, grave soldiers are waiting for thee,
My love, there is the hero's bracelet, wear it and rush to war,
Does not thou hear the war-drums?
They are beating for thee my love."

Long after the hero is gone the damsel sings again :

"The shell waits for the heavenly dew to fall
The bird 'Chakoi' waits for the sun to rise,
The hero waits for the battle to come,
And oh, the damsel waits for the hero to return."

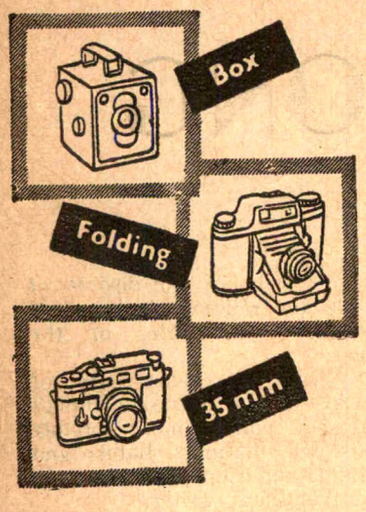
In fact there are varieties of folk-songs: songs of a woman craving for an offspring, of a widow weeping tear of blood for her departed husband, of an orphan crying for its lost mother, of a noble lady betrayed in love, of a youth whose sweetheart has proved false. Also there are songs imbued with sympathy for the harassed animals and birds.

WOUNDED DOE'S LAMENTATION (BENGAL)

Here is a typical song from Bengal wherein a wounded doe cries to the archer :

"What a deep wound, brother archer, thy arrow has driven into me,
I am a forest doe and owe to none,
For no fault of mine, I am struck,
My child remains unfed by my milk,
Nor will her moon - like face I will see any more,
Oh : no words of love will please her any more.
Whenever my child struck with hunger,
Will cry 'Mother, 'O mother dear'
Who will answer her, brother archer?
O ye, my comrades, tell my mate, my love,
To nurse my suckling child with love and care

(Continued On Page 246)



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DEALERS ALL OVER INDIA.

By UDAY SHANKAR

I DO not know if a shadow play can strictly be called dancing or ballet. People generally know me as a dancer and a ballet-composer. They could not, therefore, be claimed if they could not evaluate my art in terms of that of a shadow-play-composer. There was no question of doing that before I conceived and executed the 'Ram Lila'.

We do not have to split our heads over the question of whether or not a shadow play really constitutes the art of dancing. This much, however, certainly bears mention that it is an agreeable throw of artistic movements in at least an extended sphere of dance-art. My only interest lies in the development of the beautiful artistically inspired movements of the human body, and a shadow play is an important medium for giving vent to the urge for graceful and aesthetic motivations flowing from the mind through the different limbs, which one cannot just put down to the cold science of anatomy.

If this is not ego, I may say that I have, as a dancer, touched off all the different vibrations of rhythmic gestures of the human body and achieved a measure of artistic harmony in movement. My medium for this so long was a pure form of dancing whether on the stage in flesh and blood or on the celluloid. But in this new posture, I had to think of the figures of movement not in their pure forms of dance-art but in mere shadow-forms which, it must be said, do not strictly represent the expression of the rapturous feelings of those whose shadows were cast on the white screen in the process. The shadow may even be said to be a changed representation of the basic concept of the art-symbols typified by the players, it is, in fact, an artistic delusion to the spectator's eye, creating in beautifully moving shadow-lines the suggestion and effect of the artistes' actuality.

True the shadow does not bring that gorgeous riot of colour grandeur and intimacy of the actual human figures on the stage and thus misses the thrill of personal contact with the spectators. Nevertheless, it has a beauty and art-appeal all its own—beauty of dark silhouettes and a strange massiveness in flowing movement. Its influence on the eye and the mind embraces a new type of joy. I am not myself a critic and can hardly explain it in the light of a critical analysis of the art of dancing. But there is no reason to hide my deep conviction that the shadow-movements undoubtedly are a variant of the same joy that dancing produces, bringing a message of peculiar artistic transportation.

CHANGES BROUGHT ABOUT

In the quest of newness of movements in their exhibitions I experimented with several methods in order to bring about a change and a break in the monotony produced by the process of looking at the shadow 'characters' all the time through the intermedium of a deep green or a deep blue curtain. It naturally becomes the same continuation of a similar science of movement after sometime. When I realised this limitation I introduced the effect of a net curtain and painted scenes and their frequent shifts with the help of dimmer and focussing lights. This manipulation I found helpful in bringing the desired magnified and playful changes in the scenes and a consequent 'cinematographic' effect on the audience's eye. It is as though a throw of cinemascope with living objects. Those who have witnessed my 'Buddha Ballet' will, I hope, bear me out. In the same ballet I sought to introduce the impression of the shadow so as to feel the pulse of the audience about its effect. The result obtained was marvellous not only as a change in the stereotyped presentation, but in the matter of heightening the tempo of the ballet and casting an alternating spell of awe, thrill and suspense. I hope those that saw it will

agree that the shadow scene was the very first one showing an effective pictorial throw of feuds, murder, treachery and oppression.

The idea of movements in shadow was probably infused in my mind at the time I saw a few crude and rustic performances of shadow plays like marionette shadow plays and puppet shows in South India prior to my first departure to the Continent with a party of Indian dancers and musicians. This tour was sponsored by Madame Alice Boner. When I was contemplating and engaged in building up a troupe of Indian artistes I had the opportunity, and as a matter of fact, endeavoured hard to utilise this heritage of a rustic art-form of India. For that purpose I visited Malabar and other parts of the far South. The seeds of that experience lay dormant in my mind but came to fruition during my various subsequent experiments in the Almora Culture Centre. The conception of staging an open air shadow play of Ram Lila first occurred to me at Almora. I went on thinking and thinking trying to find out ways to represent the true effect of the glowing inspiration on the screen.

The process of experimentation went on and along with it I was trying to hit upon a suitable theme which would provide a fitting subject incorporating almost all the possible graceful movements which retaining in full the spirit of the story. I soon came upon the realisation that the stories from the 'Ramayana' would not only be a highly satisfactory subject for our countrymen, but would have a universal appeal. For this kind of theme no synopsis was required; it was self-explanatory and every Indian having felt the legends coursing through his blood. It was a theme to command a grand scale of mass appeal.

"RAM LILA" IN SHADOW

Then, for its broadest appeal and grandeur, I decided that I should have it staged in the open air. Firstly because a large mass of people could see it at a time, and secondly because the villagers for whom it was mainly presented, could have a rural flavour permeating it in the most natural surroundings. They from a child must have gone through an unceasing round of 'Ram Lila' dramas in the open during Dussehra festival throughout the length and breadth of India. This new shadow presentation of the same popular drama in its substance would, I calculated, be welcomed. They would have the same rural and natural atmosphere around them and by squatting on the ground to watch their beloved and familiar characters, even though the set-up might be achieved in a novel technique. They would possibly like it more, I thought, for its thorough new kind of presentation.

From the technical point of view there is an advantage in having the 'Ram Lila' show on an open stage. The lights are placed at a considerable distance and they sometimes require an appreciable length of space too. The stage in a hall does not allow either such a distance or so much space.

Having once decided to stage the shadow play of Ram Lila on a small scale, I called my colleagues at Almora Centre and discussed with them my proposed venture. They all liked the idea and showed their enthusiasm for it. My technical expert and friend, Shahji, got very much up and doing. He decorated the arena with leaves, flowers and festoons and constructed the stage with accurate measurements after a thorough consultation with me with regard to the placings of curtains and lights. The villagers were informed by beat of drums by our students about the impending staging of 'Ram Lila' and the entrance fee announced was either a flower or a fruit or a vegetable.

SIGNIFICANT INCIDENT

I will not forget the happy evening when on the appointed evening day a surging crowd of villagers came pouring into the pandal. It was a difficult job for my students and my colleagues to accommodate the vast crowd in the very big and open auditorium allotted for the purpose. There were children as well as old villagers among my spectators. Small tents were pitched to store the 'gate money' in kind. After some time one tent was filled up with flowers, another with vegetables and the third with fruits. We could not come to any conclusion as to what we should do with them. After the show we distributed the collections amongst them again. If I have been ever happy with my shows I suppose it was on that particular evening when I presented my 'Ram Lila' for the first time to my people of the countryside.

I still remember with fondness an incident on that occasion. A very old woman came to witness the performance without any fruit or flower with her. She was not allowed admittance by some of my students who were at the gate. Her loud lamentations attracted my colleagues and myself to the spot. It soon transpired that she came without carrying any 'gifts.' Her happiness on being allowed to enter the pandal to see it probably made my subsequent demonstrations of 'Ram Lila' a great success.

TECHNICAL ASPECT

Coming to the technical aspect of the shadow play I should say that it is more difficult to organise it than dancing on the stage. Here every angle of movement is to be carefully executed and its effect on shadow has to be cautiously balanced and thought of previously. It is then that the whole thing is planned, composed and harmonised. The composition must be imbued with a shrewd knowledge of playful novelty so as to avoid monotony. Then comes the idea of proportion and time. While moving the limbs of the body a sound idea of distance from the lights must be there. Then the effect of the shadows produced from knick-knacks are also taken to account. Every detailed and correct assessment of the stage from all corners and measurements from every object and crude materials used for production should also be properly balanced and determined.

I may also say that the movements often used for dancing on the stage are not the same when used for the purpose of producing desired effect from the shadows. The shadow movements are more difficult, sometimes slower. Shadow production has an altogether different science from that of ballet dancing or stage dancing.

After my first shadow play of 'Ram Lila' at Almora, I took my troupe out from Almora and visited several neighbouring towns. The play was acclaimed for its new presentation. But everything was on an experimental basis. Only a few years ago I resolved to present it on a truly large scale. I have the frankness to admit that even now it is not a finished product. It has however wide possibilities and can flourish if proper scope and arrangements are made available and more artistes are engaged, more materials used. All this mean an enormous amount of money. This can only be made possible if the moneyed people and the Government of our country join hands and develop this art.

It is gratifying to feel that the present Government is trying hard to revive and help the growth of the native culture and art of the land. It is to be expected that this form of ballet-art would not escape their sharp attention.

25 Years of Talkies

A comprehensive study of the salient features of Bengal's significant contributions towards the Indian Talkie during its eventful life of a quarter-century.

THE talkies took roots in Bengal almost simultaneously with Bombay. While Khan Bahadur Ardeshir Irani in Bombay was speeding up with his first talking picture "Alam Ara" to mark the beginning of a new era in the Indian cinema, Rustomji Dhotiwala, the guiding force behind Madan's extensive cinema empire, stole a march over the Bombay film magnate by treating Calcutta's cinemagoers to a couple of talkie programmes composed of selected scenes from popular Bengali plays as well as some musical items. Madan's first full-length talkie "Jamaisasthi," also made in Bengali and directed by Amar Choudhury hit the screen after "Alam Ara," the pioneer's crown thus going rightly to Ardeshir Irani. Madras and Punjab did not just exist in those days as centres of talkie production.

In the race that started between Bengal and Bombay in making talking pictures, producers in these two centres vied with one another in turning out quickies during the first phase of this revolutionary innovation,—the talking screen. Quality was naturally overlooked in the hot craze for 'talking' quantity, and cinemas were soon dumped with quickly made films that did nothing but talk! 100% talking pictures were the craze of the day which behaved in the fashion of the prattling child that has just learnt to mumble words.

For the sake of a truthful statistical record,

Strolling down the sweet memory lane, Bengal's filmgoers can yet mentally call forth the vision of the immortal P. C. BARUA, regarded as a prince among directors and an actor of actors. This famous scene from N. T.'s inimitable romantic classic, DEVDAS, shows him and JAMUNA DEVI in a drama-charged moment as 'Devdas' and 'Parvati'.

it should be mentioned that Madan Theatres were the pioneers in Bengal in introducing talking pictures. They produced as many as ten talkies in Bengali and Hindi during the first year, *e.g.* 1931. This number was almost doubled in the next year—a feat which remains unsurpassed by any other Indian company till now.

New Theatres too entered the field with a big bang in 1931, but their contribution was numerically low, with only one picture made that year. Qualitatively also, their first product did not create so much as a stir. It was "Dena Paona," a Sarat Chandra story in Bengali. Next year, N. T. made nine pictures in a row,—five in Bengali and four in Hindusthani.

BIRTH OF NEW STUDIOS

During 1931 and 1932 Madan Theatres and New Theatres were the sole talking picture producers in Bengal. The formidable P. C. Barua put in an individual effort at talkie production in 1932 under the banner of Barua Pictures with the help

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SAIGAL, India's greatest singing-actor ever, the memory of whose golden voice and carefree acting still sends a thrill down the heart of every filmgoer of yesterday. The great New Theatres star is seen here in 'action' in a scene from his famous co-starring vehicle with Kanan Devi, PARICHAY (Hindi: LAGAN).

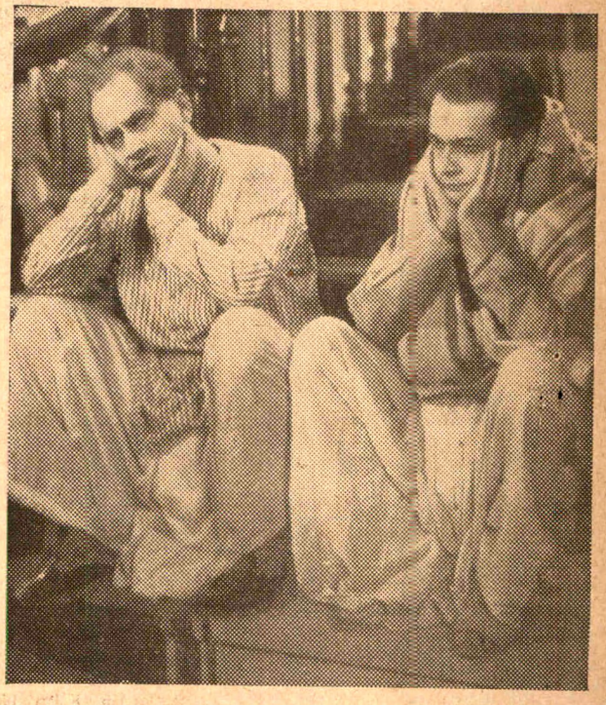
of an indigenous recording system. It was entitled "Bengal 1983". The picture flopped in its very first show for the tragic reason that practically not a syllabus of its dialogue was correctly or audibly 'recorded'.

1933 saw the birth of East Indian Film Co., Radha Film Co. and Shree Bharat Lakshmi Pictures —all powerful organisations which are still in the first line of action in so far as production activities are concerned. "India Film Industries," later converted into Kali Films, was born next year. They jointly contributed scores of pictures in the major languages of India. It should be mentioned in this connection that in those days producers from the South, the North and the East flocked to Calcutta to avail themselves of the studio facilities in making talking pictures.

With the novelty of articulation gradually wearing off, the 100% talkies soon got tiresome and producers naturally turned their attention now to improving the quality of their products from other angles. A new technique, they realised, had to be developed in which 'talk' would only be a harmonious part of the film's dramatically lively expression. The first tangible outcome of this new thoughtful experiment was found in New Theatres' Bengali film "Chandidas" which broke the record of all previous long runs and introduced to picturegoers a director whose name still ranks the highest in the hearts of all classes of audience. He is none other than Debaki Kumar Bose, the first serious thinker in the domain of Indian films who gave a new life of motion and pictorial charm to the medium. His subsequent films also bore the stamp of his individuality and his first Hindi film "Puran Bhagat" was instrumental in popularising the name of New Theatres in the all-India market. The institution at once found itself firmly entrenched into the love and affection of the film-hungry public. Soon after Debaki Bose found fame, New Theatres gave us a number of highly talented directors who enriched the all-India screen with worthwhile pictures glowing with their inspired outlook and their new approach. Most outstanding among them were P. C. Barua and Nitin Bose, who blazed new trails of glory with their individual style and their brilliance of presentation. New Theatres rose to the pinnacle of popularity by virtue of the pictures made by these stalwarts. Barua's "Devdas," "Mukti" and "Rajat Jayanti" and Nitin Bose's "Bhagya-Chakra," and "Parichaya," all produced under the banner of New Theatres, still remain landmarks in Bengal's film industry.

N. T. & TECHNICAL INNOVATIONS

New Theatres' name is also associated with some technical innovations which later came to be employed by the entire industry. Background music was for the first time used in Debaki Bose's "Chandidas". The system of playback was first ex-



SAILEN CHOUDHURY & BARUA, a couple of Bengal's unforgettable screen idols whose memory death could not dim in the minds of Bengal's film enthusiasts. The two are in a spot, as their utterly crest-fallen appearance indicates, in Bengali screen's first true full-length comedy-riot, RAJAT JAYANTI, directed by Barua himself.

DURGADAS BANERJEE, the deathless ADONIS of the Bengali stage and screen who epitomised youthful beauty and vigour and alone accounted for a long string of memorable hits. He is seen typifying an emotionally charged scene from a big film hit of yesterday, 'PARAPAREY' the lovely lady clinging to him being JYOTSNA GUPTA.

perimented with in Nitin Bose's "Bhagya-Chakra". Its success led to the wholesale adoption of the device.

To the account of Bengal's technicians are credited two other achievements. One was the invention of Csystophone, an indigenous sound system perfected by Bamadas Chatterjee. The other was the introduction of the system of re-recording with the help of a self-built machine by Modhu Sil. Both were hailed in the thirties, as not many producers in those days could afford the costly equipment of foreign origin.

Besides New Theatres, a number of other companies too made valuable contributions during the early days of the talkies. East India Film Co. became the haunt of all-India talent like Krishna Gopal, A. R. Kardar, Debaki Bose and others. They regularly made pictures in Hindi, Urdu and Bengali. It was one of their Hindi productions, "Seeta", directed by Debaki Bose, which was the first Indian production to receive a foreign award — at the Venice Film Festival —— in 1935.

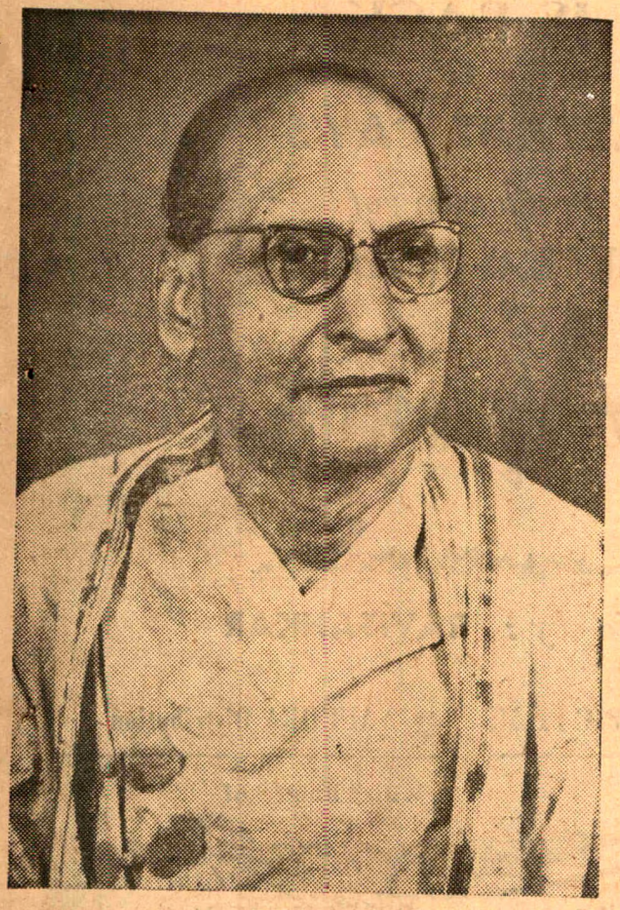
Kali Films and Radha Film Co. concentrated their efforts mostly on Bengali pictures. Shree Bharat Lakshmi Pictures, like East India Film Co. produced an equal number of Hindi and Bengali pictures in those early years. Some very good films were turned out by these companies which left their mark on the box office as well as on popular imagination.

In later years a number of independent producers appeared on the scene and made rich contributions to the entire film industry. New Theatres' fine tradition inspired them in the picking of subject matters and in the manner of their presentation. In the field of biographicals, I. N. A. Pictures' "Michael Madhusudan", M. P. Productions' "Vidyasagar" and Chalacchitra Pratisthan's "Rani Rashmoni" still stand unrivalled. Aj Production's "Dhooli" and Sunrise Films' "Jadu Bhatta" created a new taste in the country for classical music in films. National Progressive Pictures' "Paribartan" and M. P. Productions' "Babla" also set up new examples of thought-provoking juvenile dramas. The country's Freedom Movement was most realistically portrayed in "Bhuli Nai" and "42", while as examples of chaste humour "Barjatri" and "Chheley Kaar" have not many equals in the entire industry. These were all made by independent producers.

"Pather Panchali", produced in Bengali by a group of new technicians with a host of unknown players in its cast, epitomised the soul of Indian films and sprang the biggest surprise on the whole of India and the world outside by its complete departure from the usual formula of film-making. The film has since received accolades from critics in foreign countries as well as many awards of merit at international film festivals.

Bengal's numerical output in these twenty five years come up to about two thousand films, which is no mean achievement by itself. Moreover, Bengal can justly take pride in the lead she has furnished in almost all departments of film-making. Her film makers look to the future with new hopes and fresh expectations for still better pictures, bigger talents and greater appreciation.

Whoever has had the opportunity of being one of the ardent film and stage enthusiasts of the last decade will easily spot out MANORANJAN BHATTACHARYA, acclaimed one of the veteran character actors of the age. Can you fail to notice him here in a tense scene from Devaki Bose's famous film "SAPUREY" in its name role of snake-charmer.



Early Film Making in Calcutta

By AHINDRA CHAUDHURI

The peerless stage and screen veteran of Bengal, Ahindra Chaudhuri, narrates in this article written in a strongly reminiscent mood, all the interesting experiences of his career full of years and honours, relating to the switch-over of the Bengali screen from the 'Silvern Silent' to the Golden Talking Age.

CINEMATOGRAPHY as an industry is making rapid strides to-day even in this country and we are indeed passing through a boom period in the trade. On a close scrutiny one will be astonished to see that on an average sixty Bengali Films or so are produced every year and there are nearly ten film studios in and around Calcutta. Hundreds of picture houses have been erected in and around the city most of which are having a boom time. Some of these houses are as luxurious as could be desired and many are air-conditioned too. Statistics will indicate that millions of rupees are undoubtedly employed in the industry and thousands of people are making their bread from allied branches of the trade such as picture making, distribution and exhibition of films.

The art of film making has developed tremendously and this might well be called colossal. We and a few of us, who are old fossils and are not being content with a place in the gallery of natural history are still plodding wearily along the memory-lane of the filmland—our mind goes back almost thirty five years back to a period which will appear to many as dark and crude, when there could not be found anywhere in this vast city such highwalled, asbestos-covered, godown-like building electrically equipped with high voltage intensity which goes by the name of a film-studio to-day.

Film-making was not unknown then and films were even then produced in studios, but not like the ones which all of us see to-day. There were only two or three Studios with wooden platforms to hold adjustible screens for letting in and shutting off sunlight. This was laid in an open space in a garden house in the suburbs of Calcutta. A barrage of reflectors with pasted silver papers on a board served the purpose of highpowered incandescent lights. The studio at Behala, where we shot the 'Soul of a Slave', was then unique of its kind not only in Calcutta but anywhere in India. It evolved out of a model of "Ferndale" open air studio conceived by William Fox. It was composed of two walls each twenty feet high, cross at right angles, thus making four sections. Each wall contained several open arches about 14' x 18' and 12' x 15' with a turntable at the top of the junction of walls for holding mirror reflectors. These were used for giving strong back lights. There also were some rows

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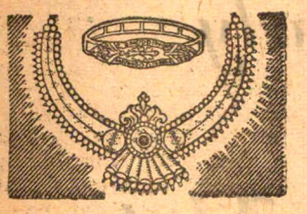

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DEV ANAND & VYJAYANTI in NAVKETAN'S "KHALI BOTAL"

Besides there were two towers, each three-storyed on east and west, accessible by inside ladder and fitted with mirror reflectors which caught direct sunlight and in turn transferred the rays to the turntable reflector at the top of the walls. Shooting was done in open air but not on direct sunlight. We worked in shade, this side in the morning and in the afternoon, when the sun went in the western horizon, we worked in the opposite chamber, in the plenty of the shade effected by the high wall.

All manual work was done by ourselves as we had no means to hire labour. My collaborator and friend, late Prafulla Ghosh, who later became one of the reputable directors in Bombay and Calcutta prepared costumes himself with a sewing machine. I did the make-up work of the artistes. We used yellow grease paint while others applied water-colour make-up by mixing up Zinc Oxide and Chrome Yellow. But grease paint was smooth to apply and gave out a soft velvety complexion. Orthochromatic films were used. Sometimes on the location we had to carry the camera, when the cameraman was unable to do so due to fatigue. There was no assistant cameraman or Camera Coolie; our Camera, however, was small and light being a 200 ft. capacity Moy Camera. There were of course more expensive cameras then with a capacity of 400 ft. such as Debries of L. J. and K. Types costing Rs. 2,000|- to Rs. 3,000|- each. The most expensive, however, was Bell and Howell Camera costing nearly Rs. 10,000|-. We could not dream of indulging in such luxuries then.

As time advanced the industry began to settle down and people gradually grew cinema-minded. Producing companies made profuse money but there were no improvements in studio construction or technical excellence by using better class of machines. Madans, who were the pioneers and leaders of the industry in this country resolved to erect an all-weather studio covered by armoured glass plates and equipped with mercury vapour lamps. The floor was laid in solid concrete; iron structures were erected but it remained uncovered for want of re-inforced armoured plate glasses, which had to be imported from foreign countries, as they were not available in Calcutta markets.

A revolving stage with complete outfit, intended for "The Bengali Theatrical Co." then housed at Cornwallis Cinema, which was then ordered from England, came to Calcutta but no Theatrical Co. was working then at Cornwallis Cinema after the measurements of which it was ordered. Finding no other place for it—it was fitted there. Some lights also came from 'Efa's at Germany. They were also sent up to the blank stage of the Cornwallis theatre. Now how to use them? A bright idea came to Mr. Framji Madan, who at once ordered to use the Cornwallis Stage as a film studio in day time. I was then attached to the Madan's Film Co. and we started the production of "Misser Rani", an adaptation from Iraner Rani which was a high hit then at the Star Theatre. I appeared in my original stage role. We used to shoot scenes from 8 in the morning to 4 in the evening on weekdays, except on Saturdays, Sunday, and Public Holidays, when Cinema shows started at 3-0 P.M.

The camera stood on a high platform on the aisle of the auditorium just in front of the stage. When any variation of shot angle was required, the workmen moved the revolving stage to bring the scene to its desired angle. Closeups were mainly taken by the change of lens. Very seldom was the camera taken over on the stage. Thus we finished the production of 'Misser Rani' but the experiment did not prove successful and so it was abandoned. Later on these lights were stored in the Tiretta Bazar Godowns of the Madans and the unfortunate revolving stage was shifted to the Crown Cinema which was then building up. It was a well-equipped revolving stage, big, smooth-running and noiseless, but it served no purpose. What happened to it ultimately no body knows; this was the fate of the first Revolving stage in India imported from abroad. It died unheard and unsung.

For another few years, the silent film went on developing and was on the point of blooming, when it was shattered by the new tornado of talkies. Then came 'Alam-ara', the first Indian talkie from Bombay. But by that time Calcutta also introduced the talkie making machines. Machinery, and complete sets with technicians were imported by Madans from U.S.A. and Europe. Everything was there except a Sound Studio. We used to take short pieces of selected scenes from popular stage plays—as no ready made script was available. Nor did any one know the technique of making one. So it was safe to select a good scene from one of the popular stage plays and have them acted by the well known stage stars before the camera for four minutes or near about that, because although the equipment came there was no arrangement for bigger laboratory, studio or editing rooms which were then only being built up. Silent camera magazines used to hold 400 ft. films while the talkies used 1000 ft. roll; the laboratory equipment were all designed to suit silent films including the developing Tank and Rack, which was to hold only 400 ft; so this required the shortening of the acted pieces. We did not feel the want of a studio, because we had to go out for location somewhere in the Tollygunge and Russa Maidan, which were then a vast field of shrubs and trees and shallow ponds and used to shoot our scenes there. When some interior scenes were required the stage carpenter fixed it up on the concrete floor left uncovered for want of armoured glass panes, the set being shifted from Corinthian Theatre to Tollygunge by Madan's motor lorries. They also got a bus for carrying artistes and these were fitted with mirrors and short shelves for make-up. Thus the shooting unit could go anywhere and shoot their scenes without making any elaborate pre-arrangement. This marked the beginning of the Talkie Era in Calcutta.

Within two decades the talkie reached its zenith and Bengal soon rose to a position of acclaimed eminence with the sober tone of the themes of her films and the simple and human execution of the same. Its films are acclaimed to-day in the foreign film festivals. This does not, however signify that we have achieved perfection in our technique. Calcutta was once the greatest rival of Bombay and produced not only Bengali, Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi films but innumerable Tamil and Telegu ones, with occasional Assamese and Oriya pictures. Unfortunately she is now dealing with Bengali films only and keeping herself abreast of the times by the sheer merit of her films and strong story value. She is, however, technically far behind others. Why? During the boom period of the Second World War the Studio owners stopped their own production and hired out their studios for more certain and lucrative profits to the independent film producers who grew like mushroom in large numbers. These studios worked in both day and night shifts. Additional floor spaces were improvised, and all the reserved or stand-by equipment worked continuously. Money poured into their pockets no doubt, but the machines soon wore out. Some of them were replaced, and others were assembled locally from old materials, as no new thing could be obtained then. Orders were placed for other things not available in the local market, but they also arrived long after the war was over. Money which once poured in tor-

(Continued On Page 230)

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CHUNIBALA DEVI, the nonagenarian Bengali artiste who so completely identified herself with the role of Indir Thakrun in the matchless Bengali film 'Pather Panchali' which has already achieved world fame and won President's Gold Medal the other day. She never acted the role but was its living replica.

That will never fail!

This article, from the pen of the well-known film critic, is an emotionally engrossing introspection into the rise and fall of what is to most of us India's finest film-making institution.

By N. K. G.

WHEN a great institution has nearly ceased to exist remembrance of its greatness sometimes fills the mind with regret. Speaking in concrete terms, there is no end of the regret which showgoers of this generation and the last one express when the name of New Theatres is mentioned. There is a touch of pathos in the way they go into involuntary soliloquies over its fabulous eminence and prestige of even a few years back. The extreme ones among them would even go the length of dogmatizing that Bengali, why Indian pictures were synonymous with New Theatres' productions. This may raise an angry frown on the brows of people who would challenge this "partisan" spirit and would cite the examples of Sonar Sansar, Seeta (Hindi), Manmoyee Girls' School, Rikta and a few more films which did not come out of the N. T. studios. But ever making allowance for the slight exaggeration in their statement there can be no doubt that it was New Theatres that put Bengal on the film map of India and then did the most to consolidate the prestige of Indian movies. That does not mean that the other notable important — the second most important — film centre in this country.

When one remembers that such a scintillating organization has ceased to make films which one day entertained thousands the regret becomes acute despite all overt and covert indications that that great unit was not run on infallible lines whosoever might be responsible for it. Critics do not refrain from saying today that the top-heavy nature of its set-up could not have been financially sound and it is a wonder, they aver, that the men at the top never realized it. Talks about its resuscitation are not entirely given up by a section of people as idle fancy-weaving. There is also quite another section who think that only some sort of a miracle can make it come back to life in its wonted splendour and efficiency.

OLD FAVOURITES

Apart from 'Devdas' which has run for years and years, I am told that old N. T. hits like Chandidas, Vidyapati, Bhagya Chakra, Didi, Mukti, Sathi, Meera Bai and Jeeban Maran can still sell wonderfully well in and out of Calcutta. A few weeks back Sathi did good business on release in Calcutta while Jiban Maran has not lagged behind. The pity is that much as people of the current generation like to see these old favourites paucity or rarity of runworthy prints does not allow the desire to be fulfilled. So that a time may come, sooner rather than later, when the new generation of our countrymen may find it impossible to see a single film of the great institution that

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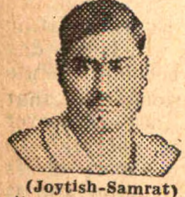

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I serve My Art

Kanan Devi, the 'First Lady of the Indian Screen', gives you in this article, written in a mood of retrospection, an intimate glimpse of the things she has seen and felt in her colourful screen career, synchronising with the growth and development of the Bengali screen.

By KANAN DEVI

THE Silver Jubilee of the Indian and the Bengali Talkie is an event of events that cannot fail to bring intense feelings of pride and joy to every one born to it and bred by it. Whoever has lived down all the thrills and anxieties that the quarter-century of its uncertain, and yet by no means insignificant existence offered may pardonably have on such a day a touch of nostalgia. After all, twenty five years is no small stretch of period in a lifetime, whether on the individual or the collective plane! Its memory must be teeming with strangely sweet and sad thoughts ranging over a long space.

As an humble devotee at the altar of an art that has found its legs and voice within the matter of this eventful period, bringing joy to millions of homes, for both the rich and the poor, for yesterday's adolescents and today's grown-ups, I may say that I also have loved and worshipped the films which have been for me the breath of my life. Today, almost at the fag-end of my career, I cannot help casting a lingering look behind. Glad and sad tears moisten my eyes dimmed by all the remembrances of its chequered fortunes that come rushing on the mind. It is indeed difficult to put into words the mingled emotions with which I find myself seized. But the feeling that rises uppermost in my mind today is one of utter exaltation to be able to know and feel I have loved all through my life to serve my art. With all my consciousness of personal failings and limitations, it cannot be denied that the industry has reared itself up through these twenty-five significant years on the blood and sweat, the tears and smiles of everyone who toiled to build up its edifice. And if anyone would care to share the feelings of one such humble worker in the temple of film art, here they are.

As I look back over the years, I can almost see myself restored to my girlhood, bubbling with its guileless pains and pleasures. Almost a tiny child in knicker-bockers, I broke into films which, just on its starting path at that time was hardly a better toddler than myself.

LIFE'S FIRST THRILL

I have but vague recollections of the exact reaction the small and obscure girl of hardly nine summers had on the day when she was told she was

chosen to play in a film. But it brought her the first real thrill of her life, bringing a queer feeling of self-consciousness and importance. And so, at an age when other girls frisk about like fluttery butterflies, I broke into the movies in the role of Radha in 'Jaideb'. It was those golden days of the silent screen, and after luck favoured me with an opening which many would die for, I had my interest sharpening with each and every role I was then called upon to interpret.

Music, if I may say so without being guilty of self-conceit, was in my blood. They also told me that I had a "face" that went well with the screen. As time wore on, I got used to the new life. I began to like this business of acting and take greater and greater interest, learning to express my emotions and sentiments through the medium of pantomime. I was an eager and willing pupil and my directors taught me all that I needed to feel and express those emotions correctly with liveliness. I am all too grateful to them.

Soon enough did the talkies come and with it still greater scope for me to act, speak and sing with a finer measure of life-like reality. It worked up my imagination grippingly. I experienced a far bigger thrill convulsing me when I discovered my "voice" not belying my own and other people's hopes. This gave me a more intense desire to study the art and to serve it better.

Things gradually settled down to the new order of the talking age. More and more studios came into existence turning out quite a number of pictures, in tune with the new requirements of the medium. Inspite of all the doubt and confusion that marked the early stage of the talkie, its experimental stage was soon over and people took the new order for granted. The notion that the talkie was but a photographed version of a conversationally rich stage-play or a musical drama soon passed. Producers and directors realised that a new technique had now to be evolved in which action and speech in a filmplay must be harmoniously blended. So that while characters would sing or talk or do anything in sound the scope for everything that he or she could do for the eye in the true style of pictorial motion must be artistically absorbed in the treatment. In short sight and sound were now wedded to each other. Of course the scope for and need of good voice with depth and range now became intensified and acquired paramount importance in an artiste's career. Those with voices that were croaking or thin but had earlier made a name for their 'silent' acting had to say good bye to talkies.

ACCLAIMED A STAR

As I said my own voice stood me wonderfully. I was thrilled to discover one fine morning that I had been acclaimed a 'star' by the public. It yesterday, I now began to feel what it was exactly like to be a 'film' star, perched on a dizzy height of isolated glory. I had now mixed feelings of intense joy and fear. What if I could not make the permanent grade and stay put in my glorious popularity ?

Ambition drove me almost crazy and I was resolved to maintain my stellar glory. A new determination came into me. Time began to shape me anew into the glorious thrill of womanhood. My worked-up feelings reached the deeper depths of my soul. That sense of Divine Dissatisfaction began to awaken in me. I was dazed....utterly dazed !

As an interpreter of filmart, I now began to feel my position, my hold on the public mind as also my limitations. I now realised that a film artiste, however great and placed in whatever role, is out and out a creation of the film director. It is he who creates the artiste afresh on his own anvil every single time. In the roles we live it is they who make us live. They make capital use of our individual charm, our personality, our talents. We dwell in the dream-land they conjure up for us. They present us in terms of moving shadows. When that presentation of ourselves is accurate, you can almost feel our pulse, our soul. It is exactly here where the specialised technique of the movie-acting materially stands out from that of the legitimate stage.

However, faith and sincerity with an unswerving sense of "must" can move the mountain for a screen artiste. Otherwise, the stories of today's universally acclaimed filmstars being moulded out of indifferent starters of yesterday would not have been true.

Yes, sincere work and unflinching devotion to work are the necessary watch-word of my life. An artiste in order to serve film art truly and well must serve the director. How far a star is to succeed and prosper is largely conditional upon the director succeeding with the star. Beyond that an artiste cannot know, should not know. And a true artiste can never have anything like the supreme satisfaction of achieving perfection. He or she must continually strive to be born anew within his or her artistic frame of mind. Or else, he or she ceases to be an artiste.

Has an artiste a separate entity as a man or a woman ? I cannot say. I am a woman and a mother too. I have my happy home, my sweet hopes and my intimate desires around that. In building that home I spend much of my daily energy. But even then, standing in the cool of my evening of artiste's life. I feel that once an artiste, one is always an artiste. You cannot escape that glorious feeling. An artiste can never have a decisive urge to quit unless he or she needs must do so for extraneous reasons. The artiste only changes his or her shade of role, passing from the mere romantic to other depths of characterization. It is more or less in the nature of a self evolution. But an artiste always loves to serve the art. To quit is beyond his or her To die

LIGHT THAT WILL NEVER FAIL

(Continued From Page 225)

not only taught us the meaning of motion pictures but gave Bengal a position of gratefully acknowledged supremacy in the eyes of the rest of India.

The history of the seedling which, planted more than twenty-five years ago, later grew into the mighty tree of New Theatres would read like a romance unto the Bengalees. It would scarcely be combated by anybody who calls himself a student of the history of the growth and

From behind this weird make-up of a turbaned and bearded face aglow with a broad smile, can you recognise Bengal's celebrated character-actor CHHOBI BISWAS? He is appropriately "done-up" here for the role of 'Kabuliwallah' in the film version of Tagore's famous piece of the name.

development of the Indian cinema industry that Bengal played a vital part in the matter of that history being written. And most certainly again, New Theatres Ltd, dead or alive, shall have its name emblazoned in the heart and affections of every true Indian, their achievements betokening the finest of qualities radiated by the representative character of the Indian film. With an impress of rare distinction and taste, its films gave the Indian screen an imposing array of artistes and technicians who, inspired by the glowing energy and refined outlook of the illustrious founder of the concern, Sri B. N. Sircar, shed a delicate lustre of cultural originality and creative imagination on the whole course of Indian films. These men revolutionised the entire conception of film-making to create a sheer artistic sensation. Out of their travails was born a new hunger for better films in the minds of India's teeming populace,—films that never meant to cheaply imitate the Western productions that had at the time taken deep roots in the Indian soil or to exploit merely the angle of novelty inherent in the imported art medium.

BEACON-LIGHT TO OTHERS

In tracing the history of the origin of this premier Indian film institution, one is thrilled to find that it was born out of the keen impatience and the dynamic ambition of a handful of young men to experiment on the glorious possibilities of a new and scientifically controlled art that had started to exercise its great appeal through light and sound to captivate the senses of people around the world. The raw talents that New Theatres could initially comb up to form an intrepid and idealistic band of technicians were seething with energy to do away with all orthodox notions and give something of a new art yet in its early flush, — something of which the people of India would justly be proud, something that would ennoble and refresh their faculty of joy. The political awakening that was convulsing the untamed spirits of the new generation found a new scope for expression in this broadened field of artistic activity, which apart from its art, would bring new avenues of economic emancipation for the Indian masses. Producers throughout India soon caught on this new urge, and to them New Theatres served as a beacon-light to guide their faltering steps.

Out of stray and shapeless conversations as well as fruitless moves from time to time amongst a close circle of young friends or associates who hailed from some of the most enlightened families of Calcutta and had come trained in various branches of technical pursuit from Europe, a common bond of desire to furrow the untrammelled soil of film art was born soon. These men, not much heard of or sung that day, formed the lever which brought into being a concern named International Film Craft, a concern that was destined later to take on or develop into the name of New Theatres so as to bring a world of aesthetic joy and modern dramatic taste to the hearts of Indians. The result was little short of miraculous.

SILENT FILM — 'CHORE KANTA'

The very first fruit of the effort of this band of workers in a new pasture was 'Chore Kanta', a silent film version of the late Charu Banerjee's widely read but simple tale. Sri P. N. Roy, cousin of Himansu Roy, and an engineer friend of Sri B. N. Sircar, largely assisted this enterprise with his ripe experience gathered during his European study tour and in course of his association with a semi-foreign film producing concern. The production drew high plaudits from all corners. Their second animated output was Chashar Meye (Farmer's Daughter), film of a story by Premankur Attorthey and directed by himself. To Attorthey also goes the credit of directing 'Chore Kanta', the first truly worthwhile Bengali production from a Bengali producer, made in association with a team of Bengali workers and technicians and yet without a tinge of provincialism. Almost coincident with this second event came the fostering of a bigger scheme on a much wider scale which when executed into reality soon enough saw the birth of a new private limited company under the appelletion of New Theatres. Thus the planting of casual efforts grew into the large tree that one day overspread its branches and bore plentiful fruits. Sturdy idealism and incessant film-study on part of those who worked at its root made this possible.

It would be an act of unkind slight to be loth to recognise the fine individual efforts and artistic inspiration of a number of loyal associates and friends of Sri B. N. Sircar without whom New Theatres might never have been born as well. These are, apart from Sri P. N. Roy & Sri Attorthey, — Amar Mullick, I. A. Hafesji, Nitin Bose, R. C. Boral, Hem Chunder, Subodh Ganguly, Subodh Mitra and a few more.

DREAMS TAKE SHAPE

From the very start, it was the cherished dream of Sri Sircar and his unfailing band of workers to make New Theatres the shining light among Indian films and film makers. As the first requisite for see-

ing their dream come true was built a spacious studio in Tollygunje with all the modern technical apparatus it could be possibly equipped with in those distant days. It was made possible only with the help and advice of the best of available experts about the design and construction of the

The little 'Durga' & 'Apu' of Bibhuti Bhusan's famous pastoral saga, 'Pather Panchali', stepped down from the locks of mental image into life's reality in the persons of Srimati Uma Das Gupta and Sriman Subir Banerjee in Satyajit Roy's classic rendering of the same.

studio that later proved to be the pride of India.

Without going into a detailed analysis of all the varied technical achievements of New Theatres, it would bear mentioning that their sturdy band of film dreamers gave Indian screen a number of important technical innovations which, apart from their lofty bearing on the whole course of Indian productions, greatly helped the surprising efficiency, realism and finesse investing their products. New Theatres' architects, composed of men like Nitin Bose and Devaki Bose, Mukul Bose and R. C. Boral, introduced in 'Chandidas' the idea of a ringing musical background to our films. They were the first again to give us the system of 'playback' in Bhagya Chakra. Back-projection was also employed for the first time here. Thrills of a new tingling experience for the human heart and soul were illustrated in quick succession in films like Chandidas, Devdas, Puran Bhagat, Meera Bai, Mukti, Didi, Adhikar, Parichay, Sathi, Baradidi, Doctor, Protisruti, Vidyapati (they seem to be a legion!). These films signalled the ushering in of motion picture mobility of the new era for Indian films on a totally new plane.

These films have bred in us today a new taste and fine new artistic standards with which to judge films astutely. They have given us directors like P. C. Barua (hallowed be his name!), Devaki Bose, Nitin Bose and Hem Chunder artistes of undimmed light and leading like Saigal, Barua, Umashoshi, Durgadas, Kanan, Prithviraj, Kamlesh Kumari & Durga Khote. They have brought us musical masters like R. C. Boral & Pankaj Mullick, technical wizards like Nitin Bose, Mukul Bose, Bimal Roy, Souren Sen, Subodh Mitra and a scenario writer like Benoy Chatterjee. To recount in a single breath all the varied achievements of such an institution, from the fount of which every Indian film-maker worth his name has drunk deep, would be a near-impossibility.

Is New Theatres no longer a name to conjure with ? Has the great tree of plenty withered away ? Is it more dead than alive ? I don't know. But for aught I know New Theatres will live on, if not anywhere else, at least in the memory of all Indians, let alone Bengalis, as something next to their heart. It will be kept warm in their bosom.

EARLY FILM MAKING IN CALCUTTA

(Continued From Page 223)

rents now became scarce and thinned away. So some of the equipment ordered for were taken delivery of while others were left in the lurch. Thus some Microphones came but not their 'booms' and so there remained the same old ones which had served for 20 years but were now rusty and noisy. New Lantern came but not their high-powered incandescent bulb. Even some Cameras came but their Dollies and Trolies were so pathetically worn out that they did not work electrically any more. Unless the whole machinery of our studios are changed lock stock and barrel it would be no wonder if the production business soon suffers tremendously. Those who are really concerned about the welfare of the trade, as far as it relates to West Bengal, must think deeply about the gloomy aspect of the picture. If one or two good pictures are occasionally produced here with a depiction of typical Bengali life in the midst of natural surroundings such as a thatched cottage in the midst of a bamboo grove in primeval sylvan situations or the quivering ripples of a placid lily pond perturbed by drizzles or a Bengali brunette clad in a graceful sari taking her timid steps to the altar of her domestic deity at dawn and with such other lyric effects it cannot be rightly said that the art of production is yet anything like technically perfect here. Even strong story elements will not be able to maintain our high tradition for all time to come. It must end some day. We must think of that fateful hour from now on and prepare for warding it off.

In order to make our films technically perfect our studios must be re-equipped and recast without delay. Bengali films are now being produced by Bombay with the help and assistance of Bengali artistes using well-adapted Bengali stories. The story and technical elements being almost flawless in these Bombay-produced pictures, imperfect Bengali productions cannot match with them. Such pictures are sure to win laurels in West Bengal and would sweep the market sooner unless we call a halt to them. All financial assistance should, therefore, be made to our studios to remodel them anew.

Are our financiers in a position to do it? If they do not come forward with their calculated fore-sight in the immediate future, the history of the Calcutta film studios will soon be a history of the past which will be read and remembered only by scholars of historical research in the study of film-making only !

WHITHER INDIAN STAGE?

By Prof. O. C. GANGOLY

OUR Indian stage cannot recover its soul — its own *metier* — only with the help of our Indian Irvings and Ellen Terries. It will grow not only by the contributions of our Indian Pavlova and Isadora Duncan, but by the dynamic co-operation of our Indian Gordon Craig, our Indian ax Reinhardt. The talented stage-crafts-man d the architect have not yet appeared in the dern Indian stage. Though sporadic attempts ve been made by pioneers, like Gogonendra Nath gore and Dr. Nanda Lal Bose, our Indian stage till wallowing in the pernicious mires of cheap ropean realism of the Victorian Era.

In fact, our modern Indian stage, apart from art of acting and character-presentation, is a nd-hand derivative of the European theatre h a Russian introduced into Calcutta in the century. Our Indian imitation of the European began by thoroughly ignoring the glorious ory of the Indian stage which at one time ins- the whole history of the Theatre-art in Asia.

IATIC THEATRE AND INDIA

As Professor Pischel had pointed out long ago t "India is the Mother of Asiatic Theatre". Dr. mmarswamy had also pointed this out in 1921, en he stated that remnants of the traditions of ian theatre are still surviving in Java—in three rms of the 'Puppet-Play', the 'Shadow-Play', and e regular 'Stage-Play'. All these forms went from dia and had a brilliant career not only in Java, am, and Cambodia but they also inspired the hinese drama, and the No-Plays of Japan. A very degenerate representative and the fragmentary principles of Indian Drama survive in a crude form in our Indian Yatra-Plays, and in Rama-Lilas, which latter, our darling Uday Shankar has made some recent attempts to revive. I have seen in several plays on the modern Chinese stage numerous elements which were originally derived from India. Although there are evidences in the text of the Bharata-Natya-Sastra, of some details of the Indian Stage, Scenerio, *Decor*, and Scenic properties and of Stage-architecture, the Indian drama developed its atmosphere and created its environment without he aid of elaborate scenic properties,—just like the arly Greek dramas played on the open air stage. Undoubtedly, there were Drop-scenes (*yavanika*) curtains, wall-hangings and movable back-ground-cloths (*patas*), generally used in suggestive and symbolical technique and formula. In the text of Bharata, there are rules for planning three kinds of stages (*mancas*) and auditoriums with full details and measurements, prescriptions for wall-hangings, drop-curtains, green-rooms, wings, prosceniums, and a peculiar device of a two-storied "prop" called *matta-varuni*, so-called probably because a *'mad elephant'* was depicted on this old conventional prop for the stage. We cite here a new design for a *matta-varuni*, substituting a *Yaksini* in place of a mad elephant.

But as a rule, elaborate stage-architecture has been avoided in the past,—in the presentation of Indian dramas.

TAGORE'S REALISTIC AIDS

And it was our great poet and dramatist Rabindranath Tagore who first started to purge the Indian stage of the servile imitations of the cumbrous machinery of European stage-craft. He proved in the productions of many of his plays that it was possible to render the subtleties of Indian dramatic representations and to interpret *natya-rasas*—without any adventitious aids (*"aharya-vastu"*, of Bharata Muni). In fact Tagore claimed that elaborate scenic properties borrowed from the European stage had killed the expressions and the delicate psychological effects of the Indian drama. Tagore has occasionally utilised realistic aids and graphic scenic effects by setting up suggestions rather than artificial representations of houses, or village-huts, as in his famous presentation of the *King of the Dark Chamber*, first produced at Shantiniketan, many years before the birth of the Viswa-Bharati and in his magnificent presentation of the *Post Office* (Dak-Ghar) at the hall of the Bichitra at which Mrs. Annie Besant was present and which presentation, she declared "surpassed anything she had seen in Russia". In this presentation, the Poet had the valuable collaboration of Gogonendra Nath Tagore and of Dr. Nanda Lal Bose. By suggestive and symbolical use of minimum properties—a lamp, a pillar, or a cold colour or neutral back-cloth, Tagore had produced dynamic atmosphere to fully express dynamic actions and to support highly emotional acting. This method of calling up in imagination of the audience all the fundamental *rasas* of any drama had survived only a few years ago in our Bengali Yatra-Plays — where our good old sage Narada would by a few verbal descriptions, easily call up the graphic picture of Vrindavana with all its lyrical and picturesque details—without any manner of visual aids.

SISIR BHADURI'S TECHNIQUE

Acharya Sisir Kumar Bhaduri, the Doyen of the Indian stage had also occasionally, given magnificent presentation of Indian dramas without the aid of elaborate scenarioes and by the suggestive aids of appropriate back-cloths, *Singhasana*, or a lamp. I can still recall the magnificent atmosphere that he created with the use of an old Nepalese brass-lamp which I had the privilege of lending him as the only piece of stage-property for his first presentation of

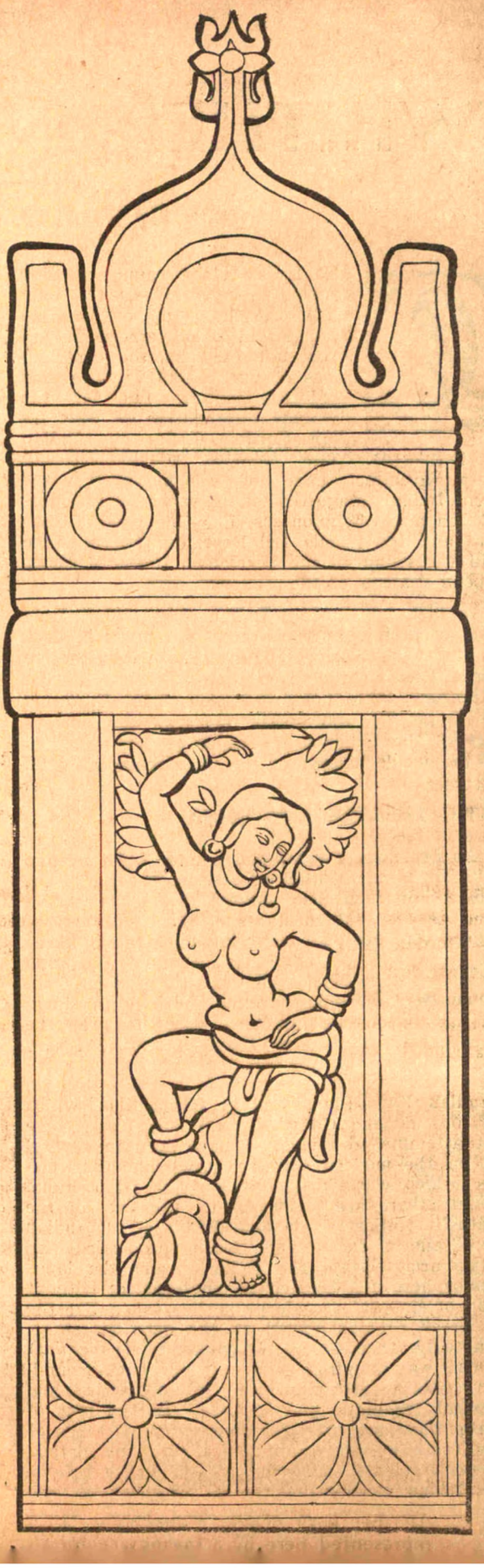
Sita, at the Eden Gardens many years ago. That suggestive acting and gestures can compensate for lack of stage properties and scenes. They are also the basic principles of Chinese Drama. Thus, in a play called the *Runaway Nun*, which requires, mountains, cloisters and images—all these are given by suggestive gestures. "On the stage there are no mountains, no young men, no cloister, no images. All are conjured up before our eyes by the dancing of the nun ..... The properties used in the Chinese drama are as simple as the stage is bare ..... A chair, besides its proper self, can be the door of a jail, or a cave dwelling. An embroidered curtain hung between sticks behind the two chairs may represent a canopy or a bed. Means of transport are always shown symbolically. The man holding a tasselled whip mounts and dismounts—as if these were a real horse".

RECOVERY FROM JAVA STAGE

Since his visit to Java, Poet Tagore had introduced many details of costumes, jewelleries and head-gears from the Javanese stage in presenting his damas. This was, in fact, a recovery of our own stage-craft and costume-designs which we had some centuries ago given to the Javanese stage. Some of the unique forms and original designs of the costumes and head-dresses that still survive in Java and Cambodia,—originally derived from India, were illustrated in the lecture delivered by this writer at the Rama Krishna Institute on the 'History of the Indian Stage', last year. We cite here two photographs of Javanese actors, presenting heroes from the Mahabharata. It is the use of these costumes and head-dresses rather than the use of elaborate scenery and props that helped our ancient producers of plays—to call up the atmosphere—and distinctive emotive values of a drama, emphasized by the depictions of the distinctive personalities and character of the heroes and heroines, which the costumes easily helped to visualize before the beholders. Acting on similar principles, inherent in the old traditions of Bharata-Natya-Sastra, Rukmini Devi, a learned and an accomplished interpreter of Indian dramatic art, gave a few years ago, at the Kala-Kshetra, Madras, a magnificent presentation of Kalidasa's *Kumara-Sambhava*, on a mud-stage without any other properties but two or three appropriate wall-hangings. Her music, dances and *abhinayas* were superb and called up the atmosphere of the great epic with remarkable graphic effect. She demonstrated that it was possible to present all varieties of dramatic effects and *rasas* by banishing the load of elaborate, and, mostly unrecessary, stage-properties, borrowed from Europe.

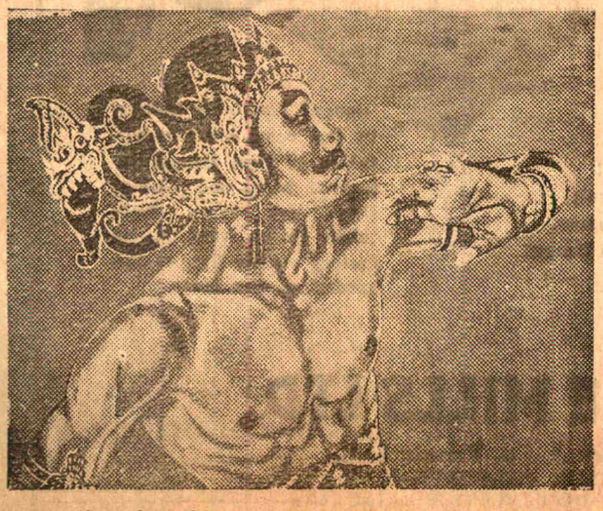
REFORM OF CRAIG & REINHARDT

In fact the European stage during the beginning of the 20th century has developed new



A Javanese actor representing a hero of the Mahabharata.

properties and machinery and devising simple and symbolic means of producing appropriate effect to express the diverse feelings and varied actions of a drama. The pioneer of this new movement in stage-production was Edward Gordon Craig, who produced several plays and operas between the year 1900 and 1903. His first success was the staging of *Dido and Aeneas*. Of this production, W. B. Yeats wrote —"Gordon Craig's purple back cloth made Dido and Aeneas seem wandering on the edge of eternity." It must have been about 1900 when the first stage scenes that he created for his mother, Ellen Terry, astounded London by their almost fanatical simplification and their turning away from realism. F Ibsen's 'The Vikings', Craig had used only curtai as background, and only such properties as we indispensable to the action; and in the church sce in *Much Ado About Nothing*, except for the curtain there was only one strong ray of sunlight, falling the stage in a thousand colours through an invisib stained-glass window.



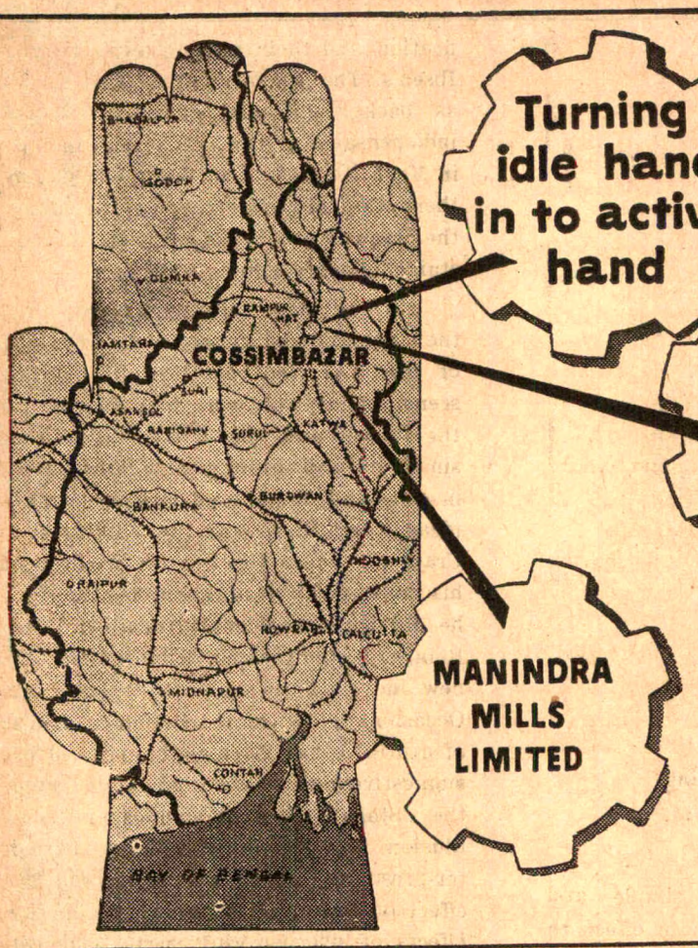
Another hero of the Mahabharata is represented here by a Javanese actor.

These new reforms in stage-productions, ar the elimination of the ostentatious and vulgar realis of the Victorian practices, in devising elabora scenery and props were welcomed by the critics an the Press, and, the *Times* wrote that the scen simplicity and severity were impressive, "harmoniou in colouring, broad and massive in design". Craig ideas were carried to the Continental Stage, an Craig was invited to go to Germany and illustrat his methods at the Lessing Theatre in Berlin, whic he did with considerable success. Thereafter Ma Reinhardt, the famous German actor, carried out thi new movement in other theatres in the Continen Occasionally, Craig and Reinhardt had used, in plac of neutral colour back-cloths, painted backgrounds i suggestive and impressionistic technique, but neve the 'Stagey' realism, which never created an illusion, but only smothered and buried the charac ter-presentations of the actors and neutralized th effect of fine and emotional acting by distractin effects of overpowering scenic elaborations.

NEED OF MASTER PRODUCERS

This we still find, in almost all the pro ductions of our dramas, on our Indian Stage still tottering under the dead weight of Vic torian ostentations, ignoring the reforms in troduced by Craig and Reinhardt. The evi effects are not so much visible in our social drama where elaborate scenery is not required, and th necessary suggestions for the *locale* and atmospher can be given by a few articles of furniture or door-frame. But even in our current productions o our social dramas, there is still a tendency to resor to expensive scenic realism, as in several successfu plays produced by *Bahu-Rupee*, under the abl direction of the late lamented Monoranjan Bhatta charjee, who introduced numerous new techniques i presenting and illustrating subtle emotional situa tions with superb acting, which did not require artificial aids of realistic scenery.

In spite of the tremendous progress made in the productions of our current dramas, chiefly contri buted by our talented actors and actresses, we are still awaiting our master producers and stage craftsmen who will give us brilliant visual presentations to interpret and intensify the diverse expressions of dramatic feeling, richly embroidered by appropriate music contributed by our master-musicians. For Drama is an essentially co-operative art in which the actor, the musician and the visual artist have each to make their own individual contributions—in a harmonious and joint co-partnership. This fundamental principle was long ago hinted at by Bharata-Muni—when he said, *"There is no branch of knowledge, no branch of Art —the appropriate application of which could ever be shut out in producing a drama."*



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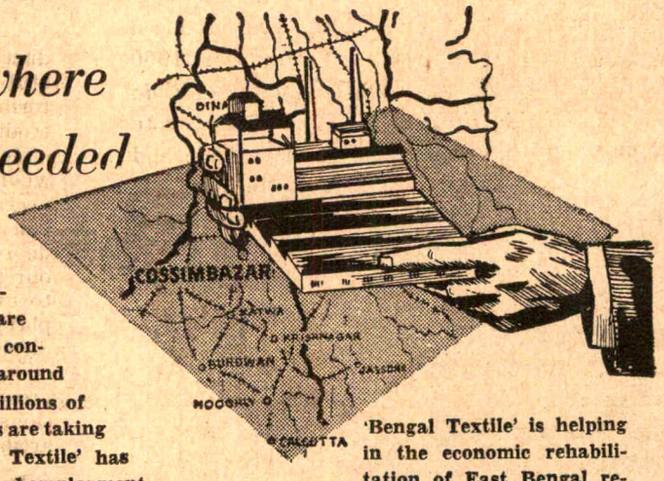

The plight of rural West Bengal is sad. Land can hardly sustain its teeming millions. Whatever industries are there in West Bengal, are concentrated in a small area around Calcutta. On top of it all, millions of hapless East Bengal refugees are taking shelter in the State. 'Bengal Textile' has risen to the occasion and created employment opportunities in the rural areas of West Bengal; it has established its factory at Cossimbazar, where there is a heavy concentration of East Bengal refugees.

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TANTRA CULT IN INDIA

By Dr. (Miss) ANIMA SEN GUPTA, M.A., Ph.D.

IT is a well-known fact that in India what we call Tantrism existed even in the Vedic period. The Atharva practice of sacrifices and chanting of Mantras for the performance of magic and miracles did occupy an important place in early Indian history and culture. It is, therefore, quite reasonable to hold that through a prolonged practice, all these magic-spell and charms eventually developed and amalgamated into what we call "Tantrism".

If we study ancient Indian history, we find two different uses of the word 'Tantra". In the wider sense, Tantra refers to any science, capable of spreading knowledge. This is the root meaning of the word and it has actually been used in this sense in the Mahabharata. Nyaya, Samkhya, Yoga etc are called Tantras in this sense. The word, however, has also a very limited and technical sense. When used technically, it refers to that branch of knowledge in which characters, qualities and actions of gods are described and Mantras are also uttered with the help of which and also with the help of symbolic figures (Tantra) gods are invoked, worshipped and meditated upon in a specially formulated esoteric manner by the initiated ones only. Thus, there is a sort of mysticism veiling and hiding the real treasure of Tantra-religion from the general mass of the people. Disciplines needed for Tantric Sadhana are difficult and cannot be practised by a man without proper initiation. A Tantric preceptor has got to make discrimination in the matter of choosing disciples.

PHILOSOPHY OF TANTRISM

Tantra-religion, usually grounded on "Advaita-philosophy", is a path specially schemed for the realisation of "one-ness" and unity amidst apparent diversity of the world.

The psychological make-up of the human mind is such that man finds it difficult to cling to a principle which is beyond thought and imagination and which can be approached through intellect only and not through love and emotion. But desire for happiness, for pleasures and well-being is very intense and deep-rooted in man. So he is always in search of some such path which will lead him to bliss and happiness and will at the same time be more impressive and more appealing to him. Thus, the religion of Tantra with its emotional aspect together with the Mantras and Yantras was able to catch the imagination of a large section of people, who were not prepared to follow the path of knowledge and pure intellect.

Utterance of Mantras used to have a special significance in Indian philosophy and religion. "Sabda" is spposed to be the creative force of the universe. It has its origin in the imaginative power of Brahman. Imagination is a function of mind and all functions of mind are performed through words, uttered or unuttered. Imagination without "Sabda" is, thus, absolutely meaningless. So the word is made of 'Sabda" and "Sabda" emanates directly from the highest principle. It is the creative energy, lying at the root of the world formation. So through "Nada", "Sabda" or Mantra, one is able to reach reality. Therefore, Mantra occupies a unique position in all forms of symbolic and image-worship in India. "Nyasa" Tantra is also based on this truth. By means of Nyasa, consciousness is generated and felt all over the body and the worshipper is able to realise that he is all consciousness—pure and self-illuminating.

SAKTA-TANTRA & DEVI-SUKTA

"Sakta Tantra", like all other tantras owes allegiance to "Advaita-philosophy" Since Brahman in its pure, transcendental form is immutable, undifferentiated and unchangeable, it admits the existence of Sakti or Creative Energy as the source of life and existence of the universe. Sakta-Tantra is based on the Devi-Sukta of Vak — the daughter of Ambhrin. The follower of Sakta-Tantra reaches his highest goal when he realises his oneness with the Devi — the inexhaustive source of the whole universe.

The first Sukta of Devi-Sukta describes this creative energy as the underlying force of the phenomenal world. All physical and psychical categories of the world are nothing but its different manifestations. This creative force is the support of the eleven *Rudras* which are nothing but the symbolic forms of five organs of sensation, five of action and mind. These sense-organs are called *Rudras* as they are respectively the recipients of sensations, doers of actions and experiencer of pleasures and pains. It is because of these sense-organs that a man receives impressions from the external world and acts accordingly, as a result of which feelings of pleasure and pains arise in his mind. This creative energy is described as the support of all wealth and power (Vasu), Dharma and Adharma, pleasures and pains (Indra and Agni). (All these are, however, represented by the names of the various gods). In short the whole of the world has come into being from the womb of the Great Energy. It is, therefore, called Mahamaya, Maha-avidhya etc. in the *Chandi* and it is also the most beloved object of worship in the religion of the Saktas.

MENTAL CONDITIONS

Sakta-Tantra recognises three different mental conditions to suit them. The three mental conditions are *Pasu bhava*: *Vir bhava*: and *Divya bhava*. When one lives wholly in ignorance and has no knowledge of ultimate reality, he is only a *Pasu* or *jiva* in the

p of *pasa* (snare). This is the lowest level and in s stage a man is advised to perform *Vedacara, isnavacara, Saivacara* and *Dakshinacara. Vira ava* is the next higher stage. In this stage, a man able to grasp (although vaguely) the principle "Advaita" and he is, therefore, in a position to ke an attempt to free himself from bondage d sufferings of life. Disciplines prescribed this stage are *Varnacara and Siddhan-cara.* The highest stage is called the stage *Divya bhava.* This is attained when a man able to merge himself completely in the *vaita*-principle which is the ultimate refuge of whole universe. Discipline prescribed for this ge is called *Kaulacara.* The follower of *Kaulacara* a person who has full realisation of the oneness the world. He is above all sorts of discrimination d distinction. He sees *Advaita* in all things and things in the *Advaita*-principle.

AULACARA & PANCA MAKARA

The word *Kaula* is derived from Kula which nds for Kundalini-sakti. Siva is called *Akula.* A ulacari is able to rouse up *Kula-sakti* by means *Yogavidhya* and is also able to unite *Kula* with ula thereby effecting unity in diversity, *Advaita Dvaita.* Practice of *Kaulacara* needs five things, h one of which has *makara* as its initial. These *Madya*: *Mamsa*: *Matsya*: *Mudra* and *Maithun.* e secret of these *Panca Makara* is not known to all. ese names are really symbolic, standing for certain iritual acquisitions and are not to be taken in ir literal senses. A *Kaulacari* is supposed to drink ne: but here "wine" stands for the nectar which ws from the lotus of the head when through ritual elevation, the Yogi is able to bring about blissful union between *Kula and Akula* or *Sakti* d *Siva. Punya* and *Papa* are two *Pasus* and as a *ulacari* is expected to kill both of them with his apon of knowledge he is called a meat-eater. *nya* and *Papa, Dharma* and *Adharma* belong to is worldly life. Man can realise oneness and unity ly when he transcends and goes beyond them. e two veins *Ida* and *Pingala* are called *Ganga* d *Yamuna.* The processes of breathing in and eathing out are known as *Matsya* (Fish). A *ulacari* needs to have full control over the ocesses of breathing.

He is therefore supposed to be an eater of fish. unning a bad company and seeking a good one is lled *Mudra-Sadhana* and a *Kaulacari* is expected be in a good company, suitable for the purpose of s esoteric practice. The intercourse or union tween the vein *Susumna* and vital force of the dy is called *Maithun.* This is the highest and the rest form of happiness attainable in life.

We find that the spiritual significance of *anca Makara* is of a high order As these spiritual

ciple here needs the help of a good teacher who will be able to explain and make clear to him the deep-rooted meaning of all *Alaras.* It is because of this esoteric practice and mystic nature of *Tantrism* that it is so widely misunderstood and misinterpreted. The ugly distortions of *Tantrism* in various ways are responsible for many evils that have crept into the blood-stream of our social life. *Panca Makara* is ordinarily interpreted in liberal sense and consequently Sakta-Tantra is supposed to provide a man with an unlimited scope for sex-indulgence and other forms of licentious life. A true *Kaulacari* is never a libertine. He has to practise strict moral discipline and observe rigorous moral rules for the realisation of spiritual freedom and elevation. It is stated in the *Meru-Tantra* that if a man wishes to be a follower of *Kula-Marga,* he must behave like a blind person so far as other's properties are concerned, must be a neuter in the presence of another's wife and must have self-control in all matters of sense-enjoyment. The need for sense-control and self-control is, thus, no less important here than in other forms of Indian religion.

INDIAN MUSIC

(Continued From Page 211)

we find the Ragas are sometimes heptatonic, sometimes hexatonic and sometimes pentatonic.

Again, a Raga is known by its dominant note which is called an *amsha* or a *vadi.* By the time of Bharata the Ragas (Jatiragas) were determined by more than one *amsha. Amsha, graha* and *nyasa* are the three determining characteristics of the *dasa-laksmana* of a Raga. The *graha* is the initial note whereas the *nyasa* the final. During Bharata's time *amsha* and *graha* were used as synonymous terms. But gradually they conveyed different meaning or significance by the time of Matanga (5th-7th century A. D.) as he differentiated them by saying: *"amsha vadyeva param, grahastu vadyadi-bhedabhinah"* etc. *Amsha* or *vadi* really determines the real form and nature of the Raga (*'vadanat iti vadi'*). It is recognized as the vitality of the Raga. A *vadi* note is always followed by a *samvadi* and *anuvadi* notes. The *samvadi* may be called as a concordant note because it helps to make the *vadi* more explicit. The *anuvadi* plays the role of a subordinate note. There is another note of a Raga called *vivadi* which is discordant to *vadi* and the Raga.

The seers of music in India never look upon a Raga as a mere skeleton of notes and seminotes, but they recognize them as great living force. They have made each Raga divine and look at them as a source of inspiration. They have surcharged the Ragas with different aesthetic sentiments and moods (*rasa and bhava*). Probably from the fifteenth-seventeenth century the inspired poets composed the *dhyanas* of the Ragas with colourful meters and beautiful words (*chhanda* and *sahitya*) and the intuitive artists began to draw their graceful pictures. The iconographical aspects of music then materialized. The ideal vision of music became real and vivid with its pragmatic value and spiritual significance which are the keynote to the songs, nay, to

The Widow

By NARENDRA NATH MITRA

THE newly white-washed walls were not only white but also vacant. Neither a photograph nor a calendar was there. The white bedsheet was hanging to the floor from a cot on one side and beside it a small table stood with one or two books and a flower-vase with some chrysanthemums on it. Amita was swinging her legs off the bed. Chinmohan stared at her once more. Her dress was just like the room's — simple and white. The moist hairs were dishevelled on her back. She looked like a couplet of *sloka* written by a white chalk on a black slate.

Chinmohan could have reached her hand from his own position and Amita would not oppose nor be astonished. Chinmohan thought, yet remained motionless. His heart was full of a tranquil sweetness whenever he sat before her, a silent and grave statue. No regret, no agitation stirred his mind. Such a feeling of beauty was new to Chinmohan. So long he had taken delight in sacrificing himself only in the dazzle of beauty. He had an acute self-feeling in that blaze. But such a beautiful tranquillity would have remained unknown to him if he had not come in touch of Amita.

Sometimes her saree had a thin hair-like black line along the edge. But today she was dressed all white. Her gravity looked deeper by this. Her grandeur was fully revealed, as it were, in such simplicity.

Remaining silent for a while Chinmohan whispered, "Sweta...." He had given her the name 'Mahasweta' for her dress and surroundings. Amita smiled softly. And to Chinmohan the colour of her smile seemed as white as that of a bunch of *Juin* flowers. It was faint, at the same time fine.

"Thank goodness, I'm no more Mahasweta today".

Chinmohan said, "Why not ? You have already wiped out the black line from your saree so that the name may be more appropriate."

Amita did not speak.

Chinmohan again said, "Well, I have no objection. I shall be waiting for the day when you will change this dress out of your own will. Yes, you'll have to change."

Amita lowered her eyes as they met with Chinmohan's. There was [illegible]

thing which made her whole heart shiver violently.

Amita had also known that the change of this dress was unavoidable. Day by day at every moment that crisis was approaching nearer and nearer. She would have to change, but not only dress. The main stream of life would flow on in a new channel. But what would that channel be ? How would that change be ? And here she felt that heart-shaking fear, the lingering doubt. Her husband had died five years ago and she had never been free from the feeling of a widow since then. She could not even dream of another form of life. But was she still attached with a single-minded devotion to that dead Amulya, for whose memory she should be grateful ? She had been observing the practices of a widow in her daily life. But she could not get rid of her own mind. Her mind had no harmony with her white dress. Many times she had shed midnight tears, yet could not clearly remember Amulya's face. Instead, Chinmohan had appeared in her vision. Amita was now undone, eagerly waiting for the end of this inner conflict and self-restraint. She was now too weak to be wounded, again and again, by those hidden thorns. She would give up all controls. Let the irresistible torrent of life drift her away wherever it liked.

Still what was the necessity of revealing herself so vividly before his eyes ? Rather there was credit and more joy in keeping herself aside, fully concealed, for ever. Chinmohan, then, would never reach her, though opening the petals of her mind day by day. Yes, Amita had thought so. But things had turned otherwise. All on a sudden, in an unconscious mood all the petals opened at a time and the secret corner of her mind was brought to light. Nothing was, now, any more secret before his eyes.

From the other side of the curtain Bhuban Babu threw his voice, "It's I, darling."

Amita could not speak at once. Chinmohan said, "Come in, please". Then as Bhuban Babu entered he took his seat on one edge of the cot leaving the chair and Amita shrank at once to a certain distance.

Bhuban Babu smiled in his mind looking at her daughter. A freshness could be noticed in her

five. Last year she had become a strict and stern headmistress after passing the B.T. examination. At home also Bhuban Babu was afraid of her strictness in regard to the daily routine. Such a strict lady looked wonderful to him with all her girl-like modesty. Bhuban Babu stared steadfastly for a minute. A fresh gracefulness filled her body. She seemed to have come to know the new meaning of life. Bhuban Babu blamed his own mind that was full of superstitions of old days. If he could have visualised this possibility only four years ago he would never have allowed her life to be spoilt in such useless austerity.

After a moment of silence he looked at Chinmohan and said, "We must be sure of one thing, Chinmohan. Both of you are mature. So you can come to a mutual understanding as to what is good and what is bad. I should have no mind to interfere with your affairs . . . . ."

"No, no that's not the thing", Chinmohan said interrupting him, "certainly you have many things to know as a guardian."

Bhuban Babu said smiling, "Not that, I want to understand something only as a well-wisher. It's nothing new. The thing is that I have not yet got the answer of my question which I put to you when you came to me with your proposal that day." Chinmohan said, "Oh yes, I have had an open discussion with all. My brother supports me fully. My mother has also given her consent at last. Maybe, it is not from her heart. But I hope Amita has strength enough to face this sort of opposition. Of course, no harm if she cannot. Marriage concerns little with family, now it is all personal."

Bhuban Babu again smiled faintly and said, "Maybe true, but the family and the society exist. The society may be small with a few relatives and friends. But it cannot be so easily denied. Chinmohan, it is not so easy to calculate what things have what amount of influence on life." A wearied and sad note was heard in his voice as he finished. Chinmohan knew something of his past life. Bhuban Babu had married his cousin. And only for this trifling unlawful act he and his wife had to live separate from his father's family for all time. That stern loneliness had not but affected their conjugal life.

Chinmohan sat silent, while Amita finding no cue said, "Well pa, let me bring tea for you." Bhuban Babu nodded in assent.

Amita had taken a week's time. She again wanted another week after that. But Chinmohan getting impatient said, "No, you will no more be allowed any time. If so, then all the weeks of our life will pass away one by one. I can't wait any more. Tomorrow is final."

Sometimes Amita took great delight in such impatience of his. Amita's own responsibility might have been still less if he was more impatient and demanding. Let Chinmohan open the knot of her doubt and hesitancy with his eager hands. Amita would not prevent him.

At last Registry marriage was settled. Yet for the satisfaction of Chinmohan's family the Hindu marriage ceremonials will also have to be observed in short.

Amita's mind pricked with shame. Again those ceremonials! Her heart could by no means respond to those performances.

After a moment of silence Amita said, "Can't those performances be avoided?"

"To me those are nothing but useless", Chinmohan said, "but our near and dear ones want those things. But those are really boring. Oh, a lot of marriage customs by the ladies and we to face them! still," Chinmohan smiled softly, "still you will feel not very awkward as you have experienced those things already. But, think, how shall I, an inexperienced man, feel falling in their power!"

Amita's face faded at once. Astonished, Chinmohan asked, "What's the matter?" "That's nothing," replied Amita with a faint smile.

But Chinmohan was clever enough to understand the matter. He had so long prevented himself as far as possible from being curious about her past life. He had rather tried to avoid it carefully. But if she felt shocked and helpless every time at the mere mention of it Chinmohan was not to tolerate. Amita was no more tender in her age and experience. Was it right of her to be still so sensitive?

"I want to clear up a thing more definitely today, Amita." Chinmohan's voice grew grave and exacting.

"What's it?"

"We have so long carefully avoided mentioning anything about your past life. But the result has turned no good, I think. Better it is to talk more freely. No use concealing the spot of pain and weakness. It's sure you have not still forgot Amulya Babu. It is only natural, and I am not jealous of or sorry for that. Only it pinches me that you always want to hide everything of him from me. Among other talks we can also talk about him. We may even talk of your past conjugal life in every detail."

Amita laughed rather strangely and said, "Your plan is as good as mechanical. Do you think that life can always be tied by a formula like that.?"

Chinmohan said, "Oftentimes it is good if it is tied. What fear from self-made ties that are like the ties of rhythm? Marriage is also a similar tie, they say."

In spite of all opposition in mind all were charmed for the time being. Amita had beauty and also a fine taste. Her face did not bear the stamp of age with which she was described before. She had no such learning that was likely (like a gun with a bayonet) to be with a keen-edged vanity. Her relation with Chinmohan was not enough to her, she was very eager to be intimate with all others of the family.

Still within a few hours again those hidden thorns of uneasiness began to prick her mind. As she approached to bow down, Mandakini (Chinmohan's mother) withdrew her feet, "That's enough, that's enough".

Amita had to shrink back awkwardly.

By that time Chinmohan's elder brother Monmohan was heard to give a lecture about widow-marriage before his friends in the parlour.

"You see Banku, I have given my consent to it after a good thinking and most willingly. Widow-marriage is hard to be in vogue in our society without such earnest attempts. The inertness of fear and superstition must forcibly be done away with in such a way."

Amita left the place in haste.

Again there arose difficulties at the lunch time. As the male members finished, Amita was asked to lunch with Sunanda, Chinmohan's sister, and Sarama, his sister-in-law. One grandma of theirs by some relation took the charge of waiting upon them. She could talk and labour hard in matters of marriage ceremonies. She had a fame for her witty tongue in the locality.

Curries both with fish and without fishes were served. But Amita was taking her meal only with the curries without fish. She was not touching any

fish-curry. That grandma noticed it and said, "Why the bride is taking not a single fish-curry ! I have had much labour in cooking all these and it's only for you, Sissy."

Embarrassed, Amita said, "Please excuse me today."

"How's it, a married lady must take fish every day."

"Please sister," Sunanda implored, "the preparation is nice."

"Take at least one curry," Sarama requested.

Most unwillingly Amita tasted a piece of fish. But then and there she vomited the mouthful of food out of a strange nausea.

Astonished, everybody gazed at her. Amita began to feel each moment unbearable in shame and uneasiness. The grandma kept staring in silent amazement for a moment. Then remembering something she began to smile in a suppressed manner,

"Oh, here's the matter, but we've heard that our grand-daughter-in-law had been intimate with Chinu a lot of days ago. Surely they knew of their coming marriage from that time. It would have been better for her to begin once more the practice of eating fish thence. Such difficulties, then, might not have arisen. Those prohibitions of *shastras* are, surely, not for all widows !"

Amita noticed that all the faces gleamed with a curious smile.

Sunanda said after lunch, "Grandma is always a lady of pinching words. Maybe she is incomparable in her wit and humour. But, the difficulty is, I can never stand her wits."

Amita gave a faint and silent smile. In her inner conflicts she could not even think of such suddenly-arising difficulties regarding outward manner and behaviour.

Sunanda asked sympathetically, "Still feeling the nausea, sister ? Please try with a betel. It may cure that."

Amita said, "But I do not take betel-leaf."

Sunanda laughed, "Will you not take even now ? I am also not habituated, but it tastes fine to me after a heavy meal in the parties. Wait, please, I am preparing one. You'll surely like that."

Only a girl of fourteen or fifteen, she would always try to sweep away other's difficulties in the flow of her own likings. Amita had come into contact with a lot of girls of similar type in the school. Yet she had remained always firm in her gravity.

Chinmohan was out of sight throughout the whole day. He was, as it were, trying to hide himself in the gathering elsewhere. He was not to be seen once. Amita enjoyed it in her own mind. How that smart Chinmohan of these days had become so bashful suddenly after the marriage !

In the evening Sarama and Sunanda brought various kinds of toilets in order to dress and paint Amita to their choice.

Embarrassed, Amita said, "What's the use of so many ?"

"Why not ?" Sunanda said. "Do you think that the same white dress as before ——"

"Hush", Sarama stopped her by a wink.

Amita submitted. Let them do with her whatever they liked. Though feeling uneasy at first Amita felt again today, after many years, that there was a strange satiety in such a submission. She became, as it were, another person, her body some other's. She herself amused along with them.

Sunanda smeared the feet with lac. Sarama laboured with the forehead and the parting of the hair. She was not satisfied with a thin line of vermilion. She brightened the head of Amita with the sign of a married lady as she did her own and gave a big vermilion-mark on her forehead. Now Amita could no more be believed to have led the widow-life for long five years. By this time also, insisted by Sunanda, Amita had again to take betel-leaf after dinner. Of course, though after a good many days, betel-leaf tasted really nice to Amita.

After dressing her up Sunanda made Amita stand before the big wall mirror.

"Just see, how nice you look. You've totally changed, eh. Can you recognise yourself now ?"

Amita smiled softly, "And it is good not to recognise."

Chinmohan was reading something in a half-reclining position. He was suddenly startled at the sight of Amita.

"What's it, eh ?"

Amita too was a little surprised, "Why, nothing."

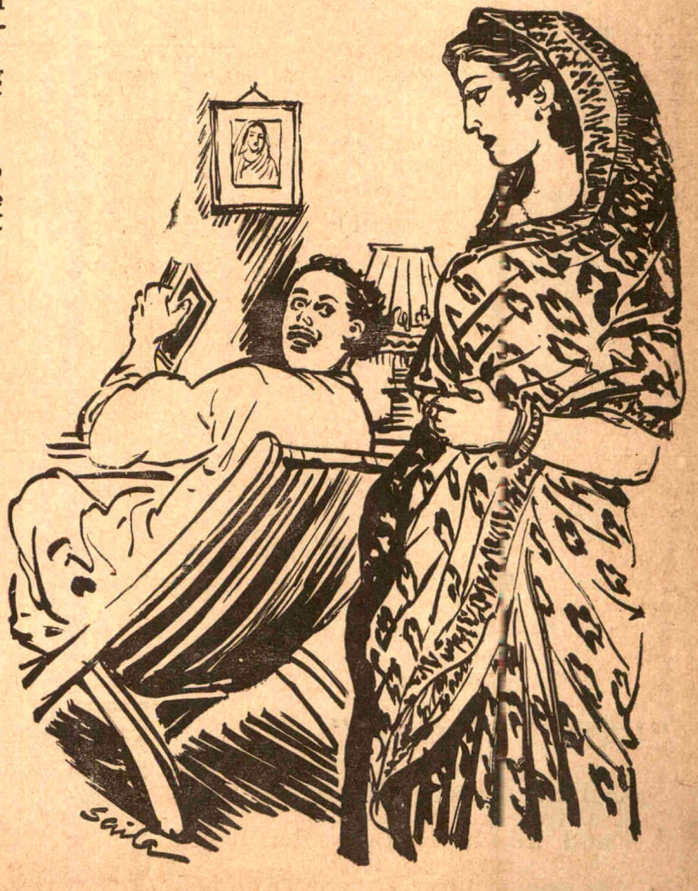
Chinmohan asked, "Who has dressed you up as a clown like this ?" The tone of his voice hurt Amita. She said, "None. I have dressed myself. Am I looking very ugly ?"

Chinmohan burst into a laughter of ridicule, "Oh no, very beautiful, very nice. You seem ten years younger. You've turned into a little bride of fourteen."

Startled at this unexpected taunt as Amita raised her eyes she saw a photo of hers, a few days old, hanging on the wall, a little above Chinmohan's head. The word 'Mahasweta' was written very carefully on it at the bottom.

Amita remained standing, silent and stunned. Beneath the gorgeous dress, the rich colour, her mind seemed to lie with the vacant vast of a desert.

(Rendered into English by Monujesh Mitra)



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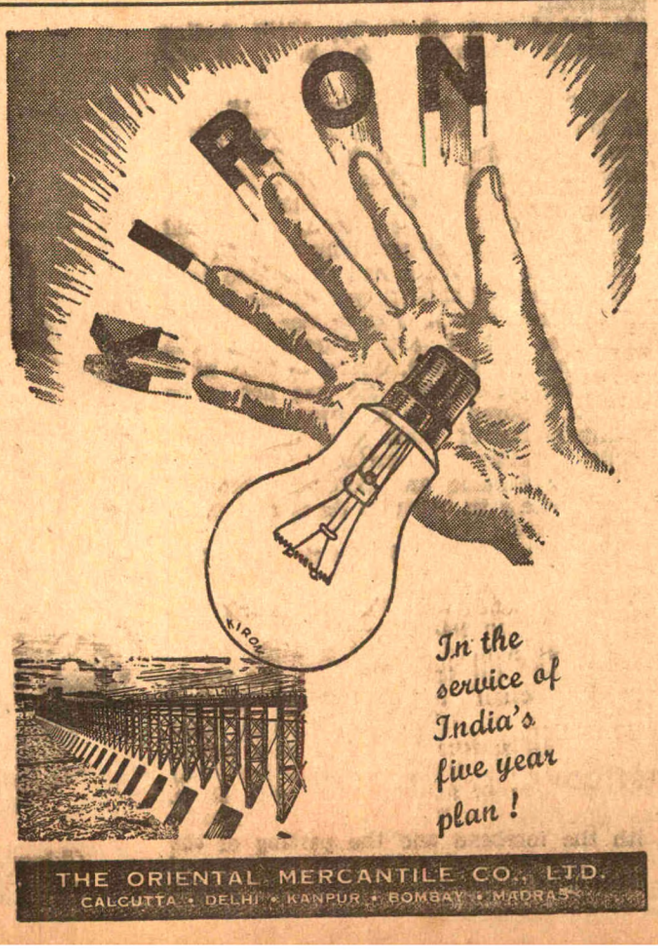

CO-EDUCATION

By INDUMATI BHATTACHARYYA

MUCH has recently been written in different papers and discussed in private, even public gatherings, about the good or baneful effects of co-education. The question necessarily creeps up whenever and wherever higher education, especially among the womenfolk, is talked of. If the correspondence columns of newspapers be taken as fairly reflecting the opinion of the thoughtful public, it must then be admitted that the majority look upon it with disfavour, and the grounds of this disfavour are admittedly many. Being one of the earliest products of co-education in our part of the country and having had the good fortune to be in touch with many other such products since I left college, I deem it my duty to give public expression to my experience and my views on the question, especially for the enlightenment of those who have their daughters to educate.

I received my primary and secondary education in a girls' school where the teachers were all ladies and whose extensive premises were walled off, guarded and isolated like the secluded feminine institution of Tennyson's Princess. We, therefore, did not have these problems associated with co-education. Nor did I have a first-hand knowledge of what girl students felt in their Intermediate classes. I passed I.A. as a private candidate. But when after a lapse of about six years I got myself admitted into the third year class of a well-known college, I could realise the difficulties of the problem of higher education among our women. I was quite unused to the company of male students and to listening to the lectures of male professors, and, I fear, most of my male class friends coming from the countrysides and many of the professors too were equally unused to the association of persons of the other sex. The result was that the lectures, specially of young professors, were lifeless, being often addressed to the ceiling as it were. If any pert girl student put any question, they would often grumble or more often affect not to hear. There was an atmosphere of restraint from which neither the professor nor the students of both the sexes could get free. The absence of an atmosphere of naturalness was certainly injurious to the development of both the body and the mind. Though hearsay was no evidence, yet I was fully convinced of the moral havoc which co-education was doing among the first and second year students who were younger than ourselves.

Several years have elapsed since that time, but many 'co-eds' who have left college recently, tell me that theirs is practically the same experience as mine. What then is the remedy?

LATEST GOVT. SCHEME

The wise people of the town where my Alma Mater is situated have given an answer to this question. They have started a college for women with questionable success. The Presidency College of Calcutta admits no girl students into its First Ye classes. But what about the experience of the Th Year students there? Is not a lady student in t Third Year there in the same predicament as I w in my time? In some places there are separa women's Universities. But their alumni must pa over to the great University of the World. Educat as they have been in isolation, do they have a bett knowledge of man and society than the 'co-eds'?

The latest educational scheme of India Gover ment to have multi-purpose schools with eleven-ye courses and three-year Degree courses in colleg thus doing away with the Intermediate classes, so far as the problem of co-education is concerne really the adaptation of the Presidency College pra tice in this respect on an All-India basis. This enabl college students of both sexes to associate ther selves in college classes with a maturer power judgment. But will not this too aggravate the er barrassment of all concerned in an atmosphere which they are 'not accustomed? Class-rooms wi students of both sexes can be free from an atmo phere of restraint and can have one of naturalne where both the sexes are used to mutual associatio and without this atmosphere of naturalness ludic ous awkwardness in mutual dealings cannot avoided.

BEGINNING FROM BOTTOM

In the University classes where the students a expected to have greater self-restraint and matur judgment, problems due to the association of bo the sexes even to the extent of half and half in son classes, do arise, but fortunately, University Profe sors are mostly maturer in age and experience. Mar of them command great respect which is a gre restraining force. But even in the classes of the revered professors, female students, unless very fo ward, are greatly handicapped. Some professors d not for a moment turn to that side of the class whe the female students take their seats. Some delive their lectures with their eyes shut. Some turn t the ceiling, some to the floor, while some others shou staring at the wall. Do they not look funny? Woul it not be better if the rule enjoined that the Unive sity Professors and the students too of both the sexe must be 'co-eds' from the very bottom?

Education in a free country which aims at carv ing out a niche for itself in the midst of the galax of more advanced countries, should have an idea which must be the same as, or complementary t the national ideal. Its fulfilment requires co-opera tion of educated women in many walks of life. A education, received in isolation, cannot fit them fo their duties as free and equal citizens of the coun try. Moreover, economic stress is compelling edu cated women to leave their secluded life and to pur

sue different gainful occupations necessitating dealings with the other sex, and co-education will certainly be greatly helpful in such cases.

Again, how to abolish casteism is a problem that has baffled solution in spite of the teachings of saints and sages. But those who have eyes to see will realise that co-education on a more extensive scale all over the country is likely to be an important factor in its solution, and a larger field of choice will do away with many other social evils like dowry and marriage between incompatibles. Even in the narrower sphere of family life, co-education helps the married couple in facing the realities of life. Education in isolation leads young men to idolise young women as goddesses, and young women to consider young men as the embodiment of all virtues. But co-education enables them to know each other's virtues and failings, so there is no disappointment in unions by marriage.

SEX PROBLEMS

Writing in support of co-education, I do not, of course, shut my eyes to its dark side. But it must be remembered that conventional text-book morality is everywhere gasping and will soon be stone-dead, let us hope, unwept and unsung. Sex problems will be there in the class rooms as there are even in secluded homes. They will tax the patience, wisdom, and worldly experience of the educational authorities to their utmost. But to solve these problems by separating the two sexes will be like solving the problem of hunger by separating the stomach from the rest of the body; the one destroys the organism, the other the co-operative spirit between the two sexes in the body-politic, which is injurious to the larger interest of the country.

Evils which commonly come into the public notice are often possible because of organisational defects and bad housing of the institutions where co-education exists. As the entire society is an organised body and sex problems there can be minimised by reforming the defects in the organisation, but cannot be solved for all time, similarly aberrations which are frequently noticed in educational institutions may be only minimised by better organisation. If there is co-education in a college, the authorities who organise and control the running of the institution, have got to see that the Principal is not only a man of extensive learning and experience but one with a personality to command and guide and also with a clear-cut vision as to what his institution is going to produce. If he has no such vision, he will simply aim at showing good results at different university examinations producing degree-holders only, not future citizens of a free country. When the Principal has a noble vision and a high ideal about the work he is entrusted with, a moral atmosphere is bound to prevail.

BACHELOR PROFESSORS

For mixed classes young professors, especially bachelors, as a rule, are unsuitable. Young students of the fair sex are attracted — not so much to their class-mates, as particularly to young professors; and hence elopements, followed by civil marriages between the teacher and the taught, do take place in many colleges. Frustration has often led to insanity and even suicide. My readers should not suppose that I write from mere hearsay; lack of space and a sense of decency prevent me from citing many such incidents. Mixed tutorial classes in charge of young professors often lead to incidents, specially when male students in the tutorial group absent themselves from attending the class when any examination draws near I would suggest the employment of female professors to take charge of tutorial classes. In an institution where there is a large proportion of female students, why should not some professors be females?

Likewise, in the clerical establishment of a college, one or two women are desirable to look after the common room, the issue of books from the library and the realisation of fees and the admission of female students. The Principal should see that if there is any extra-tutorial function within the college premises in which female students also attend especially in the evening, some professor or responsible member of the clerical staff is charged with the duty to watch any suspicious movements.

Another important duty of the college and other educational institutions is the appointment of the right type of servants. They are not now what they used to be even a decade ago. They are dangerous when for the sake of a little extra-income they allow suspicious movements within the college premises on holidays or when the classes are over.

So far as school education is concerned, my school has mixed classes in the primary stages with lady teachers only to teach them. I think this system may be introduced in other primary schools also, provided, of course, a mixed staff is employed. In the secondary stage, co-education would be workable if the class rooms be spacious and each class contains not more than thirty students. In multi-purpose secondary schools, co-education may be attempted in the three top-most classes with the strength limited to thirty-five at most.

As to defects in housing an educational institution where co-education prevails, I do not presume to be a building expert, but untoward incidents do take place due to bad location of the common room for female students and also the lavatory. The locality where the school or the college building is situated often leads to unpleasant incidents. Permission to introduce or to continue co-education should be conditional upon the right choice of the locality.

CRYPTOGRAPHY

(Continued From Page 30)

stations sent the code message *a son is born* (a code-phrase indicating the commencement of war), there was feverish activity in every code-room of the world. Success or failure on land, air or sea was in most cases due to the invisible but potent influence of cryptography. For example, the French achieved certain remarkable successes over the Germans by intercepting and deciphering the code and cipher messages of the enemy. Several German attempts to raid British troop convoys across the Channel were similarly foiled in the last moment by the British naval decoding department, known as Room 40. Again, it was the interception of the German code message to their ambassador in Mexico asking him to bring about an alliance with Japan to attack the United States that made the Americans furious and eventually brought them into the war.

The story of codes and ciphers in the World War II down to our own day lies buried in the secret archives of the nations, but this much can be stated with certainty that most of the important political and diplomatic developments have been influenced directly or indirectly by cryptography. This is why every modern government keeps a trained staff of cryptographers who are as essential as, or even more essential than the standing army, navy or air force.

SPIRITUALISM: ITS REAL MEANING

By Shri K. C. CHATTERJEE (Rai Bahadur), M.Sc., B.L.

HE make-up of a man consists of three parts — (i) body, (ii) mind and (iii) spirit. The body is physical and perishable. Mind is matter but *not* gross physical matter. It is probably the palpable portion of the ether. Leaving aside for the moment the subtle distinction between soul and spirit, let us say that soul is conscious undying spirit, which in ultimate analysis, it is. At the time of dissolution of the physical body which is death, the disembodied soul, which is the sum total of *Chit, Buddhi* and *Ahankar,* takes with it memory, reason and its chief characteristics, which constitute its personality (Compare Geeta XV, 8). When a person does not live merely a worldly or material life (i.e. when he is not exclusively engrossed in material objects) but lives a religious or pious life, we call him a spiritual man. To put it cryptically, a man who pursues Spirit or God is a spiritual man and not the one that pursues material objects.

SPIRITUALISM AND SPIRITISM

Spiritualism is a doctrine which lays down that spirit exists independently of matter. Personally, I am inclined to the view that matter and spirit are the same but for their *Avastha Bheda* as Hindu Philosophy teaches us. Spiritualism in its most comprehensive sense means nothing but a knowledge of everything pertaining to the spiritual nature of man and its corner-stone or foundation pillar is Spirit or God, Eternal, and immutable. Spiritualism, in its crudest sense means communication with the dead, with or without the aid of medium. Now, the question — whether the dead can communicate with the living — has been a subject-matter of investigation for ages. Some do believe that such communication is, not only possible, but takes place. Such communications, of course vary very widely — from saintly revelations to crude manifestations such as table-tapping etc. etc. etc. The point to be borne in mind, in this connection, is that spiritualism is not spiritism — the latter, in fact, is no better than confabulations with the dead, for curiosity, for selfish gain, for fleshly gratification, for unworthy amusing or for irreligious purpose as Dr. J. M. Peebles, M.D., Ph.D., has remarked, *"Spiritism is unhealthy and unholy: while spiritualism is a grand moral science and offers the key that unlocks mysteries of ages. Spiritualism originating in God, Who is Spirit, and grounded in man's moral nature, is a substantial fact, and infinitely more — a fact plus reason and consciousness; a fact relating to moral and religious culture — a sublime spiritual truth ultimately in consecration to the good, the beautiful and the heavenly".*

Spiritualism has been coming down to us from ages, irrespective of religion and country. *Vedas* were revealed to the Rishis. The Old and New Testaments, the Apocrypha, and the Talmudic writings, all abound in angels' ministries, spirit communications, trances, visions and apparitions. Indian Yogis, ancient Chinese Taoists and the Mystics of other religions have performed miracles; but it should be remembered that what is magic of the finite is logic of the Infinite.

SAGE VYASA'S INVOCATION

In the Mahabharata, it is said that after the battle of Kurukshetra, the Great Sage Vyasa invoked on the bank of a river, the spirits of those who had fallen in the battle (for the purpose of consolation of their living relations) and the dead came out of the water, met their near and dear ones for that night only and vanished at dawn. The underlying idea is, of course, obvious. It simply means that soul is not only immortal and eternal but that in special cases and under given conditions manifestations and communications are possible.

The Apostles and disciples of Jesus Christ were spiritualists — both Paul and Peter had trances. Seers and poets are natural spiritualists. Do we not find spiritual disclosures in Shakespeare, Shelley, Longfellow, Tennyson, Tagore and others? Socrates was often attended with a 'divine voice' to guide him while Plato said that between God and man there exist guardian spirits and that poets are interpreters of the gods or guardian spirits. Lord Gauranga of Bengal, who is believed to be an *Avatar,* had often trances and manifestations in which he used to feel that he was with God and he used to utter the purest and loftiest teachings as emanating from Lord Shree Krishna. His biographer Sishir Kumar Ghosh was a spiritualist. Emperor Napoleon and Empress Josephine were touched by an invisible hand and the Empress recognised it as belonging to her father.

SR: AUROBINDO'S VISION

Sri Aurobindo had a vision of Narayan while he was confined in prison as an undertrial in a political case, in which he was told to give up his political career and to become a religionist, for which definite purpose he was created. In his Uttarpara Speech (1909) he was commanded by God to say that India would rise for the benefit of the entire humanity, and the independence of India did come about in 1947 — the British quitted India in a way which is unparalleled in History. Mahatma Gandhi used to hear the 'inner voice'. The Rev. Dr. H. W. Thomas has very aptly said in a sermon, "The perfect vision should see in Spiritualism the essential truth of the continuity of life and the possibility of communion between the two worlds".

Many think that creative genius is an outcome of inspiration; and naturally seers, poets and inventors have a spiritual trend of mind. It is said that some great writers see visions when they write and they thus get the idea and inspiration. Many politicians and scientists were spiritualists. Abraham

Lincoln, Judge J. W. Edmonds, Rev. Theodore Parker, Sir William Crooks, F. R. S., Sir Oliver Lodge, F.R.S., Madame Blavatsky, Thomas Addison, Signor Marconi were all spiritualists. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was so sure that he promised to communicate us to what he would see in his after life; and a book has been published by a reliable educationist which purports to be a communication from the late Sir Arthur Conan Doyle as to his experience after death. Only recently, the Head of a great religion was thought to be dying and Jesus Christ appeared before him in his vision and assured him of his recovery and he recovered.

RELATION WITH SCIENCE

In this modern age of materialism, many persons do not believe in spiritualism. In the 'Science of Life' by H. G. Wells, Julian Huxley and G. P. Wells, spiritualism is described as 'Borderland Science' and in Chapter IX, phenomena of materialization, ectoplasm, table tapping etc. are mentioned. Some modern scientists do not deny the existence of such phenomena, but they say that the experiments were not done under rigid scientific method so as to be scientifically accepted. But they forget that in 'spiritualism', it is the spirit who holds the trump card i.e. it is he who can show the phenomena (and not the scientist). For example, a scientist can boil water to 100°C to show that water boils at that temperature but it is not a living human being, but a spirit, who can show a spiritual phenomenon: yet there are irresistible conclusions for scientific acceptance.

If I get a medicine for asthma by spirit communication which not only cured me of my obstinate asthma of twenty years' standing (which played havoc with me in spite of best medical aid) but I am curing others with it, can it not be said to have been scientifically proved? I know of a barrister (son of a well-known barrister), who writes poems as communicated to him by a soul. An I.C.S. district officer resigned from the service as he was spiritually directed to do so by a great soul and is now a *sannyasi*. Whenever anything from a religious book is not clear to him, he prays and a great soul appears and gives him inspiration by which the problem is solved in a trice. He is naturally very well-read and he respects all the religions. I have heard him explaining our Hindu scriptures to us, Christian doctrine to the Christians (even to Missionaries) and other religions as well as to all those who ask him about any matter — irrespective of religion, caste or creed and we hear him with rapt attention. If anyone is in distress about illness in the family, he helps him by his prayer and some *avatar* would tell him that the patient would be cured. I know of a medium whose dead *Gurudev* brings various souls for communication and "sitting". Once, in my presence showers of beads, amulets etc. fell from nowhere and later on communication was received as to which bead or amulet was intended for whom. I once got a picture and a communication from an unknown lady and then I was told of the address where to send them. On sending them to the address (which was not known from before), I was informed by him that the picture and the handwriting were of his deceased mother.

AMAZING OPERATION

The *Gurudev* also performed an operation of the appendicitis of the son of a friend of mine (a Gazetted Officer) — this was done by spiritual means and the patient was able to undertake a journey from Jharia to Patna on the third day; and during operation he felt the spot to be numbed and he had no pain or any feeling at that spot and the operation took only five minutes, after which he got up and saw the freshly cut appendicitis and blood on a plate. I am told of two more spiritual operations. An officer deputed to a foreign country for inspection of materials to be supplied to India by that country, died and his father (a retired Gazetted Officer) had a feeling that it was a case of murder and *not* of suicide as was officially reported. I gave his father the name and address of the medium and the father writes, ".....The seance took place ..... It was a miracle. The spirit appeared and an invisible hand wrote with a pencil, which stood erect, on two pages of foolscap paper giving full history of how he died. It was a clear case of murder ..... The photo of the spirit appeared ..... I and my wife were present during the seance ..... The handwriting on the two pages of foolscap paper was exactly the handwriting which the deceased had in his lifetime. The spelling of the wordings were the same ....."

Of course I had similar experience about my deceased son and at one time when the soul came, there was a spark on an wire attaching some points — suggesting thereby that energy of the soul or the spark of life is convertible to other energy. But once I saw there stone falling — it was the work of some bad spirit (or "Essential" as is named in the communication of the soul of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle) who wanted to spoil the seance. The seance had to be closed — as "spiritualism" must not be allowed to become "spiritism", which is very dangerous and ruinous. To have worldly gain is not "spiritualism" but "spiritism". One should know the distinction between the two and one should *not* encourage witchcraft, black magic or the like. Having known that the Dead have never died and being able to get in touch with them, being comforted and guided by them, does not one feel very much consoled? This is what spiritualism does. It opens the door of mercy. It affords progress from darkness to light. Christ promised spiritual gifts to the believers. The gift of converse with the so-called dead, the gift of healing, the gift of opportunity to maimed and sinful life, to blossom the gift of entering into and seeing the beauties of the hidden world of Spirit, etc. etc.—are these gifts to be treated at a common value?

RARE AND WONDERFUL MEDIUM

I have one who is only the medium of his deceased brother. If he shuts his eyes and thinks of his brother he goes into trance and hears his brother's voice and he writes what his brother asks him to write: but he won't write if any other voice ask him to write. We also hear of protective deity or of a guiding spirit. Sometimes I got invaluable advice from the other world. But for more advanced, he hears inner voice but such people are rare. By way of warning I may, however, say that one must be careful of one practising 'spiritism' — there is at least one such cheat at Patna.

To sum up, I quote the following from 'The Life Divine" of Sri Aurobindo :

"Spiritualism, in its essence, is an awakening to the inner reality of our being, to a spirit, self, soul which is other than mind, life and

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WELFARE STATE IN OUR TIME

(Continued From Page 26)

blem is not unmanageable if a determined effort is made to tackle it. The way in which the destitutes are allowed to rot in the streets, and exploited by criminal gangs, is a crying shame. The half-hearted manner in which attempts are made from time to time to round up the vagrants is, in prevailing circumstances, a futile formality. The beggar population in Calcutta, like the other sections, is drawn from all parts of the country. This fact is often put forward as an excuse for inaction. But if the problem is too complex for the States, it must be tackled by the Central Government on a national basis. It will be no exaggeration to say that the prestige which the Prime Minister's foreign policy brings to our country is lost every day in the streets of our cities by the sights and smells that assail our eyes and nostrils.

To return to housing, recent surveys have again drawn attention to the appalling state of overcrowding in Calcutta. More than forty-two per cent of the households have on an average not more than 20 sq. feet of floor space. The roof in many cases beggars description. As for the other amenities of civilised existence, the less said the better. Among single member households, 35 per cent have no water tap, 70 per cent no bathroom, and 14 per cent no latrine and 74 per cent no kitchen. Among the households comprising two or more members, about 61 per cent have no separate kitchen, 50 per cent have no bathroom, 28 per cent have no water tap and 6 per cent have no latrine.

A programme for the clearance of city slums and their replacement by decent habitations, and relief of destitution, to my mind, offer the most effective means of bringing home the benefits of planning to the common people. Such a programme will automatically enlist popular enthusiasm for the other tasks of planning. The problem of food shortage, which was problem number one even a few years ago, has been successfully overcome at least as far as supply of cereals is concerned. Government's import programme for the Second Plan affords the assurance that no risks will be taken with the nation's food supply. As regards the second item of necessities, namely clothing, the textile industry is in a position to deliver the goods required. There remains the problem of housing which now claims priority.

Housing offers the greatest scope for useful constructive activity whose effects will be felt over the entire range of industry. A planned effort to build homes for the homeless will provide the plan with the initial momentum necessary to carry it forward under its own steam.

According to the Planning Commission's estimates the urban housing shortage in 1961 will be roughly 5.3 million dwelling units, (which is more than two times what it was in 1951 after making allowance for new construction during the next five years. That means at least a two-fold increase of the homeless populations of cities like Calcutta. The prospect is too appalling to contemplate. Planning becomes a futility if it cannot find some means of forestalling this dangerous development.

LOW COST HOUSING

The difficulties of providing low cost housing in the cities are enormously magnified by the conventional approach to the problem of house construction. The main difficulties are cost of land and the shortage of building materials like steel and cement which are considered indispensable for building in congested urban areas. But it will not be necessary to wait for steel and cement, if it is decided to resettle the bustee dwellers in outlying areas where land is available at reasonable prices. In that case it will be possible to build serviceable houses with the materials that are available and at the same time to provide the minimum sanitary facilities. Houses can be built with mud walls and thatch roofs or Ranigunge tile roofs, with bamboo matting or plaited bamboos or other materials which can be easily made available in the locality. It is not often realised that what makes a slum is not the type of material used for construction, but the congestion and absence of sanitary facilities. If congestion can be eliminated and provision made for adequate sanitation, slum conditions will disappear even if the houses are built of cheap, non-durable material. But the dispersal of the bustees comes up against one serious difficulty which must be overcome before the programme can be successful. It will be no use to offer the slum-dwellers houses far away from their sources of livelihood. Most of the homeless people who crowd into the central part of a city like Calcutta, earn their livelihood by plying small trades catering to the needs of the big office establishments concentrated in the heart of the city and the large army of office workers. Simultaneously with the dispersal of the bustees there should be a dispersal of important office establishments to the outlying areas of the city. Taking Calcutta for instance, the Writers' Buildings may be shifted to Belvedere; Government House to Barrackpore; the University to Beliaghata; all control offices to Tollygunge. All records of Government Offices may be shifted to Pandaveswar which was built by the Americans during the war and remains uninhabited since 1945. There is no need to think that all records should be kept at the seat of Government. In U.K. records of the National Insurance scheme are kept in New Castle-on-Tyne. If the big establishments providing employment to large numbers of people, whether directly or indirectly, are removed to places on the outskirts of the city, it will become a practical proposition to resettle the bustee dwellers in places near about. The non-availability of steel and cement will not then present any insuperable difficulty. If tackled in right earnest, taking advantage of all practical possibilities, the programme of slum clearance and sanitation could be completed within a period of three years at the outside limit.

HOMES : WHERE TO BE BUILT

The reclamation and rehabilitation of the destitutes should also be tackled on similar lines. Homes for the destitutes should be established in areas away from the city, like Barasat, Basirhat or Rupnarayanpur where land can be acquired for the purpose. Here again provision of dwellings need not depend on supplies of steel and cement. If pucca structures are not possible, kutcha structures will do as well. If steel pipes are not available, ordinary wells may be dug for supplying water. The inmates should also be trained in remunerative occupations like weaving, poultry rearing etc., and provided with free medical assistance. Such a programme for relief of destitutes should be undertaken by every State,

WELFARE STATE IN OUR TIME

for inter-provincial movement of professional beggars makes it impossible for any State to tackle the problem single-handed. The resources necessary to finance such a scheme may be raised by a small tax on Hotel and Caterers' Bills; a tax of say Re. 1 per horsepower on all cars above 14 H.P.; and extra tax on wines etc. I understand that some States levy a tax on wealthy relatives of destitutes who are cared for in the vagrants' homes.

While the State must care for the infirm and disabled, it should also be made obligatory on every able-bodied person to work for a living. Otherwise there is a danger of idlers turning into gangsters. Every citizen must be obliged to produce evidence of ostensible means of livelihood.

Each separate item of the programme mentioned above should be in charge of a high-powered officer or Minister at the Centre who can impart the necessary drive, and is endowed with the necessary powers. There is no point in leaving such a complex and difficult problem to be tackled by the local authorities who lack the authority to take the vital decisions which impinge on various other sectors. Legislation should also be enacted without delay, to overcome any legal obstacles standing in the way of implementation of the programme.

Above all, it is important to realise that whatever is done should be done quickly, if it is to be of any use. I wonder whether the importance of tempo in development has received adequate recognition at the hands of the planning authorities. If the pace of development is too slow, it will lead to frustration in the present, without ensuring satisfaction when the targets are attained in the distant future. For, the generation to whom such targets seemed attractive would have passed away and their successors who reap the benefit would be more conscious of the shortcomings than of the achievement. Progress should be perceptible, if it is to make any impression on people's minds. What is the secret of the great hold of the Soviet Government on the masses of the Russian people and the enthusiasm they are able to command for the fulfilment of their plans? Competent observers say that this is because the present generation of Russians could see for themselves the transformation of their country and the radical improvement in conditions of life in their own lifetime. In India, too, if in the course of the next five or ten years we can bring about tangible improvement, it will then be possible to harness popular enthusiasm for the harder tasks of planning. If at all we are to succeed in establishing a Welfare State, it must be reached in our own time.

INDIAN FOLK SONG

(Continued From Page 213)

Tell him that we will not see each other any more in life,
The archer's shot ends all my hopes and dreams,
What a deep wound, brother archer, your arrow has driven into me."

As is well-known, folk songs rule over the marriage festivities. Usually a group of bright gay women gather round the bride or bridegroom and sing to the accompaniment of some primitive musical instruments. Their songs are supposed to be either of brides or bridegrooms.

A BRIDE'S SONG (BIHAR)

Here is a typical bride's song from Bihar:

"The earth and the sky were the only things at the dawn of the world so pretty,
Sweet showers from the sky poured and the earth received them with a warm embrace,
Hour of blessings there came, oh maidens,
Hour of blessings came.
A mother and a father were the only living beings at the dawn of the world, so pretty,
The mother gave me birth, Oh maidens,
And the mother-in-law to my groom;
The father brought me up with love and care,
And the father-in-law blessed me with modesty :
Hour of blessings there came, Oh maidens,
Hour of blessings came."

SONG FROM ASSAM

Here is a bridal song from Assam:

"Most beautifully shall I comb my hair,
And will adorn it with vermilion so auspicious,
Today, they say, my Krishna will come
So let me dress like Rukmini."

FOLK SONG OF PUNJAB

Here is a Punjabi song sung on behalf of bride's father:

"What makes thee stand thus, dear daughter,
Behind thy father's sandal pillar
What makes thee stand ?"

It is answered on bride's behalf :

"To knock at my father's door I stand;
Make me a bride, father find me a groom;"

Father is supposed to ask :

"What sort of groom
Dost thou wish to have ?"

Again the bride answers :

"Fair as the moon amongst stars, dear father,
And lovely as Krishna amongst men;
To knock at my father's door I stand,
Make me a bride, father, find me a groom."

Fisherman on the high seas, the boatman on placid rivers, the peasant on mother earth, the workman in the blacksmith's shop, the cartman on the mountain ghat—all have songs which add strength to their muscles and courage to their heart.

THE CYNIC REFUTED

By DILIP KUMAR ROY

IT happened years ago, but it stays graven in my memory — the unforgettable little drama in which only three people took part: our great father and we, his two beloved children. At the time I was a boy of eight and my sister, loved by all for her beauty and sweet nature, about six years of age.

First, to introduce the *dramatis personae:*

Our father, Dwijendra Lal Roy – having achieved fame as a brilliant poet, satirist, composer and dramatist—was courted by litterateurs, musicians and admirers of all denominations. They visited day after day his *sanctum sanctorum* and listened, rapt, to the poems he recited and the songs he sang which, often enough, moved his audience to tears.

Our mother — who had been renowned for her native grace, refinement and hospitality — had died prematurely at the age of twenty-seven, leaving behind her two children too small at the time to be able to appraise their loss. But our father, who had loved her passionately, never ceased to mourn her till his death, twelve years later. Whenever his friends pressed him to marry again—for he was but in his late thirties then—he was wont to remark that one could, indeed, marry many times but never love more than once. "Besides," he would add ironically, "I have my work cut out for me now that I have to shield my motherless nestlings from the commiseration of my lachrymose neighbours and my literary saplings from the thunder of my amiable critics."

He kept his word. Never was a father more patient and tender—an artist more painstaking and conscientious. Only two things he lived for, as he was never tired of repeating: his art which he worshipped and his two nurslings whom he never kept at a distance. With time he changed only in that he drew us more and more under his loving wings. We never missed our mother

Now for the *mise en scene.*

It all happened in Calcutta where, within a few years, he was to write his greatest dramas and songs and rise to the peak of his fame. We were having our morning meal together, seated on three *pindis.* (A *pindi* is just a rectangular board made of thick wood, spacious enough to accommodate a full-grown person sitting, crosslegged, in the Indian fashion).

Our father's *pindi,* placed close and parallel to the wall, confronted mine. My lovely little sister, Maya, sat on his left. The cook—who was also the waiter—had just served us our food on three big silver plates and left. He materialised, intermittently, to ply us with the next dish, straight from the oven. This necessitated waiting, now and again, though our father seldom noticed it: in fact, he was, often enough, too distrait even to notice what he was eating—a spectacle which amused our uncles and aunts not a little.

** ** ** **

Now for the drama, at last.

On that memorable morning, an aunt of ours had brought Maya a lovely present: a fancy baby *pindi* decorated with beautiful figures (called *alpana*) and painted a flamboyant red. On this she was seated, pink with excitement, like a little queen on her throne. "Look, Dada!" she kept exclaiming, every two minutes. "How it shines, my sweet *pindi,* like a mirror! Just look, father!" (In Bengal, an elder brother is addressed as *Dada*).

I had indeed started with a clean slate with not a trace of grievance against her. But what happened was that whenever she clapped her hands in joy, father gave her an approving nod. I had come to love him passionately. So the more he smiled on her, the less happy I felt with my *pindi,* looking old and wan beside hers. I tried in vain to smile back at her now that her jubilation rang out like a mocking challenge to my dignity, and yet I could not, alas, even kick against the pricks with father presiding just in front!

So I started frowning at her and followed up by giving her pointers with furtive little nudges directing her to exchange her seat with mine. At first she stared blankly at me. Then, in a flash, she took my meaning. Her face stiffened. With flashing eyes, she shook her head vigorously.

I felt hot with indignation and alarm as well: for here was insubordination hatching, my status as her superior declining, my long-standing authority melting away under my nose and yet I could take no action at all! Intolerable!!.....

My ire was rising fast. I thought hard. But as I could hit upon nothing effective, I decided on the safest course: bluff. That is, I went on giving her menacing glances whenever father happened to be not looking. But she would *not* toe the line and shook her head again and again, till I grew furious and fumed at her disobedience forgetting, conveniently, that hitherto she had served me all along only too willingly. Loyal by nature she rejoiced in running all sorts of errands for me, her leader and monitor. But today, feeling like a fairy Princess

and anointed by father in person, she simply could not bring herself to yield up what was hers by rights. So everytime I rolled my eyes at her she tossed her defiant little head, ringed with auburn curls, looking picturesque in her desperation. But having little use for beauty in my dangerous mood, when I was growing desperate myself, I lost my head. At this psychological moment, my father turned his head to the right to see if the cook was coming. I grabbed my opportunity and gave her a sudden push. Taken unawares, she could not dodge my thrust and fell down on the hard floor with a loud thud and a piercing cry.

Father gave a violent start and instantly his fair face turned a fiery red. He glared at me.

"What's all this, you monkey?" he thundered. "How dare you hurt your innocent little sister?"

Unused to scolding, I felt even more frightened than humiliated and sprang up from my seat to take refuge in a far corner where I stood with bowed head, utterly crushed. But father, taking not the slightest notice of me, picked up my sprawling sister and, placing her tenderly on his lap, showered his caresses on her till she smiled at him through her tears. The next moment, however, her smile flickered away as her eyes fell on her disgraced aggressor. Instantly she tottered to her feet and ran straight up to me.

"Come, Dada!" she said contritely, pulling me by the hand. "Come: take my seat. I give it to you."

I shook her off with a jerk.

"Go away!" I growled.

"Oh, don't, Dada!" she pleaded as her eyes glistened. "Don't grieve. Come. Take my seat and be happy. I won't claim it again, I promise you. It's yours—for ever."

I was, indeed touched: but, unable to swallow my deep humiliation and call it a day, I stood undecided just when, to my surprise, I saw father rise from his seat, his eyes bright with unshed tears. Without a word, he came straight up and, squatting on the floor before my sister, enfolded her in an embrace. At once she threw her tiny arms round his neck and burst into tears, blubbering: "Father....father....father...."

Next moment, lo and behold, father (our great, big father!) wept on her little shoulder like a child, while the little woman mothered him now, their roles reversed.

"Oh father....father!" she faltered out, soothingly. "D-don't cry....I....am not hurt.... but....d-don't scold him again, father....I can't bear it...."

For a while I stood as though in a daze. Then, suddenly, I felt giddy and, gulping down my unruly tears, took to my heels. I was staggered! For father to cry like a child in the arms of one so tiny—as Maya! The world had toppled over—for me. I did not know what to think!....

** ** ** **

At night, before a few friends who had assembled, as usual, father read out, in a thick voice, a long narrative poem, named: *A Brother and Sister's Quarrel.* When he had finished, Maya drew close to me and whispered: "Look, Dada! Over there.... near the flower-vase....the man with the white long beard....he, too, is wiping his eyes....look!"

This poem was published, a few years later, in a collection of his reveries entitled, *Alekhya* (meaning pictures), which is ranked now among the classics of our Bengali literature. From this I will quote, in conclusion, a few verses which I have rendered freely into English.

After describing the drama with a moving simplicity, the poet thus ends, ecstatically:

How beautiful the picture !
O little maiden of grace !
Whoever tutored thee in
Such flawless selflessness ?

I disown you, my wise cynic,
Now that I am given to see
How heavenly self-effacement
Stems from human sympathy.

"Our world is the devil's own playground,"
You may argue sleeplessly:
But from what today I have witnessed,
I hold it a blasphemy.

For when such a pure and deathless
Rose-compassion here has bloomed:
How can earth life be branded
As undivine and doomed ?

SPIRITUALISM: ITS REAL MEANING

(Continued From Page 244)

body, an inner aspiration to know, to feel, to be that, to enter into contact with greater Reality beyond and pervading the universe which inhabits also our own being, to be in communion with It and union with It, as a turning, a conversion, a transformation of our whole being as a result of the aspiration, the contact, the union, a growth or waking into a new becoming or new being, a new self, a new nature ..... There are four main lines which Nature has followed in her attempt to open up the inner being, — religion, occultism, spiritual thought and an inner spiritual realisation and experience: the first three are approaches, the last is the decisive avenue of entry ..... Spiritual has used all the three means as starting point, but it has also dispensed with them all, relying on its own pure strength: discouraging occult powers as dangerous lures and entangling obstacles, it has sought only the pure truth of the spirit ....."

(Compare Yogic exercises where if one is enamoured with extra-physical powers, which is usually attained on the path of progress, he cannot rise).

Let the aim and object of our life be what Sri Aurobindo has indicated above and let us understand that Spiritualism is nothing if not communion and union with God.

EDITOR—TUSHAR KANTI GHOSH

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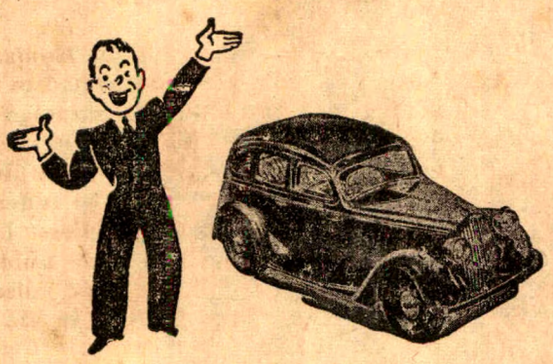

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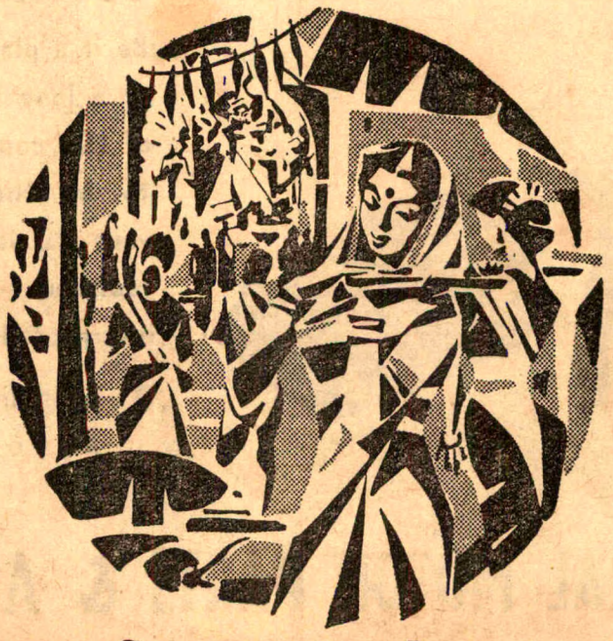

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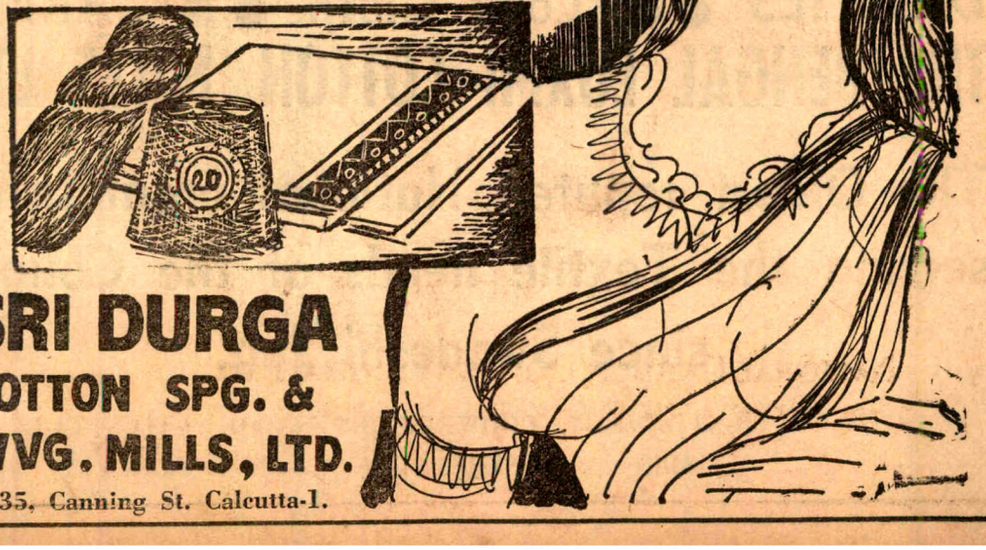

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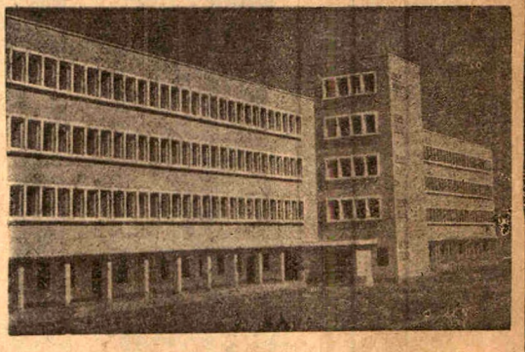

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THE DIVINE MOTHERHOOD

By Dr. MAHANAMBRATA BRAHMACHARI, M.A., Ph.D., D.Lit.

THE relation between the Universal and the individual, the whole and the part, the Creator and the created, God and Man, had been a pristine subject of religio-philosophical search on the part of the spiritual giants of human civilisation. Of all their findings as presented in the sacred literatures of various nations, one, that constitutes the closest, the deepest and the most profoundly soothing relationship, is the Motherhood of Divinity: To conceive of the Supreme Godhead as the Great Mother having a cozy lap to pacify all that languish, and unnumbered arms to embrace all that there is. This relationship is pre-eminently human and significantly alleviating. Ostensibly, this is the contribution of the Tantra Sastra of ancient India.

Tantric and Vedic are the two living streams of methodical thinking flowing across the Indian soil throughout the centuries even as the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, having one origin, the Himalaya range and one goal, the Bay of Bengal, wind opposite courses, the eastern and the western side of this Subcontinent. These two types of works *Agama* and *Nigama*, as they are often called, form the most significant parts of our ancient lore. The sacredness and authoritativeness of the both are venerated with reverence by the men of penetrating insights.

The Tantric and Vedic mode of thinking may be linked to scientific and philosophic ways of modern days. Both endeavour to find out the eternal truth underlying the manifoldness of the world, but their procedures are different, one having synthetic and the other analytic technique. Upanishads, the philisophic portions of the Vedas unify and long for an integral view through intuitive realisation. Tantras on the other hand separate the Universe into component parts by analytic dissection and attempt to see the Whole through

parts. Vedas gave us the Universality of thought, while the Tantras gave a searching factorisation of all kinds of facts under the Sun.

Sometimes the Tantras and the Vedas held diametrically opposite views, but often times, they embarced each other and by mutual endeavours, enriched the cultural trends of India. The unification of the Tantras and the Vedas, of Saktibad and Purushabad of the Chandi and the Gita, in our civilization bespeaks a profound integrality achieved by our early Seers.

SAKTIVADA

The essential teachings of the Vedas are integrated in the Bhagavata Gita and those of the Tantras are epitomised in the Chandi. To say a few words about the essential features of Tantra literature: Its first article of truth consists in Saktivada.

Saktivada means that Sakti is a Reality and It does exist. This is an undisputable theory. Nobody can deny it since its very denial presupposes its existence. Usually the postulates of sciences are to be taken for granted, to begin with. But the postulate of Tantras lies in the undeniable Saktivada. It constitutes the solid rock of Tantra's ideological structure. A Tantric devotee is proud of the fact that Tantra asserts nothing that is not based on man's experience. Veracity of any event may be questioned. Even the idea God, Soul, rebirth, heaven, hell, virtue, vice may be challenged, but the overwhelming reality of Sakti is beyond questions and criticism.

The second thesis of Tantra lies in the unitary existence of Sakti. Not only does Sakti exist but It alone exists. There is nothing under the Sun that is not a specification or conglomeration of Sakti in some form or other. Every object one comes in contact with physically or mentally is a collected mass of energy.

SAKTI IS ONE

The third article of Tantra is the oneness of all Saktis. Manifold though it appears, actually Its existence is unique and unimpeachable. Manifold kinds of energy are manifest in innumerable objects, but this is apparent. Deeper analysis brings out the fact that One and only One Sakti, i.e., Mahasakti stands out in the whole universe. All the sciences proclaim in unison the fact that there is one and only one energy that functions throughout the entire universe. The same energy that makes our heart throb accounts for the huge movements of the stars in the galaxies. All sciences of modern times unite to extol Mahasakti. But, of course, unlike a Sakta devotee they do not worship her in the laboratories. The reason is obvious. The modern science aims at controlling the Mahasakti for pragmatic purposes. Scientist would pay no adoration to the Mahasakti, since according to modern science Sakti (energy) is void of feelings or lifeless and unconscious matter. Matter has been transformed into energy by science but it is unconscious nevertheless and nobody cares to pay homage to a dead object. Here ancient Tantra parts company with modern science.

MA MAHASAKTI

According to Tantra Sastra, the Mahasakti is a fully conscious Spirit and hence is an object of worship and veneration. Instead of controlling, Tantra endeavours to establish communion with Sakti. Sakti, for a Tantric, is not only conscious but benignantly gracious also. The kindly disposition and heartfelt affection of the Sakti is deeply personal and unfathomably profound. No phrase of dictionary can adequately give expression to this gracious aspect of the Sakti. One single term and that one only possesses magically curative power is "Ma". This is the most magnificent of all designations of the Great Sakti.

Mahasakti is the Highest Being, the Brahman of the Upanishads. She is Supremely Motherly according to Tantra. The Great Mother is the source and goal of the entire universe. She is all-existent, all-consciousness and supreme beatitude. She is an object of highest love and adoration. Devilish Sambhu and Nisambhu wanted to control the Mother and the outcome was total frustration. Modern science is taking recourse to this Asuric way in attempting to control the forces of nature. The Tantra Sastra longs for establishing communion with Her through loving Puja.

MOTHER DURGA

Before manifestation of this creation the entire universe existed in Her bosom. This potential form of Her is Mahakalika. In Her we live, move and have our being. This sustaining power of the Mother is Maha-Lakshmi. We all are tending to Her as our final abode. This ultimate end of all life is Maha-Swaraswati.

Mother Durga is the all absorbing unity of these three aspects. She is our Mother, our Creator, upholder and comforter. Let us invoke Her solemnly and pray for our ultimate refuge in Her Holy Sanctuary.

LOST HORIZONS

By LOTIKA GHOSE, B.Litt., (Oxon.) Dip-in-Ed., (Oxon.)

IF a man gain the whole world and lose his own soul, what profit shall it be to him? This question naturally rises in the mind of those who can resist the dazzle of the materialistic promise that is made to us in India today.

The vast lighted horizons of the soul seen by our sages whose light has not been denied to the poorest beggar, the most ignorant peasant, are dimmed today, nay, almost eclipsed by the dust raised as thunders by the Jagganaut chariot of so-called progress crushing our bodies, crushing our souls in its passage.

And if above all the din and bustle, the dust and smoke which has disturbed the age-old peace of Indian life, a voice is heard, it is the voice of greed asking for more and always more.

Men starve and machines are bought, huge profits are made and dissipated but the age-old poverty of the Indians remains. Economists and statisticians show a great rise in the per capita income but conveniently forget to show the per capita of expenditure which might perhaps reveal a deficit difficult to cover.

We are greedy for better standards, but have not the money to pay for them, individually or nationally. The capitalist is greedy for his gains, the big officer is greedy for a fat salary, the politician is greedy for office whilst the masses ask for wages which will buy bread for his children, for work which the machine is stealing from them, for shelter over their heads and clothes to cover their body. The result is that the nation suffers from a dangerous unease, the fore-runner of revolution.

VEDIC SACRIFICE

And yet from ancient times, since the symbolic Vedic sacrifice was made to the chanting of sonorous mantras and the singing of hymns, India realised that it is only through sacrifice that the riches of the spirit, the riches of the world can be gained. So the Vedic Rishis invoked the fire of sacrifice.

> "Oh! Prince of Riches, fix always in us that in which are the Gods, settle here many herds of the begotten son. In us may there be the happy things of true inspiration and the multitude of the large impulsion from which evil is far.
>
> Oh! King, Oh! Fire, let me enjoy by thee and thy princehood of the riches many riches in many ways; for Oh! Fire of many blessings there are many treasures for thy worshipper in thee the King." (*Rig Veda Mandala vi S 1 Translated by Sri Aurobindo*).

The same message transported from the Vedas is repeated in the Upanishads, the appeal to Agni, the Lord of Sacrifice to lead the worshipper through the straight path (*rijuh pantha*) which avoids the devious ways of sin which excites and hurries man leading him away from the good path, which can alone lead us to happiness or felicity.

> "Oh! God Agni, knowing all things that are manifested, lead us by the good path to felicity; remove from us the devious attractions of sin. To thee completest speech of submission we would dispose." (*Isha Upanishad verse 18 translated by Sri Aurobindo*).

The Gita repeats the same message of sacrifice.

> "With Sacrifice the Lord of creatures of old created creatures and said, By this shalt thou bring forth (fruits or offsprings) let this be your milker of desires.' "

Once again is the fact stressed that through sacrifice alone can our desiers be truly fulfilled. The same truth acts in material as well as spiritual things, for truth is one and the same in all things. In fact, as Sri Aurobindo says, the Gita insists that not only should Sacrifice, Yajna, be considered the most important part of life, but all life, all works should be regarded as sacrifice.

BUDDHISM & SACRIFICE

Buddhism is also based on sacrifice. Buddha sacrificed kingly power and riches to seek truth by which suffering can be annihilated and having found the truth preached it to his disciples,

> "This, Oh! monks, is the sacred truth of sufferings: Birth is suffering, old age is suffering, sickness is suffering, death is suffering, to be united with the unloved is suffering, to be separated from the loved is suffering, in short the five-fold clinging to the earth is suffering.
>
> "This, oh monks, is the sacred truth of the origin of suffering; it is the thirst for being which leads from birth to birth, together with lust and desire, which finds gratification here and there: the thirst for pleasure, the thirst for being, the thirst for power.
>
> "This, Oh! monks, is the sacred truth of the extinction of suffering; the extinction of this thirst by complete annihilation of desire, letting it go, expelling it, separating oneself from it, giving it no room."

The goal of Buddhism is not felicity but annihilation of suffering, but the way is the way of sacrifice and so once more we come back to this basic truth of Indian life.

GENESIS OF GREED

The sacrificer gave to the cosmic gods all his goods and the gods granted to him his prayer. According to the Gita he who takes without giving is a thief. And so the whole of Indian life was conceived as a ritual of sacrifice. The householder would only

take his meal after entertaining his *atithi* or guest, the housewife after everyone including servants had been served. The householder's duties, all of a social nature, were manifold, and every duty was performed as an offering, it being his *dharma* (a word that has a wider connotation than the word *religion*). The poor were regarded as *Daridra Narayana* and any offering made to them was to be made as one would make one's offering at the feet of the deity in the temple. The insistence was not on the act, but on the spirit in which the act was performed. It was always on the inner rather than the outer that the emphasis was laid. With western education it is on the outward act that we have learnt to concentrate, and therefore we have become mechanical in our thoughts and actions. The heart remains untouched and the soul unlifted. It is not unnatural therefore that the springs wherefrom rose the power of giving having dried up that soon the giving ceased, till we started to take without giving and greed set in, our demands increased and the satisfaction of this increased demand led to social imbalance which contains in it the seeds of either revolution or disintegration.

POWER OF SACRIFICE

At all supreme moments of her life, India has been guided by this ideal of sacrifice. It was through the power of sacrifice of her men and women that India was able to free herself from foreign rule without the force of arms. Men and women sacrificed their lives, embracing death on the scaffold, living in dark cold prison cells, sacrificing their careers, facing starvation with their families, dying of disease unattended or in free wards in hospitals — disease brought on by irregularity, strain and continued living on starvation level,—gladly suffering prison-life with criminals, and facing untold tortures for confessions or for breaking their spirit. And as the spirit of sacrifice spread, under the call of the Mahatmaji, men came in hundreds and thousands, answering the call to sacrifice sometimes their lives, and sometimes their liberty, so that neither bullets nor *lathis* nor arrests could deter them.

It is only ten years since we have won freedom at so much cost and yet already men's hearts have grown cold. The altar lies unlit where the flaming fire of sacrifice should arise? Men whose words could inspire men and women to face bullets today can inspire no more. Where lies the ill? Is it because we are following a mirage which will never be converted to reality? Is it because we are victims of false values and have placed our faith in machines valuing them above human life? And above all, is it because we have turned to the West which has taught us to increase our material demands so that we should always remain beggars at her doors?

GONE ASTRAY

We have forgotten the words of our wise ones, forgotten the way of simplicity, the straight path, *Rijuh Pantha*, of life lived simply in joy and truth and have strayed into the devious paths of sin, always hasting, always unsatisfied, always straining for more and still more. Every nation has its own *Dharma* and what is the *swadharma* of the West can never be our *swadharma*. And yet our lives, our institutions, our very physical environment is being streamlined into the American pattern forgetting the reason for which we claimed freedom.

> **"Our ideal is that of Swaraj or absolute autonomy free from foreign control. We claim the right of every nation to live its own by its own energies according to its own nature and ideals. We reject the claim of aliens to force upon us a civilization inferior to our own or to keep us out of our inheritance on the untenable ground of a superior fitness——We have brains, we have courage, we have an infinite and various national capacity. All we need is a field and an opportunity. That field and opportunity can only be provided by a national Government, a free society and a great Indian culture".**

These were the words of Sri Aurobindo in his open letter to his countrymen in July 1909. India cannot live by aping the West but must live by her own ideals, ideals which great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath held up before us by their precept and example. It is not plans, committees and commissions whereby material prosperity can be built up but by sacrifice, gladly and willingly offered for the country's good by India's millions. It is not by demands, by strikes, by slogans that the Indian masses can build up their prosperity, but by humbly offering to their Motherland their work as worship and accept from the Mother the gift which she will give us. This sacrificial work cannot be extorted from slaves but be given freely by free men. Is that freedom ours? We are slaves to primal instincts, to our lusts, slaves to a barren system that can never be creative. Greed at one end and hunger at the other hold us in fee.

POWER OF SHRADDHA

There are two other creative forces that I would speak of, valued by our ancients. One is *shraddha* and the other *love*. The word respect or even reverence does not convey the meaning of *shraddha*. It has a much wider and a rather different connotation. The bond of *shraddha* is perhaps the most creative, the most binding of all bonds, whether in the family, the school, the society or the State. It is only if the child has *shraddha* for his parents, the student for his teacher, men for each other, and the citizen for the State that the family, the State, the nation will cohere and not disrupt. It is only if the student has *shraddha* for his teacher that the teacher can give his student the best in him. *Shraddha* is the creative bond on which human institutions grow and flourish. Perhaps the greatest disruptive force in modern India is this loss of *shraddha*. Little men to accomplish their little ends are striking at the basis of this quality without which Independent India cannot be built on firm foundations. On the one hand rapid centralisation is making the individual a mere cipher in a complex machinary where his individual worth is of no value, where the machine is the master robbing him of his employment, his power of creation, his initiative, his very freedom. In the factory, in the office, in our schools and colleges, everywhere men are slaves tied to the chariot wheels of a so-called progress, whipped to run faster and faster fearful of lagging behind lest he be crushed out of existence. In slaves we can only evoke fear, from slaves we can only exact obedience. *Shraddha* can only be freely given by free men to men and institutions worthy of their *shraddha*. Mesmerised by so-called western progress we pay but lip service to the words of our great ones who pointed to us the way of toil, the way of simplicity, the way of truth, the

(Continued on Page 201)

DIVINE PROPERTY

By D. P. SHARMA, I.C.S. (Retired)

A SCIENTIFIC outlook on life is essential. The emergence of man on the Earth planet is recent and presumably, also the latest from a scientific point of view. Perhaps the delay in his coming accounts for the complexity of his composition and character. In the whole range of creation, particularly the animate creation, he stands out supreme. To quote the words of Tennyson he is "the roof and crown of creation"—a self-assumed title no doubt, but nevertheless an honest, undisputed title. While scientists claim superiority of man over animal, the philosophers do not like to be out-distanced in the race. Some of them venture to go near enough to claim kinship with God: others loudly proclaim identity. The condemnation of man by man is also not less emphatic. Many consider that man is no better, if not worse, than beast and feel ashamed rightly or wrongly of his recent ancestry.

"MAN IS MAN"

I am inclined to take the line of the least resistance. I do not dispute what others say. I simply stick to the basic, inescapable fact that man is man. He is neither beast nor God—God as a Spirit or as a Personal Being. He just belongs to a different grade and order of existence.

If we take a consistent view of life, and do not deny his recent animal ancestry, we cannot, by any canon of logic, deny him the right of claiming future divinity as well. The points of contact between man and animal are unquestionably many. Can we not, by the same process of reasoning, see that the possibility of his rise is also infinite?

The ethos of man is both chaotic and creative. As the former, he has not only his possibilities but also his danger—the danger of defeat and death. It is up to him, endowed as he is with the freedom of action and the freedom of conscience, to raise himself. The measure of his defeat is the measure of his failure to gain ascendency over the beast. His failure is his spiritual death. As the latter i.e. as creative, he finds his vocation. To fulfil it is to be human. The purpose of his existence is to create and to contribute and not to rot and decay. Our every day experiences of life prove that it is so. He swings dangerously backward and hopefully forward.

EVOLUTIONARY URGE

Now, what I have realised is that there are ways and means open to man by which a higher stage of evolution can be reached by him. But there must be a preparation,—a very serious and strenuous preparation,—for it. Transition is from stage to stage, from grade to grade. And every transition needs adjustment, training, disposition and discipline. Therefore, his instruments, equipments and supplies have got to be augmented, refined and perfected to suit new conditions, new demands.

There is a very deep-seated and well-grounded belief that the evolutionary urge in man is impelling him to a richer, rounder, fuller and freer life. If he is greater and better than beast, he must prove himself to be so.

"CHARACTER"—ITS MEANING

To me it seems that there is only one distinctive element that can justify that claim of man. It is character. I have often puzzled, however, what this simple English word "character" stands for. Some of the dictionary meanings are:—"Peculiar qualities of a man, property etc. etc."

It is noticeable that none of these meanings gives us that clear idea which the single word 'character' suggests. When we speak or think of a man of character we always conjure up the image of a man possessing certain distinctive qualities, but what we are not always quite clear about is what those traits are. If we expand this idea a little then it becomes quite obvious that certain special qualities or attributes or properties as I prefer to call them go to constitute character and to the extent he is lacking in any or all of them he is unable to establish either his superiority over animal or his kinship and identity with God.

THE ETHICAL MAN

If we now eliminate the common traits between man and animal then we should not fail to see that character emerges into a new light. It becomes quite patent that it is grounded in moral principles. In common parlance we often loosely talk of immorality in the sense of sexual irregularities. This is obviously a very restricted meaning. Every infringement of ethical laws is an act of immorality. Theft, murder and so on and so forth are not less immoral acts than adultery, incest, etc.

A close and searching analysis leads me to the conclusion that moral laws, made by man for observance by man, for the regulation of his relation with others of his kind as well with the entire animal creation constitute the corner-stone of his life. It is his knowledge of good and evil that places him on a higher level. It is precisely his own advance towards his own free fashioning of life that must ultimately matter. It is the ethical man who stands above animal.

GEETA & CHARACTER

Lately, as I was going through the Geeta, the first three *slokas* of its sixteenth chapter suddenly revealed to me more forcefully than anything else had ever done before the hidden meaning of the word character. The eighteen kinds of *daivi sampatt* (divine property) enumerated therein go to the making of man's character. These qualities are:—

(1) *Fearlessness,* (2) *Cleanness of life,* (3) *Steadfastness,* (4) *Charity,* (5) *Self-restraint* (6) *Devotion,* (7) *Study,* (8) *Austerity* (9) *Up*

rightness, (10) *Harmlessness,* (11) *Truth,* (12) *Absence of Anger,* (13) *Exercise of the Right Kind of Energy,* (14) *Forgiveness,* (15) *Fortitude,* (16) *Purity,* (17) *Absence of Hatred and* (18) *Absence of Pride.*

These are the traits that must be developed. Of course, it is not possible to acquire all of them, all at once. We have to strive for them. In very rare cases, indeed, all of them are found in any particular individual and even those of them that are found are not found in the same degree. *

No more words are I think necessary to bring out the distinction between man and animal. It will be seen that man, in every walk and condition of life, needs all these qualities or properties. He has to pay no gold for their acquisition. By his own individual efforts he can acquire them. Training in his vocation, his ability to determine the course of events, to co-operate in the workshop of reality are conditioned by his own creative genius.

SARVODAYA & LIFE

Sarvodaya of Mahatma Gandhi's conception, I take it, aims at an all-round improvement of our life, as the meaning of the word Sarvodaya itself implies. We cannot—and I feel emphatic about it—bring about any improvement in any sphere, be it educational, administrative or any other unless and until we improve the moral tone and tenor of our life. Unless this has been achieved, other improvements will have no sure and secure foundation. Let not hypocrisy come to play any part in our life. We must live up to certain principles and ideals. They must be strictly adhered to. Actually, we deceive ourselves when we try to deceive others and there is no greater evil than self-deception. There is a good deal of carping, cavilling criticism of others going on all round. We should be a little sparing. Self-criticism will probably do more good. In our unity, in harmony, in common basic decency, in devotion to the country and its cause lie our salvation.

TRY TO BE MAN

Independent India expects that everyone of us should make our contribution, however small, to the fulfilment of her destiny. Our national weakness is disunity. Let us pull ourselves together, so that we may be able to pull through. History clings to us with its pointing finger of accusation and warning. Avoid the pitfalls. Try to be a man if you do not know how to make a god of yourself. Man has to acquire character and not animality or divinity. Character, which is another name for 'Divine Property,' is the hall-mark of humanity. In its acquisition and development lies the fulfilment of our vocation. He who has acquired it is the best of judges amongst us. Progress, prosperity and peace of mankind depend upon a proper understanding of man by man.

PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

The key to a man's future (it is true of a nation's future as well) lies in his past. He who loses his past loses his future. It goes without saying that it cannot be recreated. But, as I have said, there is no escape from it either. If we are to rise as a nation we must live *in* the present *for* the future. Wisdom lies in giving up what is bad and sticking to what is good in our past. Past should be a support, a guide but never a companion. Constant companionship with the past leads to intellectual and spiritual decay and death. Ideas change with the passage of time. We must move in tune with the march of time. But it would be fatal to break ourselves completely away from certain basic principles—however ancient they may be. Individualism is the prerogative of every man and nation. If we go on merely imitating others, we cease to be what we are. The pattern of our future must not be woven on a Russian or an American loom. A rich and proud legacy has been left to us. Not in arrogance, not in pride but in humility and sincerity we can also say that we have something to give. It is a moral and spiritual legacy. We can distribute freely without getting poorer by doing so. If need be—and in many spheres need arises,—we should borrow, adopt and adapt, but should never do anything which is likely to injure our cherished principles and independence.

AGE OF SCIENCE

Let peace and happiness go with our message. The world stands on the brink of extinction. It is precariously poised. It is trembling between hope and fear. The supramental forces of light must be helped to gather strength and momemtum so that the devilish forces of darkness be dispersed and destroyed. A very critical stage has been reached by man. Science will be nescience, worse than black magic, if it be misused. We must combine to give a determined fight but our fight must always be on a higher, cleaner and securer plane. Principles and ideals must never be compromised. And in our fight we need the aid of the "divine-property" in the sense in which the Geeta defines it.

DO GOOD TO OTHERS

Man must acquire the ability to get over the barriers created by geography, history, politics, religion etc. etc. In his ignorance, he so pathetically clings to them and to his caste, colour and creed that he gets into the habit of thinking that they are essential to his progress and prosperity. Man must transcend these limitations. The superman of our conception is not a regimented man or a robot. In freedom of thought our duty should be performed—the duty that instils in us the sense of pleasure and privilege of doing good to others. Our Motto, *sarvabhoote hitarthe,* must always remain unchanged. The cry for peace should not be a cry in the wilderness. Without peace, the progress and prosperity of mankind is unthinkable, impossible. A man or a nation is an enemy of mankind that is actively engaged in its annihilation. Peace is not a negative or passive attitude of mind. It has positive contents and in abundance they will be found in the eighteen elements of character to which I have referred.

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* I make no attempt, however, to elaborate the underlying meaning of these eighteen elements of character. Any attempt of the kind will make the article too unwieldy. I simply wish to mention, in passing, that I have taken a certain amount of liberty with the English translation of some of the Sanskrit words to suit my present purpose without in any way hurting their original intention and technical meaning.

Aeonology: A Study That May Herald Human Unity

By Dr. IMMANUEL OLSVANGER

Dr. Immanuel Olsvanger, the most renowned Sanskrit scholar of Israel, is also the Chairman of Israel-India Association. Dr. Olsvanger has visited India several times, and he counts Sri Nehru and Dr. Radhakrishnan among his friends. He has translated the Geeta in Hebrew. Dr. Olsvanger in this article dives deep into the mysteries of the Infinite in Space and Time and reveals his feeling of oneness with it. He says that this aeonological insight will enable man "to forget all petty quarrels between man and man, State and State, between warring desires and passions, and he will no longer be bewildered, torn and restless, for there will reign in his soul a beatific peace, firm as the changeless Aeon."

THIS essay intends to express some thoughts and feelings experienced by its author recently or in days gone by. It is not aiming at probing the depths of any exact science, nor at evolving any rigid philosophical system. It searches a spiritual approach, perhaps, to find a link between myself and the Universe in which I live. I shall not indulge in sentiments thought out or in ingenious speculations. Rather shall I endeavour to express such sentiments and thoughts that grow on the field of the mind which strives to know and to experience Truth Eternal, i.e. Truth not limited by boundaries of Space and Time. Which is deciding: felt experience or proved knowledge? I cannot tell. We may experience something that is void of reality. But knowledge, too, may pluck its fruits from trees that grow, but not from earthly roots. Thus, the science *kat exochen*, i.e. mathematics, is building its palace on a foundation which has no palpable reality. The point, the line, the tri-dimensional figures, with which geometry deals, are but abstract imaginations having no real existence. How strange that even in numbers created by our own human mind, there are properties generally accepted as being true, and still that very human mind cannot adduce an indebatable proof of these properties in spite of the most ingenious attempts of the greatest mathematicians through centuries! One example will suffice: the famous Fermat-assertion that the equation

$$a^n + b^n = c^n$$

admits of no solution in positive integer numbers in case $n > 2$. This has been proved for many values of n, but no general proof for all its values could as yet be found.

THE UNKNOWABLE WORLD

Thus, the world in which we live and upon the knowledge of which we depend in our daily life, has not as yet revealed to us its secrets, the example adduced being one of a host of much graver moments, in this or other fields. But I feel, and I cannot give up this feeling, that beyond the world apprehended by our senses, there is a wider world, complicated and rich, unknowable to us because of the inadequacy of our five senses, and that in that world are hidden elements and their combinations that can produce forms of beauty, apprehended by another sense, just as hues and tunes combine to form works of art to please our eyes and ears. And that other world and its, possible, Art, which we with our senses cannot even imagine, is agitating my soul not because such is my whimsical wish, but because that intuitive feeling grows from the depth of my inner being. Escapism? No, for I fear nothing and have no need to escape from anything. That word which neither brightens nor lightens, is but mockery, whereby the scoffer himself escapes with self-complacency the labour of lifting the veil!

THE ETERNAL QUESTION

Man is constantly treading different paths in his search after the secret of the Universe and after that of himself as part of the Universe.

The biblical story of Adam, the first man, relates the first step of this search. He lived a short time, happy and blissful, knowing his place which was the All. And only after having tasted from the tree of erring knowledge, the All became estranged to him. Then did he hide amongst the trees of the Garden of Heaven. Then in a voice thundering, commanding a clear reply the Ancient of Days called out to him: "Where art Thou?" And he, the man, knew it no longer and gave answer in tottering words, perturbed in soul and mind, filled with fear and shame, to that clear and simple question: "Man, where art Thou?" This is an eternal question, directed to us always and everywhere, and claims an answer. "Where am I?" I crave to know where I am, where in Space and where in Time? As relating Time, the one simple reply to this question would seem to be: "I am in this present generation". But at once a difficulty arises. What is a generation? We are used to divide History in epochs and generations. There is one epoch, of which we know practically nothing and which we call the "prehistoric age."

We are apt to forget that "prehistoric man" never knew that he lives in a "prehistoric age"! His was for him the last and highest stage of civilization. We say, he was "primitive", "savage", void of knowledge. Yet they, those prehistoric savages, have left us a mighty cultural heritage, viz. language! A heritage, to which nothing new, nothing essentially new, has been added since the time those prehistoric savages have created it, God knows how, "and happily He too knows not"! Whenever new words are required for new conceptions, we can only search in the inherited treasury and coin a word by changing and combining elements found in it, or by borrowing from other languages or reborrowing from them

what they had borrowed from us. No new word-root has been created in historic times, but for some stray sound imitations or words of fanciful fictions, e.g. Swift's Lilliput, or adaptation of proper names, e.g. Volt, Ampere, or again some modern abbreviations like U.S.A., UNESCO, etc.

The attempts to create artificial languages, the so called *Linguae Philisophicae* of the 17th and 18th centuries, have miserably failed. (One should mention in this connection the purely artificial grammatical terminology created by Panini). The savage, prehistoric man, was, then, endowed with a subtle intellectual, intuitive, gift which will never again be granted to this or any future generation. Thus, our present generation is still walking, at least in one sense, in the light of the genius of "the prehistoric age"

AN EMPTY PHRASE

Where, then, is the beginning of this our "present generation"? This appears to be but an empty phrase. One generation springs from remotest antiquity, having flown and constantly flowing into a distant Future; the same river with ever-changing waters! What, indeed, is the "present generation"? Do those who died during the last, say, five years or those who will be born five years hence, belong to it or not? Nay, this thing called "Present" is but an immaterial plane, through which the eternally evolving events pass. Our personally experienced lives are combined of reminiscences of a Past, relatively near or remote, and expectations of a Future, relatively near or remote. If, however, instead of "our generation", I speak of the Aeon in which the human race and all in the Universe is continuously evolving as in one indivisible Unit of Time, then everything assumes a new aspect; now I know another answer to the question: "Where am I?" I am in the Aeon, that stupendous unit of Time and Space, immovable and in which everything moves. Indeed, does Time move? With what speed? The absurdity of this last question proves the absurdity of the idea of moving Time. From now on, I know and feel: I am a contemporary of all that lives in this Aeon, be it in prehistoric ages or in those of the most remote Future. People of *all* ages I know and feel to be my contemporaries. They surround me, talk to me, educate me, irrespective of their separation from me in Time and Space. Their joys and sorrows I experience as being my own. All sections of the Aeon influence each other, even the Future the Present! For it is in anticipation and in foretaste of a future satisfaction of himself or posterity that man of Art and Science works and labours.

A LOFTY ADVENTURE

I have no doubt that the day will come when man will ascend to descend on the moon and on the planets. Knowing full well that this end will be achieved in a more or less distant Future, men of diverse fields of Science are working today for the attainment of this lofty adventure. I do equally believe, on the basis of rational thought, in a future interchange of messages between the widely separated heavenly bodies, including our own Earth, though the sending of the message and the receipt of the reply may take, in some cases, a hundred or hundreds of years, depending upon the distance between two heavenly bodies in terms of light-years. But it need not; a message sent from the earth to a planet circling round the Syrius would return to Earth in but sixteen years. In any case, however, a message would be sent to a planet whilst we see it as it was years or decades or centuries ago. For, whilst gazing at the starry sky, we see as if on its surface shining bodies as they were in the Past, and not one single one as it is in our Present.

Take the familiar constellation of the Great Bear, those seven luminaries filling us, with aesthetic elevation, one of whom is 220 light-years distant from us, another 80 and yet another 50! The figure of that constellation, as it appears to the onlooker of the northern hemisphere, was never in reality such as it seems. And all of them united by some power of magical illusion to delight my obsessing eyes in what seems to me one section of Space in what seems to me to be the Present. To the left of it, I can observe, through the telescope, the mighty nebula whose rays have left it 6000,000 years ago to fall on the retina of my eye just now! Again, to the right of the Bear I see, even without aid, the nebula of the Andromeda, whose rays started on their journey to me some 1,500,000 years ago! Let us look and meditate on this glorious page of the Book of the Aeon: who with a heart of flesh in his breast will not be profoundly stirred by the unfathomable, ineffable majesty of that infinite, in Time and Space united, all-overwhelming Aeon?

DIVINE AEON'S CITIZEN

Whenever I meditate on it in a clear night, when from above I see nothing but signals from severally distant Pasts, I feel: I am a citizen of this Divine Aeon; it is my place, my "here", it is my generation, my "now"! I further ask: are we humans the only being endowed with mind and spirit in this voluminous Infinitude? There is no cause for us to entertain such an arrogant presumption which, in addition, makes us feel lost and bewildered. Life, mind and spirit, diffused everywhere in this terrestrial globe, from the profundities of the ocean up to the highest strata of the atmosphere, in micro-organisms, plants, animals, seems to be the very essence of Nature working in the Aeon, and there is no reason to believe that there are no *Sapientes* somewhere else in the vastness of its realm, Sapientes whose organisms are suited to live under other conditions than those prevalent on our Earth.

TOWARDS WORLD UNITY

Thus, I find a reply to that initial biblical question addresed to man: "Where art Thou?" I am in the Aeon and of the Aeon! Does it make me small and insignificant vis-a-vis such grandeur? Bodily, measured by inches and seconds, yes! But spiritually it makes me great, for I embrace with my mind the whole of the vast extension! My soul becomes a mirror, in which all the parts of the Aeon, in Space and in Time, are reflected. Should one ask: "of what use in this insight in Space-Time Unity of the Aeon?" I shall reply: "It is of no use on the market-place: but its value is immense, educating man's soul to realise its essence in a new light, translucent, sublime.

In this aeonological insight, once it becomes indwelling in man without detracting him from the duties of his daily life, man will forget all petty quarrels, between man and man, between State and State, between warring desires and passions, and he will no longer be bewildered, torn and restless, for there will reign in his soul a beatific peace, firm as the peace of the changeless Aeon. Mankind, illumined by that insight, will strive in cooperation to attain its highest purpose. Then, the family of nations, divided by different languages of speech, united in the one language of the heart, will resemble one united orchestra, each playing its own specific instrument in a symphony of thanks to the Spirit permeating the Aeon. That will be a symphony of insurpassable beauty, if only each player will keep his eye fixed on the baton of the Conductor who resides in him because He resides always and everywhere in the Aeon.

INDIA & THE ARAB WORLD

By DR. SUNITI KUMAR CHATTERJI

Chairman, West Bengal Legislative Council

LEAVING aside the States of the Soviet Union, which are now within the sphere of Russian influence, the rest of Asia can be said to consist of three main cultural worlds—the World of India in the centre with ramifications in South-Eastern and Central Asia; the World of China, with extensions in the Far-East (including Korea, Japan and Viet-Nam); and the Arab World in Western Asia, within whose orbit through Islam have come Turkey, Iran and the Turki peoples of Central Asia, as well as Pakistan, Malaya and Indonesia, and partly India. In these three particular domains were created three distinct ways of life, which still embrace a large number of peoples, and they are active forces in the life and civilisation of Asia. The world of China was profoundly influenced by the world of India through Buddhism and Indian thought and some of the Indian sciences and arts and crafts; and it is now becoming clear that the world of China also to some extent influenced that of India, but this matter is one which has got to be investigated into more closely. There was an influence from India in the formative period of the culture which we connect with the Arab world and Islam, particularly in thought and science. On the other hand, the Arab world with Islam has for the last 1000 years profoundly modified the life and thought of India, particularly in Northern India, and has added new elements into the synthesis of Indian civilisation.

TWO GEOGRAPHICAL & ETHNIC UNITS

India and Arabia are two self-contained geographical units in the South and West of Asia, and they present more a series of contrasts than agreements in their physical situation. India is a land of many climates and shows a remarkable variety—it is more like a continent than a single country. But Arabia is largely uniform with its wide deserts and barren hills, and deep river valleys (*Wadis*) which during a brief spell in the course of the year receive some rain and then there is vegetation. Except for a number of oases, which are scattered all over the country, with their rills of water or wells and groves of the date-palm, Arabia is a country virtually denuded of vegetation, excepting in certain parts like the seaboard tracts along West Arabia, and in South Arabia. Some aromatic plants grow in Arabia, and one of the exports from Arabia has been incense of various sorts.

The variety and exuberance of Nature in India has been responsible for a high civilisation having developed in the country; and in the formation of this civilisation, more than one race of people, some four at least, have participated. Through the fusion of these peoples and their cultures, and welded by the genius of the Aryans and their Sanskrit language, a uniform type of civilisation has develop in India binding all the various races.

In Arabia the population is more homogeneo It belongs to a single branch of the white race, t Semitic Arabs in two ramifications—that of the No thern and Central Arabs, and that of the Southe Arabs, who are also known as Himyarites or S baeans. The Arabs developed their primitive way life based on the economy of a pastoral and nom dic people. With their flocks of sheep and their he of camels, and latterly of horses, the Arabs mo from place to place, from oasis to oasis, and t developed the elements of their nomadic cult which could not create anything great or original the entire period of antiquity. Since their cour was not productive, the Arabs of the outlying ar particularly in South Arabia, in West Arabia and North Arabia, as well as along the Persian G developed trade and business, and they special in the business of carrying commodities from country to another. This formed in all periods of the important items of their economic life. As trading people who are required to meet diffe nations, the Arabs quite early developed an alert of mind and a power of adaptability, besides a s of adventure, which became some of the great sets in their life and character. The people of Ar came in touch with the highly civilised nations the Mesopotamian Valley, where one of the gr est original civilisations was started by the anc Sumerian people. These were later on influenced an early branch of the Semitic people from A and Syria, known as the "Akkadians," and Akkadians ultimately absorbed the original Su rian people of Mesopotamia and adopted their gion and culture, but they imposed their own guage. These Akkadians became the ancient B lonian people, with a language akin to Arabic with a religion and culture which belonged t Sumerians. The Arabs proper of Arabia came influenced by their kinsmen, these Babylonians. were also influenced by the Jews from Palesti well as by the Southern Arabs or Himyarites. also, as a country on the other side of the Re and linked up with Arabia in the North, influ the Arabs to some extent. For the greater pa the first thousand years before Christ, the Ara the South, the Himyarites particularly, had tions with India (South India and the De through sea-borne trade. It was thus primaril way of the sea that in ancient pre-Christian the Arabs of South Arabia came in touch wit people of India.

INDIAN THOUGHT TRAVELS WESTWARD

Indian civilisation was taking its definite during the early centuries of the first mille before Christ, and Indian thought travelled ward through Iran into Greece during the before 500 B.C., but evidently the Arabs as a

ve people confined to their country were not touch-
l. Indian commodities made their way into the
estern world, and the Arabs also got a number of
ticles from India, mainly through Iran. Already in
e language of the Koran, which is one of the old-
Arabic Books, there are some words of Indian
gin to indicate commodities which the Arabs ob-
ned from India. A fruit like the coconut, a vege-
le like the brinjal, a condiment like the ginger,
ong other things, and Indian steel, which was
hly esteemed among the pre-Islamic as well as
t-Islamic Arabs (such steel was known as *Muha-*
a or 'the article from *Hind* or India"), and various
gs (e.g., camphor), were received by them. But
y little in the way of ideas could come to the
bs, as they were not highly advanced intellec-
lly. Before the advent of the Prophet and the
blishment of Islam, the whole period of pre-
mic history in Arabia came to be known, to the
mic Arabs, as the *Jahiliyya* or "the Age of Igno-
ce": which shows that in certain respects the
Islamic Arabs were considered to be very much
ward when compared with the post-Islamic
s. But nevertheless, through contact with
ylonian as well as with Syrian and Greek cul-
s, the Arabs of the Northern parts of Arabia had
up a cultural world of their own; and in the
of Palmyra in Northern Arabia, on the borders
yria, they had built a great State, and two Arab
reigns, King Udhaynathun and his Queen Zay-
who came to be known to the Greeks respec-
y as Odenathos and Zenobia, became quite dis-
ished and well-known as enlightened rulers
g the days of the early Roman Empire.

M, SUFIISM & VEDANTA

slam was the creation of the Semitic Arab mind
rily, and in its bases there have been profound
h influences. The rigid and uncompromising
theism of Islam is fundamentally Hebraic, and
monotheistic idea did not exist from the begin-
among all sections of the Semitic people. The
al Semites were polytheists as much as other
s of antiquity. Koranic Islam owned a great
o the personality of Prophet Muhammad. The
and narrow path of orthodoxy, with its
te and uncompromising faith in a Single
y, who is a Jealous God and the Great Task-
and Final Judge—that is what Islam has
ed to the whole human race. But a century
he passing of the Prophet, Islam, which had
started as an Arab reform movement, began
modified in the direction of mysticism and
experiences. This gave a new colour to a reli-
hich fundamentally consisted of an unques-
faith in a Single Divinity and in the neces-
man living a good life according to the pres-
s of this Divinity as revealed through His
. But mystic vision of a new type came into
nd added a new world to it. Islamic mysti-
asawwuf or *sufiism*, was developed owing to
es from other ways of thinking. This began
t the Muslim Arab mind and spiritual aspira-
he Greek conception of *Gnosis* or "Spiritual
" was adopted by the Sufi mystics, particu-
Sufis like Dhu-n-Nun of Egypt, and this
ame to be known in Arabic as *Ma'rifat*. This
owed, what competent scholars have thought,
ndian or Vedantic conception of *Nirvana*
or the emancipation of the human soul and
on of its individuality by merging into the
Being; and this idea was rendered into
s *Fana fi-llah*. During the first two decades
0th century A.D., the Sufi saint and sage
al-Hallaj, who was of Iranian origin but
settled in the Arabic-speaking world of Iraq, came to India in order to study the Indian magic and mysticism, and after his return to Iraq (Baghdad), he declared before the Arab-Islamic world his great doctrine of *Ana-l-Haqq*, which means "I am the Truth", and by this doctrine he preached the essential unity of the human soul with the Divinity. This was Indian Vedanta, which he appears to have studied in India, and the Arabic expression *Ana-l-Haqq* is virtually a rendering of the Upanishadic expression *Aham Brahma asmi*, i.e. "I am the Supreme Spirit".

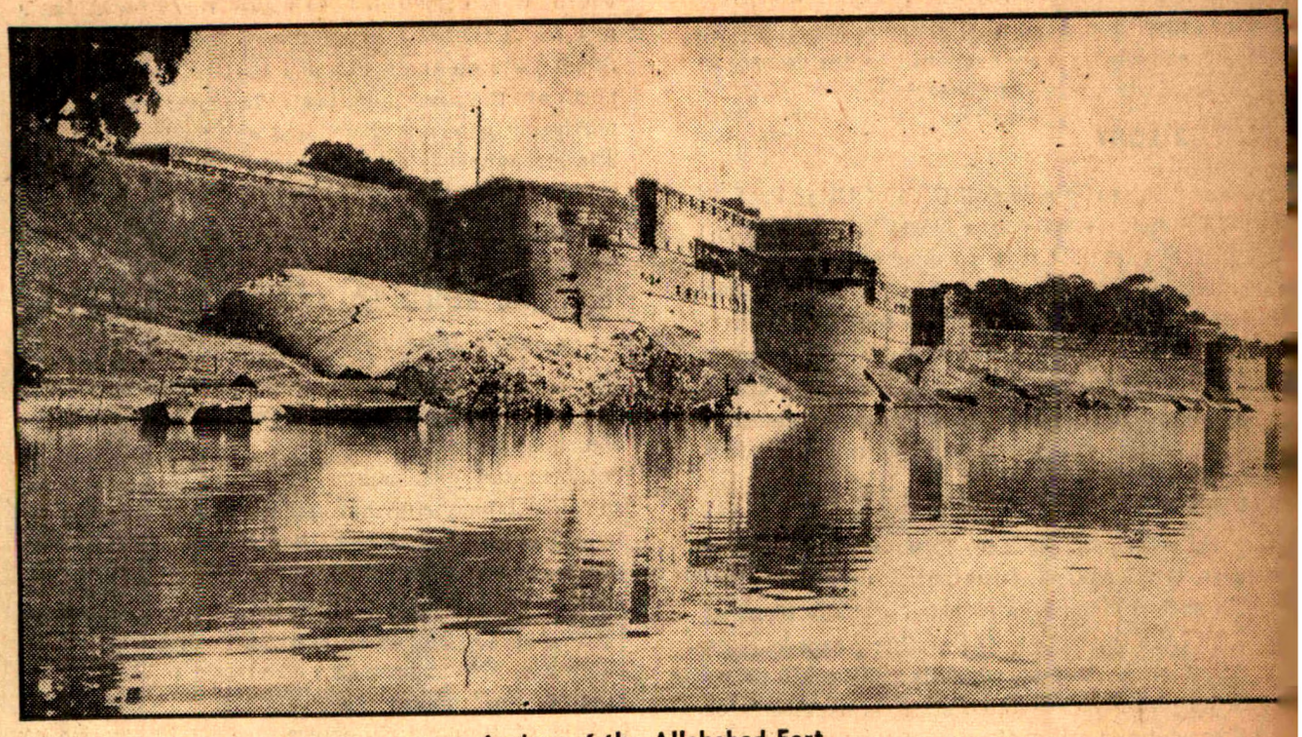
TWO OCEANS MEET

This was not understood by the orthodox Muslims of Iran, and to suggest the identification of the human soul with the Supreme Spirit was considered to be blasphemy. The orthodox *Mollas* and others accused Mansur al-Hallaj of preaching a doctrine contrary to Islam; and there was a protracted trial for two years, and finally Mansur al-Hallaj was condemned to a cruel death for blasphemy. But although Mansur al-Hallaj was put to death, his ideas came to enrich Islamic thought and mysticism, and later on Sufiism or *Tasawwuf*, which was looked upon as heterodox and anti-Koranic, was brought within the range of higher Islamic thought and Islamic orthodoxy by the great Islamic Philosopher Al-Ghazzali. In several other matters, some Indian points of view were also adopted by the older Sufis. The famous Arab Sufi, who was born in Spain, namely Ibn al-'Arabi of the 13th century, who is one of the greatest mystics of history and a mystic poet of a profound character, is said to have assisted at Damascus another Arab Sufi in translating into Arabic a Sanskrit work on Yoga called the *Amrita-Kunda*. Certain Yogic practices, including the idea of the six centres of spiritual power within the body (Sanskrit *Shat-chakra*, in Arabic *Manazil*, or "the Stations within the Body"), were adopted into Islamic Sufiism. Sufiism and Vedanta found a common platform in some of their ideas and in their general attitude to God and Man and the duty of Man, so that all these agreements between the higher thought of both Hinduism and Islam came to be poetically described as *Majma'u-l-Bahrain*, or "the Union of the Two Oceans", which expression (in Sanskrit *Sagara-Sangama*) was used by the great Sufi thinker and writer Prince Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of Shah Jahan and great-grand-son of Akbar in India during the first half of the 17th century.

INDIA INFLUENCES ARAB SCIENCES

Apart from this spiritual domain through Sufiism, India influenced also the Arab sciences. In Mathematics, the Arabs obtained the zero concept and the decimal notation from the Indians. These were among the greatest advances in Mathematics, and the Arabs passed them on to the European world. The Arabs called the numerals, as used on the decimal basis which they obtained from India, the *Rakam al-Hind* or "Indian Figures", and the world of Europe adopted this decimal system of writing numerals. But because the Europeans got this directly from the Arabs, and as they did not know its origin, they called these numerals "the Arabic Numerals". Indian Mathematics, Geometry as well as Algebra, were taken over by the Arabs, and they developed this science of Mathematics further. Astronomy was another science, which in the hands of the Arabs obtained greater developments. Another science in which India exerted a great influence upon the Arabs was that of Medicine. From the 8th century onwards, Indian Doctors were going to Mesopotamia, to Baghdad, and sometimes they stayed there,

(Continued on Page 197)



A view of the Allahabad Fort

THE HISTORIC FORTS OF UTTAR PRADESH

By DR. NANDALAL CHATTERJI
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IN former times, Uttar Pradesh was studded with forts of all kinds, forts of stones, of brick and of mud, built by rulers, big and small, no less than by baronical chiefs and petty land-owners. Apart from cities which were usually walled and fortified, even villages were often turned into fortresses by local chieftains whose mud-built castles could afford the much-needed protection to the inhabitants in times of war, confusion and anarchy. The character of the alluvial Gangetic plain made fortification essential to the security of the main approaches. Rocky ridges and elevated mounds, deep jungles and circuitous pathways, river confluences and strategic cross-roads—all favoured the growth of both isolated place fortresses and large and magnificent fortress cities, devised for military purposes. The frequent wars and invasions, not to speak of the kaleidoscopic changes in the political fortunes of the local people, made the forts the rallying points of kingdoms and empires all through the ages from the ancient times down to the British conquest.

ANCIENT FORTS

Nearly all the ancient fortresses of Uttar Pradesh are now mere mounds of desolation and heaps of ruins. Some of them were demolished and rebuilt in the medieval period. Broken mud ramparts and bastions are the only reminders of what once us to be massive fortifications in the bygone da Garhwa, a fort of the Gupta Age. 25 miles sou west of Allahabad, is now, for example, no bet than a mass of wreck. Again, the excavations Kausambi, once the capital of the Vatsa Kingdo have brought to light the remains of an extensive f with a circuit of 23, 100 ft., the ramparts where were 30 to 35 ft. high and the bastions being hig still. Take another instance. The fort of Kara, bu in the days of Jaichandra of Kanauj, is equally d pidated, as are the earthen fortifications of Jha the ancient Pratisthanpuri, on the other side Ganga, opposite Akbar's fort at Allahabad. high mounds in different parts of Uttar Pradesh s indicate the forgotten vestiges of ancient forts kingdoms like Hastinapur, Mathura, Kanauj, Kos Kashi, Kausambi and Prayag.

ELEGANT MEDIEVAL FORTS

The medieval forts of Uttar Pradesh are gener of solid sandstone. The walls are thick, while bastion and ramparts are stern and formida Construction used to be as ingenious as it elegant. From the base to the top the stone w were joined by strong iron rings so closely that e a hair could not find its way into the joints. Ap however, from the skilful engineering, the forts designed and built like pieces of fine architectu

into their composition were introduced graceful features like fosses, battlements, embrasures, machicolations stringcourses, towers, kiosks, cupolas, gateways and decorated palaces and mosques which exhibit a new trend in Indo-Islamic architecture. Strength and beauty were combined so dexterously as to give the forts a pleasing appearance.

JAUNPUR FORT

Among the early medieval forts of Uttar Pradesh that of Jaunpur stands in a class by itself. Even though most part of it is in a ruined state, it has still an abiding interest of its own. The town of Jaunpur, situated on the river Gomti, thirty-four miles northwest of Varanasi, was one of the strategic outposts which Firuz Tughluq, the Sultan of Delhi, established in the middle of the fourteenth century. Its fort, meant to be the eastern bulwark of the Delhi Sultanate, was strong and purposeful. Its style, at once bold and elegant, exercised not a little influence on the fort architecture of the age. Essentially Muslim in character, it yet embodied the purely indigenous features in such a manner as reflected a subtle blend of the best of the two styles. The aesthetic excellence in the conception of the fort, which is still faintly traceable in its pitifully devastated state, is expressive of the refinement and self-exaltation of the Sharqi rulers under whose brilliant rule Jaunpur became the Shiraz, a prime centre of art and learning of India.

The fort is now little more than a wreckage. Even those parts which had escaped destruction at the hands of Sultan Sikandar Lodi at the end of the fifteenth century were dismantled by the British after the Mutiny of 1857. Even the stone walls were pulled down. With them was demolished the fine Sharqi palace in the fort — the Chihil Satun, or hall of forty pillars built by Ibrahim Sharqi. The fort itself contains the impression of an irregular quadrangle. Begun by Firuz Tughluq and finished by Ibrahim Naik Nasir-bak, it occupies the site of the older Hindu stronghold of Kerakot.

AGRA FORT

The fort of Agra, a memorable example of Akbar's style of architecture, is a peari in a setting of gleaming red sandstone. Facing the waters of the Yamuna, this noble stronghold, the finest of its class in Uttar Pradesh, breathes of the wars, the conquests and the imperial glory of the Great Mughals, and colours in stone and marble, the epic splendours of the reigns of Akbar, Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb during whose time Agra was, for long, the metropolis of a far-flung empire stretching from Afghanistan to Bengal and from the Deccan to Kashmir.

The fort at Agra, a mile and a half in circumference, spreading crescentwise along the right bank of the Yamuna was built by Akbar on so vast a scale that it took about eight years (1565-73) and cost thirty-five lakhs of rupees to complete. The fort marks the site of an older Rajput citadel, called Badalgarh, which was demolished to make room for Akbar's new fort. Of the four gateways, the so-called Amar Singh Gate on the south and the Delhi Gate on the north are the most important. The river gate and the north-east gate are now closed and no longer in use. The stronghold is enclosed by two massive and lofty walls, loop-holed and embattled all along. Such was the strength of the fort that in Mughal times it was deemed absolutely impregnable.

MUGHAL BUILDING ART

According to the Ain-i-Akbari, Akbar built inside the fort over five hundred buildings of red sandstone, but most of them were later demolished by his grandson, Shahjahan, to make room for his luxuriously designed and ornamented marble edifices. But, the so-called Jahangiri Mahal, one of Akbar's own palaces, is still happily preserved. It is remarkable for the grace and vigour which animated the great builder's style of architecture. Its heavy brackets, decorated terraces, projecting eaves, serpentine struts, crenellated panels, oblong recesses and stately pillars, not to speak of the trabeated system of construction characteristic of Hindu architecture, are all illustrative of the broadminded tolerance and aesthetic taste of a great statesman who sought to evolve a national school of architecture of which both the Hindus and the Muslims could be proud.

But, it is Shanjahan who created most of the sumptuous buildings inside the fort. His works of art in marble, which have eclipsed the sandstone structures of his grandfather, mark a phase of construction of extraordinary delicacy and grandeur. If Akbar's style had marked the epic age of Mughal architecture, that of his grandson ushered in its lyric age. Shahjahan's buildings, which were more Persianized than Indian in style, embody features which herald the emergence of a new age of "Picture" architecture in his reign. Pietra dura inlay, ornate dado, cusped arch, bulbous dome, tapering pillar, voluted bracket capital and foliated bases give the marble creations a bewitching aspect reminiscent of the Golden Age of Mughal building art.

ALLAHABAD FORT

The impressive fort of Allahabad is the most capacious of its type built by Akbar. In his reign, it rivalled, in design and elegance, even the metropolitan fort of Agra. Its foundation was laid by the Emperor in 1583. Owing to its location on the confluence of the Ganga and Yamuna, the fort is necessarily of the triangular shape of a wedge or segment of a circle. Its sombre battlemented walls of red sandstone are as imposing as those of Agra. It had

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ON EDUCATION

By Dr. R. C. MAJUMDAR, M.A., Ph.D

EDUCATION perhaps invites more serious sermons, both oral and written, than any other subject outside politics. In addition to addresses on occasions like the Annual and Special Convocations of Universities when more than two to three dozens of the very elect illumine the subject every year, and more than two hundred reported speeches of less distinguished persons presiding over the prize distribution of Annual days of Colleges and Schools, we have high-level conferences of both official and non-official type which serve as occasions for high-sounding disquisitions on almost every branch and aspect of education. I have no intention, therefore, of adding one more to this large number of ponderous discourses. I propose to give the reader only a few rambling thoughts and some staggering revelations.

I shall begin with the students, for as a tree is known by its fruits, any system of education is best judged by its products. I shall begin with the very pick of students. The Public Service Commission calls for interview, for a test of general knowledge and outlook, only a small number who secure higher marks than the rest in a written examination. As these examinations are held for appointment to higher Government posts, naturally the persons selected for interview represent the very best students of the year. Now the experience I have gathered from such interviews regarding the knowledge and alertness of the students would have been most amusing if they were not really painful revelations of the intellectual calibre and personality of our young hopefuls. Students of Bengal know hardly anything about Surendranath Banerji. Even a large number of those who were taught at the college bearing his name were not much wiser than the rest. The majority knew nothing more than that he founded the College (probably a guess), a few knew that he was a patriot, very few could associate him with the Partition of Bengal in 1905 (quite a large number never heard of this partition), and not more than three or four had any idea of his contribution to Indian nationalism. Of Asutosh Mookerjee most of them knew very little, and of Bankim Chandra Chatterji even less. One who seemed to know something of Asutosh was asked whether he saw his statue anywhere in Calcutta. The answer was in the negative. Then it transpired that he was a student of the University Law College. Of course he must have seen the statue inside the building? But no, he had no knowledge of any such statue either in the building or anywhere outside it. Being cross-examined he admitted that during the three years he studied at the Law College he never ascended the grand staircase in the Darbhanga Building. He always passed through the corridor and the small staircases. After this it was hardly a matter of surprise that he and many others never saw the statue of Vidyasagar in the College Square and never heard of his name, far less his fame. A student who took his usual morning walk by the side of the toria Memorial Building could not say whether t was anything at the top of the dome.

What has been said above would convey a idea of the general knowledge and alertness of r possessed by even the best of our students. Reg ing the average type of students my idea is base the examination of the answer-papers of the candidates of several universities. These have passed the B.A. Examinations and must there be looked upon as types of students whom University has distinguished by hall-marks of hi education. Regarding the knowledge of the sub matter displayed by the answers, it would be a ral estimate if I say that not less than half the dents are ignorant of facts which should have known to a Matriculate of our days As regard knowledge of English, mistakes in the spellin simple words and violation of simple rules of g mar can only be described as horrible and sho in the extreme. More than half of the M.A. ex nees in a University (outside Bengal) have 'throne' as 'thrown' and 'caste' as 'cast.' I tolerate when Asoka "was succeeded Bindusara' "was ascended the throne," but when the t which "he was ascended" was "thrown" upon head and the age-old "caste" was "cast" upon face, I gave up all hope of our future hopefuls

But I found little relief when confronted the highest academic degree combined with search. A First Class First in M.A. Examinatio Ancient Indian History and Culture, carryin research under the auspices of the University awarded him the Degree, was a candidate f post of a curator of a Museum, and was select interview by a Public Service Commission with six or seven others among a large number of dates. He could not read even a simple Brahm cription, had no knowledge of sculpture, and nothing of architecture in ancient India. He not recognise the Saranath image of Buddha could he distinguish a Buddha of the Gupta from one of the Pala age, and explain the diff in style between a North Indian and Dravidian ple. When shown photographs of these two ty temples he could not say which belonged t north and which to the south. His defence wa he took up a group which had nothing to do either art, or epigraphy, or Buddhism, and carrying on research work in ancient Indian and culture to the full satisfaction of his sup without feeling the need of even a general ledge of these branches. Another candidate post of a lecturer in history in a Government was carrying on research work on Dalhousie a already submitted the thesis, but knew about Warren Hastings or Cornwallis, being the scope of the selected subject.

POOR TEACHING QUALITY

These types of specialisation are becor regular feature in universities and partly for the poor quality of teaching in our colleg

niversities. But the amazing ignorance of teachers not confined to the research-workers. One of the ndidates for the last-mentioned post was a tea- er in a Calcutta College for more than five years d he used to teach European history. When asked ether he could name any country in Europe ich had a very ancient civilisation like India, was nquered by foreigners, and got back independence the nineteenth century, he could not do so. He s next asked whether there was a country in rope which was carrying on struggle with the glish for independence, like India, early in this tury, but he could not answer. When Ireland was gested, he readily agreed; and when questioned ther there was any similarity between the me- ds followed in India and Ireland for achieving dom, he woke up, and as if to make up for his silence, said loudly and in a firm voice: 'Of rse of course, the Irish followed exactly the path down by Mahatma Gandhi.' Alas for the atma! Still more alas for the 'hundreds' of stu- ts whose 'advancement of knowledge' was in his (?) keeping for the next thirty years! He be- ed to a College where, I am told, more students admitted than there are seating accommodations class.

Why is there such a lamentable state of things? asks himself. Our mind naturally turns to the es and leaders of education in our country. a few statistical inquiries covering the first ten s of independence are suggested to our readers. ey pursue the inquiry perhaps the answer would evealed to them.

VICE-CHANCELLORS

The Vice-Chancellor of a University is the high t of our chief palladium of learning. How many Chancellors in the twenty and odd universities dia, during the last ten years, were persons could, even by the remotest stretch of imagina- be regarded as an educationist in the proper of the term? How many of them possessed h learning to be thought fit for the post of a ssor in any branch of arts or science with ninety-nine per cent of students are con- d? Not long ago, in a premier university of there was a Vice-Chancellor who never cross- e threshold of the university within twenty-five or more of the date when he was nominated coveted post. The only qualification of not a as that they played a part in high politics, or in high administrative (including judicial)

would not refer to the Chancellors, who are Governors. They remind me of the definition d given by Vidyasagar of revered memory in *dhodaya*, a book not known today, but was prized in our childhood. God, we are told in ook, has eyes but cannot see, ears, but cannot and so on. Our Chancellors' eyes and ears, n theory and practice, are the Honourable ion Ministers. Here again, the same question How many of the Education Ministers in during the last ten years are known to have their energy and attention, even to a slight to the real educational problems of our coun- ore, during, or after the period when they d the ministerial guddee? How many of them e capacity to do so? How many of them would en appointed by a Public Service Commission s, of course, there was a directive from High s—to the post of a Lecturer in a College? It would surely be possible to count on one's fingers those, if there be any, who would be appointed by a Selection Committee either a Professor, or a Reader or even a Lecturer in a Teaching University. The main qualification of our Ministers is the sacrifice they made for their country. I yield to none in my respect and reverence for them, and I sincerely wish that the country should not only honour them but also help them materially—but otherwise than by placing the Government, involving the future of the country and its millions of people, in their hands, simply because they suffered for the cause of the country. If the Englishmen and the Frenchmen proceeded on the same principle, their legislatures, after the two great wars, should have been filled by soldiers returning from the battlefield. Fighters for the country certainly deserve well of their country and should occupy a high place in society but unless otherwise qualified they should not be allowed to preside over the destiny of education which forms the very backbone of a country. It reminds me of one of those caustic, but very apt remarks for which Johnson was justly famous. 'Cows,' he said, 'are very useful animals (we Hindus hold them sacred), but who would ever let them into his drawing room?'

Coming to internal administration, it is a well-known fact that politics rather than a real academic spirit rules most, if not all the universities. Cases are very rare where the authorities really appreciate the scholarly contributions of a teacher, and it is almost the universal belief among teachers of all grades and categories that the time spent in study and research might be more profitably devoted to the humouring of the powers that be. The intellectual demoralisation of teachers as a class has proceeded far enough to cause grave anxiety to those who look upon them as builders of the future generations.

EXAMINATION SYSTEM

The Examination system which is the only known objective standard of measuring knowledge and intellectual attainments has come for evil days and evil tongues. Its defects and imperfections are many. Even he who runs may read them. But has human ingenuity invented a better system of testing knowledge? The defects are at least partly due to the way in which Examination is conducted, and the little importance attached to it even by highest University authorities. I was asked to examine M.A. answer-books of one university and I decided to return them as I was not familiar with the Hindi script in which some of them were written. The Registrar requested me to take the help of some friends who knew Hindi. I returned all the Examination papers with the remark that I take the university M.A. Examination too seriously to accept his advice. Recently there is an attempt to do away with the examination in high public appointments, and even removing the necessity of a minimum university Degree for posts where it exists. Of course, that would remove the slight difficulty that still exists in the way of nepotism.

Lastly we come to the expenditure on education which determines the salary of teachers. A handful of teachers at the top, whose number would not exceed one per cent, may be said to have enough for a decent livelihood without any side-business But even these are at best tolerated, and do not enjoy any prestige or esteem in the eyes of

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PROBLEM OF PRODUCTIVITY IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

By DR. U. P. BASU
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OF all the problems faced by India in the present stage of its developing economy, that of productivity is perhaps the most important one, as the real economic prosperity arises out of the fullest, proper and efficient utilisation of the available men, machines, raw materials and monetary assets.

The country has set before itself the ideal of achieving a better standard of living with a rapid but disciplined industrialisation under Five-Year Plans. In its onward march for an all-round improvement varied problems, financial, technical and administrative, are raising their heads almost simultaneously. On the other hand, the very factors that constitute better life vary for different strata of society. For a large number it may mean more bread and butter; for others it may mean clothing or better housing; for many again only cheaper goods from the market would do, and for some mere opportunities to enjoy more would be welcome. But the fact remains that more production in every field or sphere is of paramount importance.

CLEAR CONCEPTION NEEDED

The concept of production must be very clear to all so that for the precise definition of the word "productivity" one may not have to recall the ancient fable of the five blind men and the elephant. What the lack of such conception leads to would be evident if it is recalled that discussions that often take place in our country in different committee meetings or conferences, whether of official or non-official nature, show that in the solution of many of our problems, we come back to the point whence we started. Numerous contradictions in the policy approaches would be found in the activities of learned societies, public organisations or even the Government. There is a tendency among individuals to criticise the activities of others, but seldom an approach is made by a joint effort for solution of a national problem. The sooner this drawback is removed the better would be the climate for rapid industrialisation, as the latter is possible of achievement only through co-operative and united endeavour of all concerned.

As a matter of fact, beginning from ordinary behaviour of individuals to adoption of a policy by Government, profession of aims runs contrary to action, and this causes all the malady, both social and economic. We often criticise our municipal authorities for not keeping streets and lanes clean, but at the same time we would not hesitate to throw away an empty cigarette box while moving in a car along a municipal road or street. In another plane the Government is justified in not agreeing to go slow with the industrial development programme but is it not difficult to reconcile when the same body is reluctant to offer full opportunities to textile industrialists for enhancing their production in order to ensure the increase of exports of textiles. Again we prefer mixed economy and an over-all expansion. But how would it be possible if all the available resources of the country are mopped up through taxation or loan policies? We need money to the order of Rs. 5,300 crores for meeting the planned requirements in the public sector, and the finance available may not exceed Rs. 3,200 crores including the foreign aid of Rs. 800 crores. A gap of Rs. 2,100 crores is left and steps have to be taken for finding resources for meeting the deficit, or the Plan is to be pruned. Without going into any complexities the fundamental doctrine that economic development is the function of invested savings is remembered, it would be apparent that in an under-developed economy like ours where the volume of saving is small due mainly to low *per capita* income, the real economic emancipation lies in increasing the *per capita* productivity. This is indeed the supreme need, in the background of which, the question of differences of private, free, or public enterprise would not be of any material significance.

CONDUCIVE FACTORS

Productivity is thus the root of all economic prosperity. Its increase implies finding out a better way for the utilisation of various resources of production in order to have more and better goods within a short period and at a lower cost. The programme is, however, to be adjusted in such a way as the maximum production may be feasible with full, proper and efficient utilisation of men, machines, raw materials and monetary assets without dislocating the social and economic conditions of the country. It will be difficult to measure the increase of productivity which is virtually the ratio of goods or services produced (i.e., output of wealth) to the input of resources required for production. The resources again include labour (skilled and unskilled), power, machines, materials, capital, land (in case of agricultural productivity) etc., and as such it becomes more difficult to measure the input. A quantitative measurement of productivity is often made in terms of money value. This is taken as "added money value" which is equivalent to the difference of the selling price and the cost of raw materials, electric power, depreciation, etc., etc.

Productivity then virtually depends upon certain factors, such as:—

(a) Management—This implies management at all levels from administration, office, laboratory and workshop to operation. Managers, whether they are economists, accountants, personnel officers, en-

neers, chemists or biologists will be faced with the problems of planning, co-ordinating and control. Planning is an engineering concept, while the idea of control is closely linked with the profession of accounting. But engineers and accountants differ in their expression, mission and vision. As such co-ordination is a special function, and this is becoming more complex with the widening of the base of different industries and of industrial activity. Naturally, a training is necessary for managers in different fields. The system of education in technological institutions in India, however, lacks in the necessary co-relation with business and industry. Nevertheless, the country needs to-day quite a number of technologists with managerial skill in them. This is now being felt by all and the Government is starting a Staff College for training in administration. But at the present stage of industrial progress there is need for men at various levels who may control production to its maximum capacity. The question is how to have such trained personnel and engulf the difference between education and management.

(b) Human relationship—This is again another problem where social, economic, cultural, educational and psychological issues are to be simultaneously adjusted to have the maximum benefit out of any production.

(c) Technological advancement — This involves multifarious problems including designing, fabrication, processing, standardisation, controlling, job analysis, conditions of working and inter-allied issues. Shortcoming in any field and delay in any execution would affect the rate of production.

(d) Selection of Staff — Always a square man is to be in a square hole, so that the maximum output may be obtained in and from any work. After selection again a man would need training.

(e) Research — The idea of research is not often conceived in its proper perspective. It may be for new product, new process, improvement in product and processes, in cost reduction and avoidance of any wastage and also in marketability. Ultimately it should help in enhancing the rate of production of quality goods at an economic price.

ROCEDURAL REQUIREM ENTS

In adopting procedures for attaining higher roductivity certain fundamental basis has to be id down, and this largely rests on establishment a good relationship between the executives and chnologists or management and workers. Developent of newer ideas and techniques depends on the genuity of the latter, but adoption and introducon of the same lie on the executives or manageent, who must take the worker into confidence. It no doubt, true that man by nature is conservae and some resistance to any change is inevitable. the interest of better output or improvement of nditions, however, the workers must graciously cept the renovation and the authorities must nevolently look into their problems. Improveents of techniques of production, or even a rough overhaul of the system of working in any rticular job may create conditions in which the management will inevitably have to make certain alterations; but it has to be seen that the change-over does not lead to unemployment. Further, it is to be infused in the minds of workers that any gain, or profit would be in the interest of all; and for this it is to be demonstrated that the benefit has been equitably distributed amongst those whose services and contributions have led to the enhanced production.

Increased productivity will gradually lead to an increase in *per capita* income. Recently it has been found in the U.S.S.R. that introduction of heavy electric locomotives for the underground transport in the coal mines, has necessitated a change in the working period from eight hours to six hours a day. This has neither affected the output of coal, nor the income of the miners. On the contrary, by appropriate training many miners are earning more through other jobs. The most important change has been in linking the miners to work in groups. This has provided a healthy impetus to the miners and stimulated an interest in increasing output. There has been an increase in the earnings of the miners as is evident from their savings bank books. A similar move in one or other direction will certainly create wonders in our country. The bottleneck lies in devising improved methods, and newer techniques in work and in training the workers with a feeling that a greater output will ultimately help them in solving their own economic problem and they would be on a better footing in the socialistic structure of the society.

With the improvement and growth of productivity yields in profits generally increase. This brings in higher wages to workers, shorter working hours and improved working conditions. Under better working environments an extra impetus, provided automatically, creates renewed energy offering further incentives for greater productivity. This will again result in enhancement of wages of workers, as is evident from the fact that the salaries of staff and wages of workers are always the highest in countries where productivity is also at the peak.

LABOUR AT TRANSITION

It is often remarked that an increase in productivity may lead to displacement of workers. There is some justification in entertaining such a notion; but a survey of the nature of employment would show that higher productivity has always gone hand in hand with higher levels of employment. Increase in productivity would help in lowering the cost of production and the consequential supply of cheaper commodities. This creates newer markets and ultimately fresh employment in expanded or new units. As has already been pointed out, increased profits would offer new reserve and this would create new capital for investment and greater employment.

The immediate effect of introducing any newer or improved process may, of course, involve a threat of redundancy. Concrete measures would, therefore, have to be taken to keep to the minimum the number of workers that may have to be displaced and to assist in the re-employment of these displaced persons. Stoppage of fresh recruitment, training of redundant workers, introduction of schemes of unemployment insurance and overall distribution of profit money for the welfare of surplus labour, can effectively solve the problem of unemployment or displacement at a period of transition.

LET HIM FEEL FOR HIS JOB

The prime necessity in any move for the increase of *per capita* productivity is to make the worker feel for his job. For this he must be given a

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INDIA'S INDUSTRIALISATION

By NITYANANDA KANUNGO

Minister of Commerce, Government of India

THE progress of Indian Industry over the years since Independence, and especially in the last two or three years has been striking. Not only has there been a remarkable increase in the output of existing industries, largely through fuller utilisation of existing capacities, there has also been a marked diversification of the industrial structure and the establishment of new capacity in a large number of new directions. Between 1947 and 1956, industrial production increased by 60 per cent on an overall basis. Among consumer goods industries, there has been a sharp increase in the production of cotton cloth, in the output of bicycles, sewing machines, electric fans and lamps, radio receivers etc.

Significant as has been the increase in the industrial production of consumer goods, the increase in the output of producer goods, especially in engineering and chemical industries, has been of greater significance from the point of view of the industrial potential of the country. The output of cement has increased several-fold; and noticeable progress has also been made in respect of engineering industries like diesel engines, power-driven pumps and electric motors. The progress of the chemical industries has been even more phenomenal. Not only has there been a sharp increase in the output of basic chemicals such as sulphuric acid, caustic soda, soda ash, liquid chlorine and fertilisers, there has also been an increase in the varieties of chemicals produced in the country. A beginning has also been made in the manufacture of machinery, and the present value of the output of machinery in the country today is around Rs. 30 crores annually as against practically no production in 1947.

BASIC INDUSTRIES

Sketchy as has been the above review of our industrial progress in the past, it is yet indicative of the changing pattern of production as well as of investment in the country. As is generally known, during the Second Five-Year Plan period, increased capacity has been the target in respect of all basic industries, and large investments have been planned for the development of industry, transport and power. In the field of industry the greatest emphasis has been laid on the development of basic industries, especially on the expansion of the steel industry. Programmes are also under way for the development of capacity in the manufacture of heavy structurals, castings, forgings and other heavy machine-building industries. The work on the first phase of the heavy electrical equipment plant has begun. Plans are also afoot for the manufacture of machinery required for the expansion of industries like coal mining, cement, sugar and paper. It is estimated that the value of the annual output of the industrial machinery will rise to some Rs. 60 crores by the end of the Second Five-Year Plan period.

While large investments are being undertaken by the Government for the development of basic industries, significant investments have also taken place, and are taking place in the large sector of industries manufacturing consumer goods and numerous intermediate goods required for the manufacture of consumer goods. Among the more notable of such investments, big increases are planned in petroleum refining and the production of rayon and staple fibre, chemicals and drugs, sugar, paper, and in the existing light engineering industries.

LARGE-SCALE IMPORTS

It would have been clear from the foregoing statements that India is going in for industrialisation in a big way. An under-developed economy, seeking to industrialise itself within a short span of a few years has necessarily to rely on large imports of developmental commodities. Thus, it has been necessary in the past few years, and it will continue to be necessary over the coming years to import large quantities of machinery and equipment as well as the raw materials needed to sustain a big industrial production programme. The total value of imports rose sharply from Rs. 673 crores in 1955 to Rs. 815 crores in 1956—an increase of Rs. 142 crores in one year. The chief items in which there was a notable increase in imports are metals, machinery, vehicles, chemicals and electrical goods. Imports of iron and steel alone recorded an increase of Rs. 71 crores from Rs. 53 crores in 1955 to Rs. 124 crores in 1956; while imports of non-ferrous metals increased from Rs. 25 crores to Rs. 36 crores during the year. Imports of machinery increased from Rs. 110 crores

to Rs. 151 crores; imports of vehicles increased from Rs. 53 crores to Rs. 69 crores and of various chemicals etc. from Rs. 35 crores to Rs. 42 crores. Thus the increase in the imports of the above items alone accounted for an increase of Rs. 145 crores in one year. There was also an increase in the imports of various other raw materials not mentioned above, required to sustain a higher level of industrial production, e.g. imports of art silk yarn, pulp etc.

The position today is that India's imports consist very largely of basic developmental commodities required for implementing the programme of development or of raw materials required for sustaining industrial production.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE POSITION

At the present rate of imports, we are having a serious drain on our foreign exchange reserves because our imports are currently higher than our exports by some Rs. 350 crores annually. As seen earlier, our present imports are essential to sustain the programme of development envisaged in the Plan. It is thus necessary, in order that the development may be sustained, to pay for these imports through increased exports from this country. Over the past few years, our exports have shown but a relatively small-rate of increase. In the context of the substantial expansion that has taken place in the international trade, this is a disappointing trend and needs to be corrected and reversed. Opportunities need to be created for ensuring that an increasing share of world exports comes to this country.

LARGER EXPORTS NEEDED

One of the reasons why our exports have not fared so well is the failure of agricultural production to keep pace with the requirements of the economy as well as of exports. Thus the necessary surpluses of our commercial crops have not been forthcoming for exports, with the result that we have had much less to spare for exports after meeting internal requirements.

A noticeable feature of the expansion of the world trade in recent years has been the expansion of trade in durable producer goods and in manufactured articles at the expense of primary commodities. Primary producers have, in general, not been able to reap the same benefits of expanding world trade as industrially developed countries. In view of the need for augmenting our foreign exchange earnings, however, it is necessary for us to rely for some considerable period—at least until our development has proceeded considerably further to rely on our agricultural commodities to yield a substantial proportion of our foreign exchange requirements. We must also at the same time try to improve upon our performance in respect of a large variety of other articles in which we have now entered into the world market, and in which with some effort, we can improve our competitive position.

We should continue to find new markets, improve our quality, and ensure a high standard of our exports so that there are no complaints regarding the quality of our exports from foreign buyers. Only thus, with patient and sustained effort and enterprise can we build up a long-term export market. The long-term development of the country would depend very largely on the extent to which we succeed in building up our exports, so as to be able to pay for the imports necessary to sustain our development.

ON EDUCATION

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the Government. Look around at the numerous conferences, committees, delegations etc., appointed by the Government, and find out what places are occupied by teachers even when the subject-matter is vitally concerned with education. Lawyers, politicians, administrators and their friends and relations are frequently appointed as members and Chairmen of temporary or more permanent Commissions dealing with even purely educational matters, but teachers, unless they have a pull at higher quarters, scarcely figure in them.

TEACHERS' EMOLUMENTS

About the lower grade of teachers who are entrusted with the task of educating our boys at the most formative period, the less said the better. The teacher of a primary school gets less than half the pay of a chaprasi. The majority of school-teachers in a H. E. School draw a salary on which a family of five cannot have two square meals a day even if they carry on with the scantiest clothing and without any medical help. Lecturers in a College, with the highest academic qualifications, can seldom earn a decent living in the sense in which that term should be understood in modern society. The teachers cannot strike to force the hands of the Government or attract the attention of the sympathy of the public. When the Tramway Conductors organised a strike a few years ago, sympathetic persons came round to ask for subscriptions to help them. I asked them whether they knew that Tramway Conductors or Postal Peons (who also were on strike some time before that) drew a much larger salary than the average pay of a teacher in a school. The idea never struck them.

These statistics speak for themselves, and we need not perhaps go out of our way to seek for an explanation of the sad state of things described at the beginning of this article.

WELFARE STATE IN WEST BENGAL

By SURESH CHANDRA ROY, M.A., LL.B., J.P.

The writer who is a well-known industrialist and the present Sheriff of Calcutta wrote an article entitled "Welfare State in our Time" in the last Puja issue of Amrita Bazar Patrika. The present article is a continuation of the thoughts and suggestions embodied in the previous article.

THE establishment of a Welfare State is the declared objective of national policy. The objective has again been more specifically defined as the socialistic pattern of society. The results of the last general election and the election manifestos of the major political parties show that only those parties whose programmes had a broad socialistic content were able to make any impression on the electorate. The endorsement of the socialist pattern by the electorate means that economic activities must be informed by social purpose and must directly contribute to the welfare of the Common Man. In advanced industrial communities which have already attained a high degree of economic development and material prosperity, the choice between alternative programmes may not be evident. Where the primary needs are satisfied, it will be best to leave the satisfaction of other needs to individual choice. It will not be easy for the Government to decide whether the provision of a refrigerator for every family or an electric washing machine will contribute most to economic welfare. But in a country like India, where even the elementary biological requirements of food and of clothing and shelter are only inadequately met, there could be no controversy over the immediate objectives of economic policy. These objectives of a Welfare State in India, may be briefly stated as:

1. Provision of adequate food, clothing and housing to the population.
2. Provision of remunerative employment to every able-bodied person.
3. An educational policy designed to enable every individual to play an effective role as member of a civilised community.
4. Adequate medical relief to all people and maintenance of the aged, the disabled and the destitutes.

I believe that there will be no controversy that the above should be the basic aims of economic policy of a nation which is striving to establish a socialistic pattern of society. The plans of economic and industrial development should be drawn up with a view to the attainment of these objectives in the shortest time.

EMPHASIS IN PLANS

The Five Year Plans, of which we have gone through one and are in the middle of another, lead in the same direction. But I feel that the emphasis in the Plans is more on the means than on the ends. That is to say that the planners are preoccupied with the projects, steel plants, cement factories, heavy machinery plants, multi-purpose projects and such like, which call for heavy investments of money and of time, before they yield results. I do not wish to minimise the importance of establishing a foundation of basic industry for accelerating the pace of development in the future. But exclusive preoccupation with these projects, while clamant human needs remain unsatisfied, is likely to make the public more keenly aware of the cost of planning which is felt in the present, while the benefits are all in the future. The assessment of costs, which exceed current resources, will also result in scaling down of the advertised targets leading to disappointment and frustration. In these circumstances, it will not be possible to stimulate the popular enthusiasm which is essential for the successful completion of the plans. Therefore, I believe, that along with the basic industrial projects, which yield results in the long run, the Government should also take up for implementation projects of social welfare, which at a low capital cost and little or no expenditure of foreign exchange, will make an immediate impression on the standard of life of the common man. But it will be necessary to arouse popular enthusiasm, and stimulate a sense of social responsibility in all the strata of our society.

In a country like India, planning to be successful should produce quick tangible results, and these should be widely distributed. In the situation which faces the country, concerted effort should be made on the one hand to increase the availability of the immediate necessities of life, namely, food and clothing and on the other provision of relief to the victims of social injustice or indifference. The efforts in these directions, if they are well co-ordinated, will go a long way to deal with problems of employment, education, medical relief, and also the problem of prices, which currently is the greatest single obstacle in the way of the implementation of the Second Five Year Plan.

BALANCED DIET

I propose to indicate briefly in the following pages, the immediate requirements, as far as West Bengal is concerned, which should be attended to, in order to convince the people of the reality of progress towards the Welfare State.

The budget debates in the West Bengal Assembly, have served to draw attention to the magnitude of the food problem. Dr. P. C. Ghosh gave estimates of requirements of the different articles or diet, and urged the Government to take up integrated planning of the production of food. Sri P.C. Sen the Food Minister, agreed to the need for an integrated poli-

f food production, and also admitted that there ere severe shortages in several important items hich enter into the dietary of the people.

According to the report of the Nutrition Advisory ommittee (quoted in Health Bulletin No. 23, pub-shed by the Government of India) the composition f a balanced diet, adequate for maintenance of ood health, should be as shown in Table 1.

TABLE I

	Oz. per day
Cereals	14
Pulses	3
Green Leafy Vegetables	4
Root Vegetables	3
Other Vegetables	3
Fruits	3
Milk	10
Sugar & jaggery	2
Vegetable Oil, ghee etc.	2
Fish & Meat	3
Eggs	1 egg

Calories over 3000
Cost. Rs. 1.25 to Rs. 1.40.

The cost of such a diet, at current market prices * in Calcutta, works out to between Rs. 1.25 and Rs. 1.40, taking the lowest quoted prices. The total calorific value is over 3000, which compares with the average per capita intake in Britain which is about 3130 calories. While the provision of diet on this standard should be the ideal, it may not be possible to reach it in the near future in spite of our best efforts. Apart from the cost which is higher than the per capita income, supplies of many of the items included in the table, notably of milk, fish and meat, and oils are far below requirements. Taking West Bengal, against requirements of 30 lakh tons of milk on the above basis, production is estimated at less than 3.9 lakh tons. As for meat and fish against seven lakh tons required to be provided for a daily ration of 3 oz per head, available supplies do not exceed 57,000 tons. The severe limitations of resources should be taken into consideration in any practical programme of action.

MAINTAINING HEALTH

The Health Bulletin No. 23 referred to above, also gives in another table, the composition of what is described as an improved diet. Though not quite satisfactory, it is considered sufficient for maintenance of health and working efficiency. The composition of such a diet and the essential nutrients is given in the following table (Table II).

TABLE II.

	Oz. per day		
Rice	9	Protein	73 gms.
Millet	5	Fat	73 gms.
Pulse	3	Carbohydrate	445 gms.
Non. leafy Vegetables	6	Calcium	1.5 gms.
Green leafy Vegetables	8	Phosphorus	1.4 gms.
Milk	4	Iron	60 mg.
Fat and Oil	2	Vitamin A	5000 I.U.
Sugar or gur	2	Vitamin B	1.5 mg.
		Vitamin C	100 mg.

Calories — 2,795
Cost between 75 and 90 Naye Paise.

The quantity of milk included in the above table is very small, but there is no point in asking people to drink more milk which is simply not available. Another serious omission, which will immediately catch the attention of the reader, is the absence of any mention of meat and fish. But in view of the very inadequate supplies, meat and fish are likely to remain occasional luxuries as far as the bulk of the population is concerned and it has been left out in the table showing the composition of a daily diet. The calorific value of 2795 may be considered adequate for Indian conditions. The labour conference held in New Delhi last July has recommended that net intake of 2700 calories per head per day should be taken as standard for fixing minimum wages.

In view of our limited resources, the composition of a balanced diet shown above may be taken as the basis for fixing targets of food production. Millets are not cultivated in Bengal in any substantial quantities. The possibility of introducing millet cultivation in the dry areas of West Bengal may be explored. But this will take time and millets are not likely to figure as an important item in diet. The requirement of cereals will have to be met mainly by rice supplemented by wheat. The deficiencies in essential nutrients will have to be made up by addition of meat and fish to the extent possible. The cost of a diet according to Table II, at * current market prices in Calcutta, will work out between 75 and 90 naye paise, per head per day.

MAKING UP DEFICIENCIES

According to the 1951 Census, the population of West Bengal was 2.48 crores. Allowing for natural increase, influx of refugees from East Pakistan and States Reorganisation, and making a deduction for the number of children included in the total, the total number of adult units, at a rough approximation, may be taken at 2.5 crores. The requirements of the various foodstuffs for the entire population on this basis, the present production of some of the items, and the shortages to be met are shown in the table given below:

	Requirements	Production	Shortage
Rice (Lakh tons)	44	43	1
Pulses "	7.5	4	3.5
Vegetables & Fruits "	36	—	—
Milk "	12	3.9	8.1
Sugar "	5	1	4
Oil Ghee "	5	—	—

The aim of an integrated policy for food should be to make good the shortages either by increasing production within the State or by imports from other States. Special attention should be devoted to increasing supplies of milk, vegetables and fruits as well as of fish, meat and eggs. In view of the overall shortage of availability of fats in whole country — the per capita availability of fats and oils in India for all purposes is less than 12 lbs. per year — it may not be possible to ensure an intake of 2 oz per capita in the daily diet. But every effort should be made to augment the available supplies to the required level. The scheme for expansion of coconut cultivation in West Bengal is a step in the right direction and should be implemented with vigour.

As regards clothing it will be necessary to aim at a target of at least 20 yards per head. Against

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* Prices current at the time this was written.

* Prices current at the time this was written.

Will Both Ends Ever Meet?

By D. N. BHATTACHERJEE

EAR to year, month to month, prices have been continually swelling up, so much so that family budget in almost every household is running into wider deficit inspite of tapping all available resources. No amount of bonus, Puja advances or petty loans can cope wtih this ever increasing nature of domestic expenditures. Stresses and strains are becoming more and more acute for the humble purse of the common man. Even a morsel of food has gone beyond the means of some poorer sections, and newspapers trail the shadow of scarcity, if not of famine, which is fast darkening over so many rural areas. Whatever be the causes, such unhappy things cannot but set everyone to serious thinking.

True it is that India, poor as she was, could not have grown poorer since Independence. Progress might or might not have been upto expectations, but progress has been there. May be the national planning had been too ambitious, may be it claims too much of its success, still it will be going too far to say that nothing has been gained through these plan-efforts. Taking the figures of production before and after the plan-period, one will have to admit that national income has increased and with it the *per capita* income. Of course, this increase is computed in terms of money and relates more to the collective wealth of the community than to individual benefits. While for the present people are being asked to spend less, consume less, save more and invest more, the investment on the Plan is directed more towards long-term projects that are likely to yield dividend in some distant future—(perhaps to the benefit of a future generation). The immediate benefits as have been derived from projects like Irrigation and dam building, Electrification, and other consumer industries are too small in comparison with the needs of the country.

SLOW BUT STEADY PROGRESS

When unwedded to mere power-politics, every planned economy strives to raise the living standard of its people within a stipulated period. More comforts with lesser efforts—this is the pulling impulse behind all the sacrifices and self-denials demanded by a plan. Betterment of a vast country cannot be effected overnight. It must take some considerable time. It will also depend on the nature and amount of contributions of the community. Rightly goes the age-old saying that "as you sow, so you reap." If India is to double her actual annual income, she will have to go through many a five-year plan and not merely one or two as envisaged by the planning authorities. Moreover India is pledged to democracy, she has to advance slow and steady in a fully democratic way. She cannot take to regimentation or other totalitarian measures to speed up her course. Unlike other developed countries, India will perhaps take a longer time to attain appreciable results in developing her underdeveloped economy. This has got to be accepted. But it is difficult to understand how in the face of avowed socialisation the poor are becoming poorer still and how the bottom man who is already sinking below the subsistence level can be persuaded to make further sacrifices.

SPIRAL OF INFLATION

Statistically speaking, the income of the average man might have increased, the number of the employed also might have increased, but there have also been considerable increases in money circulation, in demand for goods and in prices of daily necessaries of life. Money incomes though apparently rising are actually moving downwards in terms of goods and amenities. Nowhere can one buy an equal amount of utility goods with the same amount of money as in pre-war days. Goods have grown far dearer and money is losing value proportionately. The spiral of inflation is at its foul play now. Invest more and give more employment to idle hands, the production will be more; if more people have money to buy, there will be more demand in the market; if the supply is not sufficiently flexible, the market prices will go up; when prices are high, workers will demand more wages; and more money wages will create more demand for goods and again the demand for more goods will lead to inflation of prices and so on. The wants of a sub-standard community are so inexhaustive that there seems to be no end to this vicious cycle unless some timely brakes are applied at the right place. Herein comes the question of deciding priorities in the Plan programme. The first things should be taken up first, leaving the things which can wait for some later days. It is no use trying to move far ahead of time simply in the quest of working wonders.

CRUX OF PROBLEM

This time India has adopted a capital-intensive plan. At the same time she promises nearly full employment to her population. Majority of Indian people live in villages and more employment therefore will have to be provided in cottage and small-scale industries there. Employment-potential of heavy-industries is comparatively low and there is no prospect of such heavy industries to be of any immediate service in production of more consumer goods. For goods of daily use people will have to depend on medium, small and rural sectors of industries. If the production in these industries can be stepped up, more people can be absorbed there and the demand arising out of the earning of these additional hands may somewhat be set against the increase in production. But the crux of the problem lies with the production of food articles. While production of other prime necessities of life can be pushed up by additional doses of capital and labour within a short period, food production often follows the law of diminishing returns and takes rather longer years to add to its output. If in the meanwhile the growth rate of population cannot be restrained in proportion to the food-resources, the food price is sure to shoot up very high carrying almost all the other

commodities in the wake. Such inflation in price will all the more be worsened with inflation of money. Rather than increasing the purchasing power of people, greater circulation of money will only tend to curb the capacity. Without levelling down of prices, more money wages will often mean less real wages.

THE REMEDY

Call it inflation or devaluation of money, its real remedy can hardly be found in increasing the wages of industrial workers. Trade unions are there to fight for higher wages always. But it is puzzling enough how higher wages can go hand in hand with demand for full employment. Unless there can be substantial increase in the national income, the process of socialistic distribution will bring everyone to starvation limit without doing any good to the 'have-nots.' In all fairness, wages should be linked more with the *per capita* income than with the price index or cost-of-living index. If the planning has to be successfully carried through, people cannot be allowed to eat up whatever is produced, but a part of it will have to be saved and set apart for capital-formation. The accumulated capital should be progressively ploughed back into production in order to attain a superior standard of living. But before raising the standard of living, people must be allowed to live at least. Provisions have to be made at any cost for the subsistence of the masses. Tons of sweet words will be no substitute for a handful of rice to the hungry mouths, and it will be wise to remember that necessities, particularly the bare necessities of life, know no law, however sound and sacred the law may be.

FOOD PROBLEM

It may be good politics to win the agricultural votes by awarding higher prices for agricultural produce, but it is bad economics and does not pay in the long run. More money supply in the rural sector will create more wants and gradually deprive the village folk of the free amenities they used to enjoy. Through centuries of sufferings they have developed an immunity against distressing circumstances and can even go without shelter or garments or other comfort-goods provided they have their little food. Why then grow discontent amongst them by promising them a model living all at once? Drive for socialisation could have waited for a few more years. Economically there was little necessity for giving an impossible assurance of full employment before providing two square-meals a day for everybody. For sustaining a peaceful atmosphere within the country which is so very important for all economic developments, the food-problem should have received topmost priority and some lasting solution should have been worked out. Although the food problem has now-a-days attained the magnitude of a world phenomenon it does not exert so much inflationary pressure in other industrially advanced countries as in India which is primarily an agricultural country. Production of food is very much seasonal in nature and cannot be quickly enhanced, nor can the volume of foreign imports be infinitely enlarged to cope with the rising spiral of prices. In India, price fluctuations are more conspicuous in foodgrains and industrial raw materials than in manufactured items. Price-control of manufactured or miscellaneous goods therefore, can but go a little way in holding the price-line. In any scheme of price-stabilisation more emphasis needs be given to those commodities in which 'market' factors are more active and which are highly sensitive to slightest impulses coming from either production or money sides. Cereals, pulses, fibres and oil seeds come under the category of such sensitive commodities. Every price-policy should be so designed as to arrest the accelerating behaviour of prices under this 'market'-series and for this it should have its strongest prongs in the countryside.

AXE OF TAXATION

Axe of taxation is no doubt being rigorously employed to sizable portions of income, profit, dividends, wealth and expenditure of the rich people and big companies. Excise duties and Bank rates are being further increased to keep down the inflationary pressures. But public expenditures, both by States and Union, go on unrestricted. Wage-demands and threats of strike are being continually aided and abetted by the ordinances and awards of industrial tribunals. On one side capital and credit are being restricted to the private enterprise, and on the other public expenditures and more wages are putting more money into circulation. This contradiction is cutting at the very roots of disinflation and price-stabilisation. It is very essential therefore that proper steps are taken to remove this anomaly. Internal expenditures have to be kept at the minimum to curb down the domestic consumption and there is ample justification to impose a wage freeze, a moratorium for at least 5 years on wholesale increases in wage demands.

NEED OF CO-OPERATION

To bring about the success of the Plan, people's co-operation has got to be marshalled, but that cannot be secured by merely showing them the rosy mirage of full employment. What should they do with the little money, if it cannot buy them their minimum requirements? Employment or no employment, everyone must be given his food and wear. The average Indian is a believer in plain-living and he will seldom grudge if his rich neighbour earns a little more money to spend on a few luxury items. Mutual hatred and enmity do not dominate the relationship between the labour and capitalists of India unless there is an external provocation. Unfortunately either of the classes are often made scapegoats by political aspirants. All the blames of profiteering, black-marketing, hoarding, corruption and tax-evasion are indiscriminately showered on the shoulders of the rich people only perhaps to doubly impress that political personalities are above these dirty affairs and the administrative, legislative and executive set-ups of the country are absolutely free from malpractices. Whenever there is any sharp mounting of prices, it is the unfortunate trading community which becomes the first and foremost target of all attacks. But if one goes deeper into facts, one can easily realise how political considerations get the upperhand of economic wisdom and how the little mistakes of the policy makers bring disastrous effects on the whole economy.

Holding back of huge stocks is the official explanation of the recent rise in price of rice, and on this plea rice-mills and godowns of stockists have been raided. But knowledgeable men will show that if the production figures are really beyond any suspicion, there must have been maldistribution of supply due to defective transport operations or otherwise and the impact of hoarding is almost negligible. Anyway, the cause of anxiety cannot be removed by shifting the blame from one to another. To ensure stable lever of prices, everyone should join hands for greater production all round. India must produce more than what will be consumed by her people. Then only the price-index will conform to the purchasing power and with the rationalisation of cost of living, the standard of living will tend to move upwards. Then only can the common man hope to make both ends meet.

INDIA ON THE MARCH

By DR. ANIL CHANDRA BANERJEE, M.A. Ph.D.

TEN years ago the sub-continent known as India, united as never before under the joint pressure of British imperialism and Western culture, was all on a sudden divided into two unfriendly States. This was the heavy price which the people had to pay for the liquidation of British imperialism. New Delhi accepted partition with extreme regret but recognised it as a settled fact; an agreement had been made and political honesty as well as national self-respect demanded that it should be implemented in letter and in spirit. In Karachi, however, a different policy found favour with the leaders of the new State. The boundaries fixed by the outgoing British rulers and accepted officially by the leaders of the two States had no sanctity from the Pakistani point of view. Kashmir and Junagadh were to be occupied, and even Hyderabad—a State in the very heart of India—was to be controlled through Kasim Rizvi and his Rajakars. Thanks to the far-sighted statesmanship of Sardar Patel Pakistani intrigues failed to achieve their purpose in Junagadh and in Hyderabad. In Kashmir, however, Pakistan showed greater boldness and resourcefulness and India, anxious to win the goodwill of the world and haunted by the fear of war in a period of difficult transition, withdrew her armies at the moment of victory. The result was the occupation of a part of Kashmir by the forces of Pakistan. Foreign occupation of Indian soil is one of the bitterest legacies of partition.

LESSONS OF THE KASHMIR STORY

It is unnecessary to dwell on the dramatic story of Kashmir which is fairly well known. Some of the lessons it has taught us should, however, be carefully noted. In the first place, the decision of the people of Kashmir to establish an enduring constitutional link between their State and the rest of the Indian Union shows that the old two-nation theory which provided the ideological justification for the creation of the Islamic State of Pakistan, no longer appeals to Muslim imagination. Economic forces carry much greater weight to-day than religious fanaticism. Secondly despite the intimate relations between Kashmir and the rest of the Indian Union there are even now some political forces in Kashmir (represented by Sheikh Abdullah and his followers) which are unfriendly, if not positively hostile, to the existing constitutional arrangement. Whether they are definitely in favour of a link with Pakistan, it is not easy to say; but they are undoubtedly opposed to that closer integration with the rest of the Indian Union in which lies our security and strength. Thirdly Pakistan's Western friends will continue to acquiesce in its aggression against Kashmir (and, therefore, against India) as long as we do not change our foreign policy in favour of the Anglo-American *bloc*.

FOREIGN POLICY

India's foreign policy has many admirers and not a few critics even within this country. Pandit Nehru was practically the sole exponent of national foreign policy even before India was free. Naturally he has been playing the same role since 1947. There are very few men and women in the Congress, even after ten years of independence, who are really familiar with the problems of international politics. Mr. Krishna Menon's real contact with the Congress began after the withdrawal of the British, and he knows much about the world simply because he was for many years a virtual exile in England. Our British rulers left for us an efficient bureaucracy thoroughly familiar with the problems of internal administration; they did not create a Foreign Service because they did not require one. India's foreign policy was dictated by the British Government. As Lord Morley, once Secretary of State for India, said: "This country (*i.e.*, Great Britain) cannot have two foreign policies".

Unaided by political colleagues, unrestrained by expert advice coming from a trained Foreign Service, inspired by an imaginative approach to history and sustained by a vigorous idealism, Prime Minister Nehru formulated and executed his foreign policy with rare courage and determination. Very few people could make a detached assessment of his policy without succumbing, consciously or unconsciously, to the magnetism of his personality and the literary flavour of his speeches. Yet excursions into the field of international politics must be judged from a severely practical, utilitarian point of view; they should not be praised or condemned straight away as romantic adventures or foolish escapades.

KASHMIR : PONDICHERRY : GOA

Has our foreign policy brought us a good dividend ?

So far as Kashmir is concerned, we have not been able to persuade the U.N. to accept the straight proposition that legally politically and morally Pakistan has no right to stay in the so-called "Azad Kashmir" area. Mr. Krishna Menon's "Marathon speeches" have given us nothing more concrete than newspaper headlines. Our defence budget is becoming heavier day by day because the Kashmir problem remains unsolved and the cry for *jehad* continues to be the most popular political slogan in Pakistan.

It would be wrong, however, to treat the Kashmir case as the sole test by which the utility of our foreign policy should be judged. I believe Pakistan will quit "Azad Kashmir" within a fortnight if Pandit Nehru agrees to make the sacrifice which successive leaders of Pakistan have made for a slice of Kashmir, *i.e.*, submission to Anglo-

American control over foreign policy. That is the price for an immediate solution of the Kashmir problem, but we—as a free nation with a sense of self-respect—cannot pay it. If the Nehru policy has driven us into a morass in Kashmir (as many critics say it has), it has taught us the fundamental lesson that a free nation must have a free foreign policy. We cannot support colonialism (in Egypt, in Jordan, in Algeria) or atomic war simply because the British and the Americans will be pleased and Karachi, rebuffed in London and Washington, will withdraw its net from Kashmir. As a free country we have greater duties and responsibilities than those which are involved directly in our own safety; we cannot afford to be blind to the security of mankind in order to safeguard by temporary devices our own security on the north-western frontrier.

The liquidation of British imperialism in this country implied, as its logical corollary, the liquidation of French and Portuguese colonialism. The admirers of the Nehru policy scored a big point when France agreed peacefully to quit her settlements in India. The Prime Minister's critics had their turn when the heroic speeches of our Congress leaders failed to dislodge the Portuguese from Goa. These two cases, however, provide no real test for the success or failure of the Prime Minister's policy. The French followed the example of the British because they are a politically mature nation, while the Portuguese decided to stay in Goa because they are a nation buried in their romantic past. France is anxious to consolidate the remnants of her colonial possessions in Africa; it would have been foolish for her to provoke India's hostility for the sake of a few isolated towns which had long ceased to be politically significant or economically important. Her graceful departure is, therefore, no triumph of the Nehru policy. And Portugal's refusal to read the writing on the wall is no defeat for the Prime Minister; no sensible statesman precipitates a war simply for expediting the inevitable process of liquidation.

THE U.N. AND THE COMMONWEALTH

Despite the rude shocks which India has received from time to time in regard to the Kashmir problem she has remained steadfastly loyal to the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Nations. Her loyalty to the U.N. is easily understood and almost universally supported; there are very few sensible citizens who would advocate withdrawal from the U.N. simply because Anglo-American influence has denied us justice in the Security Council. Even as a second-rate member of the U.N. India can do useful work in the international arena, as she did in Korea and in Indo-China. Moreover, the negative policy of boycotting the U.N. would not solve the Kashmir problem. India's close contact with other Afro-Asian nations gives her a status worth having and brings her into the very centre of world affairs. When, at the end of its period of apprenticeship, the Orient comes to play its legitimate part in the solution of the world's problems, India will undoubtedly be a force to reckon with. The Western Powers have controlled the destiny of the world for two centuries. Why should we feel discouraged if we cannot win the first round in a contest with the seasonal veterans ?

India's loyalty to the Commonwealth, on which the Prime Minister is never tired of laying the greatest stress, is much more difficult to explain. Britain does not hesitate to support Pakistan against us on the Kashmir issue. She is the co-sponsor of those military alliances which, in Pandit Nehru's view (which is widely shared in this country), imperil the peace of the world. And although a second-rate Power, she launched her aggressive expedition against Egypt in co-operation with her partner in dying colonialism—France. South Africa is carrying on a crusade against coloured peoples which affect us directly. Australia is an enthusiastic member of the SEATO which we regard as a threat to the security of South-East Asia. And nearer home is Pakistan, occupying a part of our territory in Kashmir.

What is there in common between us and these countries ? Sentiment, tradition, the mere force of habit—and very little else. Indeed, whenever the Prime Minister is criticised in connection with the Commonwealth issue (criticism comes even from the Congress benches) he delivers excellent speeches which combine 10 per cent argument with 90 per cent rhetoric. Very few people are convinced that the Commonwealth link does us any good. Criticism is comparatively mild because the general feeling is that it does us no positive harm. The Commonwealth Conferences are interesting *tamashas* in which ceremonial dinners are preceded and followed by speeches and talks which lead nowhere.

TOWARDS DANDAKARANYA

While one of the legacies of partition—the Kashmir issue—is primarily, if not solely, a problem of foreign policy, the other bitter legacy—the refugee problem—is a strange mixture of external and internal issues.

West Pakistan got rid of its non-Muslim minority within a few months of partition in violation of all promises and undertakings on which the acceptance of the Mountbatten Plan was based. It secured a religious homogeneity which was essential for the smooth functioning of a purely Islamic State. The reaction in East Punjab, though regrettable, was not entirely unexpected.

The result was a simplification of the problem on both sides of the frontier. Hindus and Sikhs driven out of West Punjab, N.W.F.P. and Sind found a vacuum in East Punjab which they could fill up. Moreover, expanding Delhi and the growing towns of Western U.P. provided for them scope for settlement in a congenial climate and favourable environment.

No such comparatively simple solution of the refugee problem was available in the Eastern zone. There was no vacuum in West Bengal and Assam to be filled up by the Hindus driven away from East Bengal by violence, terror or the force of circumstances. Moreover, no one knew when — if at all — the exodus would stop.

For ten years the unfortunate East Bengal refugees have served as guinea pigs for politicians and bureaucrats alike. Men and women who might have contributed to the prosperity of the country have been treated as unwelcome beggars. Bureaucratic regulations have created fresh problems. The refugees, demoralised by suffering and neglect, have lost confidence in themselves.

Yet no one can deny that enormous sums have been spent and much has been done for these unfortunate victims of partition and religious frenzy. The problem was unparalleled in its magnitude and entirely unforeseen in its socio-economic implications. No politician or official had any previous experience of dealing with a crisis which, seemingly, had no end.

Will Dandakaranya solve the problem at last ?

INSIDE EAST BENGAL

The key to the solution of the problem lies really in East Bengal. If India could be sure of the number of refugees for whom she would be required to make provision, it would have been possible for

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THE DIVINE MOTHER

THE CASE OF THE Raven's Claw

BY

VINCENT STARRETT

A very exciting detective story, with so many dramatic situations, which will amply reward the readers' patience in going through it.

THIS is the amazing story of the green bicycle, the dead raven, and John Hamilton Carter.

It reveals chronologically and for the first time the facts in the case of Barbara Stagg, whose murder some years back stirred the detective-minded public to extraordinary cerebration. There is no one now who can be injured by the truth. Anyway, I have Jimmie Lavender's permission to tell the story.

It was on an evening in early September — a trifle less than a decade after the last guns had roared in France and Flanders—that Thomas Mottram, a golfer returning from the Airedale Clubhouse near Glencoe, came upon an appalling spectacle. It was the murdered body of a young woman, in whom—in the failing twilight—he recognised his son's fiancee, Barbara Stagg.

The body lay at the edge of the turf, close to a winding trail between tall trees and not far from a miniature bridge that crossed a creek nearby. The face seemed buried in the grass. A savage wound had been inflicted on the head, but the blood that matted the girl's fair hair had ceased to flow. One arm was twisted beneath her, the other flung forward as if to interrupt her fall. He had no doubt that she was dead. No faintest tremor of life disturbed the contours of her garments. Her mouth was pressed against the earth.

The dead girl wore high boots and a khaki riding habit. Her hat—a black bowler of the sort affected by equestriennes—lay a few feet away. There was no sign of the short riding whip that might have been expected to form a part of her equipment.

Mottram knelt beside the battered corpse and laid a hand above the heart. He rose quickly and, undeterred by the weight of his bag of sticks, ran back to the clubhouse—the nearest human habitation—to report his terrible discovery.

The situation was singularly poignant, it developed. Mottram had come upon the body, dramatically enough, while his son was uppermost in his mind. Trudging through the white dust of the auto highway, his bag across his shoulder, he had paused for a moment, as was his custom before the granite shaft that stood upon the Glencoe town-line. The shaft told the simple story of the Glencoe dead, in France. Among the names chiselled on the stone was that of his son, also Thomas, who, if he had lived, would have married the girl whose body Mottram was to find.

Turning from the memorial, he had struck downward into the twisting path that roughly paralleled the highway, and almost at once had come upon the body.

At the clubhouse were two physicians of eminence—Lucas and Benson—members of the club, still attired in caps and knickerbockers, as they had come off the course. Guided by Mottram, they hastened to the scene. The shadows were heavy along the curving trail when they arrived. The tall trees were spectral in the melancholy half-light of evening. Under the little bridge, the crooked stream ran with the eerie flow of wandering water in a twilight silence.

The body lay as Mottram had left it. In their turn, the two physicians knelt beside it. An electric

torch was brought into service, by the light of which a hurried examination was made. In the end, both physicians shook their heads. It was their opinion that the girl had been dead about two hours, possibly less. They also reached the rather obvious solution that Barbara Stagg had been thrown by her horse, then kicked.

Taking Mottram back to the clubhouse with them the physicians reported the occurrence to the coroner of the country, and shortly thereafter a sorrowful procession wended its way to the Stagg mansion, near Glencoe, where Barbara had lived with her father, her stepmother, and a younger sister.

It was the death of Mason Stagg. For years his heart had been affected, and the shock killed him as neatly as an arrow through his eye.

He died at the door of his home as the body was carried in, and never knew exactly what had happened to his daughter.

So much for the summary. In spite of first appearances and two doctors, the case was one of murder, and Jimmie Lavender was the man who solved the mystery.

Lavender, too, was a member of the Airedale Golf and Country Club, and shot—on occasion—as snappy an 85 as anybody on the course. His profession notwithstanding, there was nothing of the flatfoot about my friend the debonair detective.

It was not generally known at Airedale, in point of fact, that Lavender *was* a detective. I suppose the Board of Directors knew it, and a few intimates with whom he played; but certainly he didn't advertise the fact. His comment, however, was often so penetrating that I have seen his more casual acquaintances look at him with startled surprise.

One man who knew Lavender well was Jim Cloud, police chief of Ravinia, the township to the north, and it was Cloud who interested him in the case of Barbara Stagg.

It was Saturday morning—the morning after the discovery of Barbara's body — and Lavender and I had just arrived at the clubhouse. Our programme called for eighteen holes before luncheon. It then called for luncheon and another eighteen holes. We were pretty strenuous golfers, both of us. When we got a chance, we were.

Then Cloud's telephone call came through, and Lavender answered.

"The deuce they have!" I heard him say. "Where are you now, Jim? At the house?"

The telephone whispered stridently.

Lavender tossed me a glance of whimsical dismay. I knew the game had gone glimmering, and possibly, luncheon also.

"All right," he continued, speaking into the mouthpiece. "There's no point in my going to the house, I suppose. Who's there?—Lucas? What does he say?" He listened, frowning thoughtfully. "All right, Jim! I'll be there."

He swung away from the instrument. "Sorry, Gilly," he said to me, "but it's important. You don't have to come, although I suspect you'll want to. It's that tragic business of Barbara Stagg we read about this morning. It wasn't an accident, after all. Dr. Lucas found a bullet wound in the girl's temple, a moment before Cloud called. You see?"

"The devil!" I exclaimed.

"Yes, it's pretty sulphurous, I'm afraid. Already it is apparent that the murderer planned things rather diabolically. The battering of the head was done to suggest the impact of a horse's hoof."

"But a bullet wound," I said. "Isn't it usually—?"

"Noticeable? It's a small hole, Lucas says, hidden not only by her hair but by the heavier wound inflicted by cudgel, or otherwise, to cover it. Maybe

It was the murdered body of a young woman

it *isn't* a bullet wound; but Lucas thinks it is." He added: "We're to meet Cloud at the bridge."

Lavender preferred to make the jaunt on foot. The distance to the intersection of trail and highway was not great. It was marked, closely enough—the intersection, I mean—by the granite memorial shaft to the Glencoe dead. A bright morning sun was shining over the trees and there was promise of a warmish day. On the Airedale course already some dozens of hardy fellows were hammering a tiny pellet; but we—Jimmie Lavender and Charles Gilruth—as so often happened, were setting play aside to search for clues more microscopic than a pebbled ball.

Turning into the trail, when we had reached the shaft, we came quickly upon the scene of the murder. There was no mistaking the spot, although signs of struggle were not many. But the grass was

flat and broken where the body had lain; on the bruised turf were still traces of the girl's life-blood. The grass blades were thick and mottled; they were ugly with significance.

That there had been some trampling of the sod was evident. Lavender glanced at the signs and shook his head.

"Nothing," he said. "Nothing that we could not have visualized without seeing the place. As for the trampled grass, who is to say what happened? These evidences may actually have been made, last night, by Mottram and the doctors, when the body was removed."

"Her whip was missing," I suggested tentatively; and he nodded.

"That may be significant, too, Gilly. Her head may have been battered with the whip handle. An ivory handle would clean readily; a stag horn might offer difficulties, which a clever man would realize."

He continued his search, casting about in wider circles, but nowhere in the deep grasses was there any sign of the missing crop. I supposed, at any rate, it was the crop Lavender was seeking. I mentioned it again, at last, with a regretful head-shake . . . . . .

"He must have carried it away with him."

Jimmie Lavender looked up. "The whip?" he asked. "Oh, yes, he carried that away, Gilly. At least, I hardly expect to uncover it here. I'm looking for traces of the man himself. I'd like to know which way he came and which way he went. But there's nothing to suggest that he came through the trees, on either side. I'm afraid he stuck to the trail." He glanced reflectively about him. "These are all private estates hereabout: the estates of wealthy men—friends, no doubt, of the girl's father."

The road engaged his attention for a time, and at length I heard an exclamation.

"Here's luck, Gilly," he said. "I foolishly supposed it to be in the wound."

In his palm was a tiny pellet of lead—a flattened bullet from a pistol, or revolver, of small calibre.

"Seventeen feet from the body," he mused, calculating the distance with his eye. "And trodden into the roadway by a horse's hoof. Now where the dickens was it fired from? I'd like to see the wound it made."

He cocked an eye at the bridge across the meandering creek.

"A small rifle, possibly," he hazarded; "it's hard to be certain. Could he have rested it on the bridge-rail?"

With swift steps he covered the ground to the bridge and bent his eyes on the rail.

Then again I heard his exclamation. But whereas his first cry had been one of quiet satisfaction and only mild surprise, this one was almost an exclamation of amazement. I hurried to his side.

CHAPTER—II

"WHAT in the world, Gilly, do you make of that?" Lavender asked me. His fascinated eyes were still on the bridge-rail; and, bending beside him, I saw the faint outline of what appeared to be a miniature trident. It was very faint, but that the curious symbol had been drawn in blood I had no doubt at all. I had seen the traces of blood on wood too often to mistake it.

Suddenly his hand was on my shoulder. "By the Lord Harry, Gilly, I believe it's nothing but a bird-track."

"In blood!" I exclaimed.

"Yes," he replied curiously, "in blood. A very strange thing, when one comes to think about it. And yet—I wonder! The more incredible a thing is, the most susceptible it is to simple explanation."

His face for a moment or two was a study of alert thought.

"The simplest explanation," I said, "is that the bird alighted close to the body, smeared its claws with blood, and later alighted on the rail."

"I know," he agreed, "but there's the bullet. I'm bound to consider it. It might have come from a rook rifle, Gilly. But in what conceivable position could Barbara Stagg have been standing to have received a bullet intended for a crow?"

Inspiration bathed me in happiness. "She wasn't standing," I cried "She was riding, Jimmie!"

He nodded "It's possible, I think: although as a problem in mathematics it's beyond me. And whoever fired at the crow must have seen her. A woman on a horse isn't an insignificant sight."

"Some one in a neighbouring clearing," I continued, "perhaps a boy. The bird may have been on a bush. Just as he fired, Miss Stagg galloped past on her horse."

"He must have seen what he had done, then," demurred Lavender. "It's too plausible—too immorally plausible, Gilly. And too unexciting, for that matter!"

I shrugged. "What then?"

A hail from the bridge head interrupted his reply, and we turned to greet the police chief of Ravinia, a hulk of a man with a fat and kindly glance quite out of tune with his profession.

Lavender shrieked at him: "Keep your hands off that rail, Jim!"

The chief, who had been idly touching the railings as he lumbered towards us, jerked his hands up as if the bars had been electric wires.

"What's the matter, Jimmie?"

Then Jim and Jimmie advanced together and shook hands with great heartiness.

"It's this," said Lavender, pointing to the bird-track. "I was afraid you'd rub it off."

Jim Cloud was at once a countryman and a sportsman. There was no hesitation in his next remark.

"Yes," he said, bending over the faint lines, "old Mister Crow was sittin' there for a time, a little while ago. What'd he have on his feet, do you suppose?"

"Blood," said Jimmie Lavender. "Now ask me where he got the blood."

Cloud gave him a shrewd glance. "What's on

your mind, Jimmie?" he asked. "Is it something about this case?"

"I don't know," admitted Lavender, and told him the situation we had imagined.

Lavender shrieked at him....

Cloud nodded. "Smart," he commented. "Darn mart, Jimmie! I knew we'd get action as soon as ou began to work."

"Great Scott!" cried Lavender, "you don't be- ve that's the way it happened, do you?"

"If you say so, I do," said the police chief of avinia. "What's more, it sounds very reasonable to e, Jimmie. After all, now, who would want to kill nice girl like Barbara Stagg? But an accident— at's another matter. The fellow who did it, of urse, knows he did it, and he's hidin'; that's cer- in. All right, we'll find him. What else do you ow, Jimmie?"

Lavender threw up his hands in despair.

"You're too fast for me," he said. "There are er possibilities. There must be. I don't like this w theory at all. Look here, Jim! You scout around your own now, and see what you make of it; then ll compare notes. I may as well tell you, though, t I've found the bullet. It's a thirty-two. I found n the road, about seventeen feet from the body— where the body *was* and it's in my pocket now. was ground into the earth by Miss Stagg's horse, while it was running away after the shot, I suppose."

The chief examined the flattened bullet with interest.

"That's funny," he said. "The wound was pretty deep. It's funny it came out again."

"Deep?" echoed Lavender.

Cloud banged his right fist into his left palm. "Eara-y!" he roared, "I'll prove your own case for you, right now. Where were you fellows brought up? In the city, of course! Did you ever hear that a crow will drink blood?"

"No," answered Lavender. "That's something I never heard before."

"Well, it will! What's more, it *did*! It ain't pretty to think about, boys; but that's what made the bullet hole so deep. Listen! That crow's dead somewhere 'round here— dead of the blood he drank! I'll find him for you."

And he did.

It was the promptest performance of its kind I ever saw. Casting about like a great dog, the police chief put his nose to the trail and vanished from our view among the trees.

He was gone for nearly an hour; then suddenly we heard him crashing through the brush and coming toward us. He lumbered up, panting with triumph.

"There's your bird," he said, tossing it at our feet. "I found it over in the meadow, beyond the trees. Flew there, and then collapsed."

We looked down in amazement at the stiffening body of a raven, dead of the blood upon which it had gorged itself.

* * *

Sarah Stagg, Barbara's younger sister — Sally, everybody called her—was one of the prettiest girls I ever saw. And she had nerve too.

Her sister's death must have hit her hard, for they were inseparable: but she didn't pine on a sofa.

It was evident that she liked Lavender and trusted him. She was only a kid, but there was a lot of shrewd commonsense about her, just the same. Her stepmother had simply collapsed and was of no use to anybody.

But Sally Stagg could throw no light on Barbara's affairs that seemed to offer a clue to the murderer. "Barbara didn't care for men—much," she said. "You see, she really loved Tom Mottram; and when he was killed. . . . . "

"I see," nodded Lavender sympathetically.

"She blamed herself a lot for having urged him to go. He was one of the first. And afterward— well, you see, she really had no men friends worth speaking about. She knew a lot of men, of course; even went out with them—a little; but there was never anything between them. You understand? I mean—I don't think any love affair was responsible for this, Mr. Lavender."

"Quite," agreed Lavender. "Nevertheless, it's an angle that has to be inquired into. I suppose you

couldn't know everything that passed between her and the men she knew?"

Miss Stagg, however, thought she was entirely cognizant of all that had passed between her sister and the men with whom, occasionally, she rode or played. For Barbara had been a determined golfer and a good tennis player, as well as a hard rider.

"Her horse didn't t h r o w her, of course", said Sally scornfully. "The h o r s e hasn't been foaled that could t h r o w Barbara." Her loyalty to her dead sister was admirable.

T h e shot that had struck the elder sister had been fired from no great distance, Lavender decided after viewing the wound. On the other hand, it had not been fired at close range, else the lead would not have glanced off and fallen in the road. What the obscene bird had done, however, was rather horrible.

"There's your bird" he said.....

The usual inquiries were begun, and at this point the green bicycle entered the case. A cottager, caretaker of one of the large estates between Glencoe and the town of Ravinia, had seen Barbara on the afternoon of her death, astride her big horse, riding beside a man on a green bicycle. He had stared at this unusual spectacle for a moment. Barbara he had recognized, since everybody knew her; the man on the green bicycle he was certain he had never seen before.

This had been about five in the afternoon, while the sun was still fairly strong, and the pair had been headed in the general direction of Ravinia, on the woodland trail. They had not, however, reached the little bridge across the creek, which was at least a mile beyond. Barbara's body had been found, by Mottram, not far from the bridge, about seven o'clock.

A bicycle, of course, is an old-fashioned thing; but for that matter so is a horse. And in the country, away from the congested auto pavements of the metropolis, neither is as old-fashioned as sophisticates would like to think. Nevertheless, a green bicycle was a substantial clue. Lavender was happy about his discovery. Sally Stagg, however, had never known her sister to speak of anyone who rode a bicycle of any colour. The man had been attired in knickerbockers, the caretaker thought, and he distinctly remembered that he wore a cap. Possibly spectacles; the caretaker couldn't be sure. And a little mustache? Or had he imagined the little mustache?

"He *may* have imagined the mustache and the spectacles," said Lavender. "On the other hand, he may not. Such memories are subconscious and frequently surprisingly accurate. The knickerbockers, if the fellow wore them, suggested the golf course as well as the bicycle; so does the cap. One thing is certain, Gilly: the fellow *was* a stranger. Sally knew nothing of him, and if he had been anybody in the neighbourhood this caretaker would have recognized him. He had no difficulty recognizing Barbara. That was a little different, I'll admit; still, he ought to have known the man, too, if he weren't a stranger."

He was talking as much to himself as to me.

"The fellow doesn't know yet that murder is suspected, which is just as well. But, if he is the murderer, he knows it *will* be suspected. That bird was an accident; a curious one. He couldn't figure anything as fantastic as that to help him. What's more we must keep quiet about the bird. If he were to hear of it, the same idea would occur to him as occurred to us—and what a defence he'd have! Shooting at a crow—just shooting at a crow—and at the psychological moment along came the girl on horseback! A smart lawyer could do a lot with that. You know, Gilly, it's a little odd that nobody heard the shot fired. After all, there can't be so much shooting going on around here. It's dangerous. Too many golfers around, and things like that."

He looked at me humorously. We had borrowed a private room at the golf club and were, at the moment, sitting in it.

"Jim Cloud ought to know all the bicycles in the vicinity," he continued, after a moment. "I'll ask him."

He stepped to the telephone and was lucky enough to catch the chief in his office. Cloud had been with us for a short time in the morning, but had returned to his duties in Ravinia, satisfied that the case was in better hands than his own.

CHAPTER–III

CLOUD had no memory of a green bicycle.

"There are plenty of bikes around," he told Lavender, "but most of them are green with age or dirt. They belong to workmen on the various estates. I'll think it over, Jimmie, and let you know. It's certainly an eighteen-carat lead."

As evening drew on Lavender became morose. But at my suggestion that the murderer might actually have been a stranger in the neighbourhood, passing through on his bicycle, and now miles away on his northward journey, he shook his head impatiently.

"There's no motive there, Gilly," he said. "The man doesn't appear to have been a tramp. If he were fleeing, he wouldn't go north and let himself be seen passing through every village from here to Wisconsin. He'd turn and go south, and hide himself in Chicago. But I think he belongs somewhere in the neighbourhood. However, I don't think he knew Miss Stagg. I think their meeting was an accident; and that's a puzzling feature of the case, for, again, it leaves us groping for a motive. Could he have been somebody she once knew, but had not seen for a time? I suppose he could. But if he had been a man of recent acquaintance, Sally Stagg would have heard of him."

He was glum for several moments; then he bounded to his feet.

"We have time for exactly nine holes, if we hustle," he observed, surprisingly. "I think we both need it. It'll shake us up. My own brains seem to have reverted to their original dust."

He shot the first two holes in par, and was on the way to an astonishing record, when an idea seized him. We had just reached the third green.

"Gilly," he said, "suppose *you* had committed this crime. Suppose *you* had a green bicycle. and had killed a girl—deliberately or by accident—and knew that you had probably been seen riding with her. What would you do?"

"If I had killed her deliberately," I told him, "I'd get rid of the green bicycle. If it was an accident, I'd give myself up."

"You might not," he demurred. "I mean, you might not give yourself up. You might be frightened. But you *would* get rid of the bicycle. So would I. Now where? Around here!"

"In the woods?"

"Where it would be found, traced to its maker, then to a dealer, and finally perhaps to you? A bicycle recognized at once, maybe, by some person who saw it? Not by a large majority! You'd look for a place to sink it forever."

He was smiling joyously as he described my supposed criminal activities.

"There's a river a few miles from here, Gilly," he continued briskly. "The north branch of the Chicago. West of here—near a place called Deerfield. It occurs to me that the green bicycle is in the river."

I looked quickly at the sky. The light was steadily going, but it was still bright enough.

"Not tonight," said Lavender. "In the morning. Let's give him time, Gilly. We mustn't hurry him. He may want to take it apart, or smash it a bit, or file off a name-plate. A bicycle is a troublesome thing to get rid of. He may be taking it to the river tonight."

I laughed. "*I'd* have done it last night," I told him, recasting myself for the role he had allotted me.

"Only if your crime had been deliberate," said Jimmie Lavender. "We must give this fellow the benefit of the doubt, for the time being. It isn't certain yet that he's the murderer. We know only that he rode and talked with Barbara Stagg, yesterday; we assume that he must have read or heard of her death, by this time, even if he isn't the murderer; and we know jolly well that he hasn't come forward. It's all significant, but it isn't final."

That night he gave me another glimpse of his mind. We were still stopping at the club.

"When you looked at the horse, this morning, Gilly, you noticed, of course, that he had been pretty smartly beaten about the flanks?"

"No!" I cried, startled.

"Yes, pretty smartly; I think. Barbara didn't do that. I asked Sally. Barbara never whipped the horse; she didn't have to. But *somebody* whipped him—hard. Why? To make him run, of course. after the—murder. And the horse, I imagine, ran wild for a time, along the back trail; then perhaps grazed a bit, and ultimately went home. The welts weren't remarked in the excitement of his homecoming. I found them, this morning, because I looked for them."

He rolled over on his side.

"In the morning we'll get the bicycle."

All of which brings us, chronologically, to John Hamilton Carter and the green bicycle.

The bicycle belonged to Carter. We had a bit of trouble finding it, of course, but there was no trick about it. We merely canvassed the river in the vicinity of Deerfield until we found the place where Carter had slipped, climbing the embankment. After that we got a boat and some grappling hooks, and fished until we found the bicycle.

It hadn't been taken apart. Nothing had been done to it. But a garage man in Deerfield had seen it before and recognized his handiwork on it.

It still amuses me to think that Carter was an author. He actually wrote detective stories!

* * *

John Hamilton Carter lived by himself in a sort of shack, just a bit outside the township proper. It later developed that he had a perfectly good apartment in Chicago and used the shack only during the summer months.

He was a young man—about twenty-four—and redheaded. The caretaker hadn't noticed the red hair. But Carter did wear spectacles, knickerbockers, and a cap. Either the caretaker imagined the mustache, or Carter had shaved it off, although he swore he hadn't. It didn't seem to make any difference, one way or another.

Mr. Carter was definitely alarmed when we descended on him. Lavender was unusually abrupt, that day. He began with a statement of fact, and followed it with a curt question

"You had a green bicycle, Carter. Where is it?"

The red-haired young man stared for an instant, made up his mind, and answered. "I *never* had a green bicycle," he said. "Who are you, and what

are you talking about?" It was a nervous speech, however, despite the boldness of the words.

"What about the one you had repaired, last summer? The one Okey fixed for you."

Mr. Carter changed his mind. "Oh, that one! Was it green?" he asked. "I got rid of it, I guess."

"When?"

"Quite a while ago. I guess I sold it. No, I gave it to a fellow."

"Make up your mind," said Lavender. "Who was the fellow?"

"I can't tell you his name. He came along here looking for something to do. Working his way across the country, I think. He was hard up, and after I'd talked with him a while I gave him my old bicycle, to help him on his way."

"By Jove!" cried Lavender in excitement. "Was he a middle-aged man with a scar here on his cheek?" He touched his own cheek, and I looked at him in amazement.

Carter nodded solemnly. "Yes", he said, "that's the man. Do you know him?"

"I never knew or heard of such a man," said Lavender.

Mr. Carter was nonplussed. He blushed warmly. He was really an amazingly poor liar, in spite of his profession—which, of course, I didn't know, at the time. "I've probably forgotten him," he admitted.

"Well," continued Lavender briskly, "about the bicycle that you gave away. You didn't ride it yesterday?"

"Certainly not! How could I?"

"Or the day before?"

"Of course not."

Lavender grinned provokingly. "It's a pity you can't remember that fellow's name", he said, "for I'm afraid he's committed murder."

Mr. Carter gulped. *"No!"* he cried.

"Murder!" nodded Lavender. "Friday evening, just before dusk. The victim was Miss Barbara Stagg. He was seen riding beside her, just before the murder must have occurred."

Mr. Carter sat down heavily in the nearest chair and feebly motioned us to join him.

"Afterward," continued Jimmie Lavender, "he rode over here into your neighbourhood and threw the bicycle—your bicycle—the one you had given him—into the river. We fished it up this morning."

"Bad business," muttered Carter. "Bad business!"

Lavender agreed. "Did you kill Barbara Stagg?" he asked in a low voice.

Carter bounded to his feet. *"No!"* he shouted. "Of course, I didn't. My God, I don't even know her."

"Yet you rode beside her, Friday afternoon."

Carter sat down again. "Yes, I did," he admitted. He began to explain, his voice hurried and nervous. "I hadn't any right to speak to her: I know that. You see—I'm an author—and—that's the difference! I like to talk to people who look interesting. You see? I want you to understand why I spoke to her at all. She was attractive; she looked intelligent; she was riding a handsome horse—you see?"

"Well, perhaps," conceded Lavender.

Mr Carter looked grateful He continued with a rush: "I was riding home and I met this girl. I didn't know her but I spoke to her. She was generous—she spoke back, and we began a conversation. Idle and pleasant. I don't know what we talked about—horses, for one thing; and books—Oh, I don't know! I didn't even ask her name, though."

He drew a quick breath. "We separated near that monument at the cross roads. I went west; she

"Did you kill Barbara Stagg?" he asked.....

went on north. That's all there was to it. But when I opened my newspaper, Saturday morning, there was her picture! She'd been killed in an accident. I was horrified. And in the afternoon, when I heard it wasn't an accident—and they were looking for a man on a green bicycle—you see?"

It was Lavender's turn to be surprised.

"Where did you hear that?" he asked, amazed.

"In Ravinia. I was there, late yesterday afternoon—riding the green bicycle, too!—and a number of persons mentioned it. Shopkeepers are gossipy in a place like that. They were talking about it in two of the places I went to. I learned for the first time it wasn't an accident. I learned the police were looking for a green bicycle. And, all the time, that bicycle was parked over at the edge of town—waiting for me to ride it home."

Lavender was annoyed. "That's Cloud's doing, I suppose. He must have conducted his inquiries with a brass band! And so you left town hurriedly."

Mr. Carter nodded agreement. "I went home by every obscure back trail I could find. I made a nine-mile circuit to come at my own shack from the west."

"And last night you threw the bicycle into the river."

"Yes, I did. I thought everybody in the country would hear the splash, too!"

CHAPTER–IV

"DO you own a gun of any sort?" Lavender asked Carter.

"I—I did own one."

"Where is it now?"

"In the river," said Mr. Carter.

"Good Lord!" exclaimed Jimmie Lavender. "What else did you throw into the river?"

"That's all—except the cartridges."

"What sort of a gun was it?"

"A woman's revolver—thirty-two. A little pearl-handled thing". He appeared anxious. "What sort of a gun was it killed Miss Stagg?"

"She was killed by a thirty-two bullet," answered Lavender dryly. "We have to date, found only the lead." He asked another question savagely: "Why didn't you go to the police, at once?"

Mr. Carter repeated his now familiar defence. "I was scared. Everybody seemed to think the man on the green bicycle had committed the murder—and I was the man on the green bicycle" From his own point of view the logic of it was obvious. "I'm sorry—now," he added. "You believe me, don't you?"

"I believe you're sorry," said Lavender. "Of course, you know I'll have to take you back to Ravinia."

Carter was dejected. "I suppose so—but I didn't do it."

"Unless somebody turns up who *did*," said Lavender, not unkindly, "I'm afraid you're going to have difficulty proving that. What is your own idea of what happened?"

"I haven't any," confessed the author. "You wouldn't want me to invent one."

"There was no one who saw you talking with Miss Stagg? No one saw you leave her?"

"Not that I know of. Cars were passing along the main road, I suppose; but we were on the trail."

"You talked with no one else along the trail?"

"Not a soul." Carter suddenly had an idea, however. "But, look here! Somebody must have seen us, or how would I be suspected?"

"A man working in a field saw you as you went by."

The red-headed author stared. Then, quickly, he put his hand to his face with the gesture of a man to whom had come, tardily, a momentous thought.

"By Jiminy, I saw *him*, too! I'd forgotten all about him. I took him to be a labourer—somebody working on one of the estates. What an ass I've been!"

"No, you were right. He is a caretaker employed by a neighbour of the late Mr. Stagg."

"Mr. Detective," said the writer solemnly, "when I first saw that fellow I thought he had a hoe in his hand. It has just struck me that it wasn't a hoe—it was a rifle!"

* * *

The caretaker's name was Babcock. He was employed by G. Stanley Morris, a man of great wealth and a business rival of the late Mason Stagg. And Babcock had really had a rifle in his hand. He had been out shooting crows, he said when taxed with it, which somehow seemed significant in itself.

"I was afraid to mention it," he said. "It might have looked bad for *me*."

"Two of them" commented Lavender, thinking of Carter.

Sally Stagg, when she heard the news, was excited. Her father, she said frankly, had never cared for G. Stanley Morris, nor G. Stanley Morris for her father. They had not, when they met, stuck out their tongues at each other; but there had been a veiled enmity between them, for years, based on some flim-flam performance in the past. Each believed the other had double-crossed him. Something of that sort. Anyway, the families didn't mix; and the servants, taking their cue from their superiors, had been known to insult one another in public places.

"Of course," said Sally candidly, "I don't think Mr. Morris wanted Barbara murdered; but servants are funny things. They adopt family quarrels with a great deal of enthusiasm. I don't even think this man—Babcock—would deliberately kill Barbara. But suppose he thought it was a good joke to frighten her. He could always claim it was an accident, if the horse bolted. Then suppose he aimed a little too low, and——"

She stopped suddenly, trembling.

"No," said Jimmie Lavender, "it didn't happen that way, Miss Stagg. Your sister didn't fall from

She stopped suddenly, trembling.

her horse, whether or not she was shot. She wasn't bruised—that way! Forgive me for mentioning it; but —you see? She was killed while standing almost exactly where she was found. If Babcock is the man responsible, we must assume he followed her from the point where he first saw her riding with Carter." He rubbed his chin reflectively, then shrugged. "It's puzzling!"

Carter, meanwhile, was in jail at Ravinia. He didn't like the situation, but Cloud was taking no chances. He believed firmly in the "bird in hand" philosophy. Lavender agreed that the plan was a wise one. He obviously entertained a sneaking kindness for the red-haired idiot, but he had been deceived by plausible liars before.

Shortly after dinner that evening—Sunday—a call came through from Cloud. We were at the clubhouse, as usual. Cloud had been doing some thinking of his own. It had occurred to him to wonder what Carter had been doing in Ravinia on Saturday afternoon. He had inquired, and Carter had mentioned a number of visits, among them one to the post office.

It appeared that Carter preferred to do his shopping in Ravinia, although there were shops in Deerfield less expensive. This seemed silly to Cloud.

"Well," Cloud had asked him, "what about the post office? There's a post office in Deerfield."

Mr Carter had merely availed himself of the Ravinia office, while shopping in that town. He had, it appeared, sent away some manuscripts.

Out of the situation Cloud had evolved the sound idea that Carter had visited Ravinia deliberately to visit the post office, and that it was the shopping which had been incidental. The day was still Sunday, but the enterprising chief had roused the postmaster from his afternoon nap and gone with him to the office where as a result of their explorations, a curious circumstance had come to light.

A registered package had gone forth, a stub showed, to a certain Harriet Carter in Chicago. The clerk who had given the receipt reached by telephone, recalled the package and the man who sent it. The man described was undubitably Carter—whose red hair was the memorable feature—and the package, the clerk thought, had been a curiously misshapen affair.

"Manuscripts!" commented Mr Cloud derisively. "More likely that missing riding whip."

"Of course, some one other than Miss Carter must receive the package," said Lavender.

"I've taken care of that," said the chief.

The package, in the mails while this conversation was being carried on, was delivered on Monday morning to a Chicago detective, on the doorstep of Harriet Carter, who protested feebly and was haled to a police station. It was opened at the station, and was seen to contain a small pearl-handled revolver and a box of cartridges.

Carter's goose appeared to be cooked. On Tuesday the evidence against him piled up. An anxious mother appeared in the chief's office, piloting a couple of embarrassed girls—youngsters of eight or nine. It developed that a man on a green bicycle had spoken to them, the preceding Friday afternoon as they sauntered among the trees near the edge of the woodland trail. They had been gathering flowers. The man had thought the flowers pretty—as pretty indeed, as the little girls. He had mentioned the circumstance. The conversation had not been extensive. The man had offered the children no harm. After a time he had ridden on.

"Lord, what an imbecile!" observed Lavender, when he heard the tidings. "He must have remembered meeting the children. Why should he have lied?"

The chief put the question directly, and Carter again was abysmally frank. "Chief," he said, "I'm just a firstclass damn' fool! What I need is a guardian—six of them. I go round talking to people just because they look nice, and I like them. I'm a student of life, you see, and—I guess I'm hopeless. You'd better hang me quick, and be done with it."

Cloud, a literal-minded and somewhat humourless person, looked at him shrewdly. "Then you killed her," he accused.

"My God, no!" answered Carter. "I wouldn't kill a fly, if I could help it."

We burgled his shack that evening, anyway, in search of the missing whip. It wasn't there. Could it be in the river? The pellet of lead found in the road, the morning after the murder, Lavender had sent to Chicago some time previously for an examination by an authority on ballistics. By this time, presumably, the authority was in possession of Carter's revolver, also, and would be able to reach a conclusion. As far as Carter was concerned, we rested.

The case against Babcock, however, was pushed with vigour, but tear up his quarters as we would, we could find nothing but his rifle that was incriminating. The rifle, thereupon, followed Carter's revolver to the ballistician, and we rested the case against Babcock.

On Wednesday all the evidence was in and we found ourselves, as far as I could see, exactly where we had begun. The eminent authority had spoken. The pellet of lead plucked from the woodland trail had been fired from neither Carter's revolver nor Babcock's rifle.

CHAPTER–V

LAVENDER took the news calmly.

"Good enough," he commented. "I never did think Carter was guilty, but Babcock was a possibility. Both of them had to be exonerated before we could proceed with intelligence. Elimination is as good a way to solve a mystery as any other."

He rubbed his hands together briskly. "All right, Gilly! What about it?"

I shrugged "Don't pick on me, Jimmie."

"Suppose we consider the whole episode carefully," he suggested. "I told you at the beginning it had a diabolical look It still has My first thought was that the missing riding crop was the key to the mystery I'm beginning to doubt it. If the murder was carefully planned, the disappearance of the whip is part of the plan. I mean, the whip may have been intended to lead us on a wild goose chase: I hadn't seen Miss Stagg's body when I suggested *it* was the weapon that had battered her skull. There are whips and whips Some have heavy butts of ivory or staghorn: others are merely plaited leather Miss Stagg had a collection of crops, and it's impossible to say which one is missing—which one she carried that day Probably, though, it was one with a heavy butt. The idea of its being mistaken for the death weapon might very well have suggested itself to the murderer. If he were a shrewd fellow, now, wishing to send us on a false trail, what would he do?"

"He swung away from the instrument.....

I was as hopeless as usual. "Drop it in the river?"

"I think not," said Lavender. "You see, he was not far from an auto highway, along which cars are always passing. If he were particularly clever, I think he might contrive to toss it into a passing motor vehicle, which would carry the thing clean out of the neighbourhood But what sort of a motor vehicle? Not a private car, surely, for the driver would be likely to hear the thing as it fell. Something that makes a noise, then—a truck, perhaps? It's all guess-work; but why not?"

I nodded agreement. "Not guess-work," I demurred "Imagination!"

He laughed. "Let it go at that But if the whip was not the weapon, what was? If we can name the weapon, we may come close to naming the man who used it. With reference to the murderer, what have been the possibilities from the beginning? The man on the green bicycle—Carter; the man who reported the green bicycle—Babcock; or an unknown, living in or out of the neighbourhood Since I believe the murder to have been planned, I eliminate the unknown stranger from other parts. The 'neighbourhood' may be roughly described as comprising three villages — Glencoe, Ravinia, and Deerfield, with the Airedale Golf Club and some dozens of private estates between. And right there we get a hint, do we not? Whatever the facts may be, the weapon could have been a golf club."

"By George!" I said, weakly inadequate.

"It's a staring possibility, but it has been minimized by the even more staring indications pointing to Carter and Babcock. When we come to consider the membership of the Airedale Golf and Country Club, we are, of course, on ticklish ground. Motive cuts a large figure in the murder, obviously, and we are bound to consider that not only G Stanley Morris, but half the wealthy business men of the county are on the rolls—as well as humbler citizens—lawyers, physicians, and I believe even a clergyman or two. It's a democratic institution—like the game it stands for. Its president—Dr. Lucas, one of the physicians who was summoned by Mottram—is merely a local practitioner."

He paused and looked around him. Outside the private dining room in which we sat, and which had been given us as a headquarters, we heard the stir and bustle of the club. It was early afternoon. Cars were arriving outside, depositing amiably quarreling players at the door In a back passage caddies chattered and shuffled their feet. From our window we had a view of the first tee and the long green stretch of the fairway

"I think I've checked everything," said Lavender, "There were several alternatives. It was to be remembered, for instance, that the seventh green sits dangerously close to the cross road into Deerfield. A player teeing off at that point would have a clear view of the memorial shaft and the entrance to the trail. At the proper hour of the day he might have seen—last Friday afternoon—the parting of Barbara Stagg and Carter, after their little conversation. But I have found no one who was exactly there at that moment. It may have been five-fifteen when they parted at the cross roads; it may have been a little later. Mottram found the body about seven, and we must assume that after leaving Carter

Miss Stagg continued northward for some time, then turned back. The murder occurred, I think, about six o'clock."

He stood up, "I have made every possible inquiry here at the club—quietly, of course— and have seen the caddies' service records for that afternoon. I know exactly who was on the course that day, and when they all checked in. I know who is on the course today."

From the window we saw two men in knickerbockers cross the grass behind the clubhouse and stroll leisurely toward the first tee. Lavender turned quickly.

"Supose we join them," he said. "Come on!"

But at that instant the telephone shrilled and, with a muttered imprecation, he snatched up the receiver. At the other end of the connection was Cloud. I heard the grumble of his voice.

"He's *what?*" roared Jimmie Lavender. "*Who's* escaped? Carter? Good Lord!"

He swung away from the instrument, covering the mouthpiece with his hand. His face was almost comic.

"Carter's escaped," he observed. "Can you beat that, Gilly? That idiot won't be satisfied until they hang him."

He bent his lips to the telephone.

"Listen, Jim," he said. "To hell with Carter! Come up here to the clubhouse."

* * * *

We made it a foursome. Our playing companions were, I discovered, Dr Lucas, the president of the club, and a second physician whom I had not met. His name was Benson, and he was no less a person than the man who accompanied Lucas to the scene of the murder, five evenings before.

He was a brisk and likable follow, was Benson, who chattered volubly and shot a rollicking game of golf. His first drive took my breath away He took a great fancy to Lavender, from the first, and they discussed the crime, as they tramped from green to green, with a dispassionate appreciation of its points that an outsider or a layman would have found disturbing.

"Well", said the second doctor, at length "I certainly hope you get the man who did it."

"I intend to," replied Lavender grimly; and at his tone my heart suddenly skipped a beat and my pulse ran faster Something impended.

I hooked my next shot into the rough in my excitement, making an amateurish 8 to the green. What astonishing *coup* I wondered, was my friend about to perform? His sense of drama was high. And it was entirely typical of him to leave me in the dark. I was actually relieved when we passed the seventh green and left the sight of the Glencoe memorial behind us.

In point of fact, it was just beyond the eleventh that the thing happened. In a neighbouring fairway two men were plugging down the stretch, headed in the opposite direction. One of them waved to us. Then the twosome would have passed had not Lavender hailed it.

"Come with me, all of you," he said, and crossed over into the parallel alley.

The twosome advanced to meet us.

"Hello, Mottram," said Jimmie Lavender. "Is that your caddy?" His eye was on the undersized youngster lugging a bag of sticks. "Come here, Bud," he ordered; but it was he who went swiftly to the boy.

"Give me Mr. Mottram's mashie niblick," he said quietly; but it was he, himself, who plucked it from the bag.

"A sinister weapon, gentlemen," concluded Jimmie Lavender, balancing the thing on his fingers. "It was with this that Barbara Stagg was killed."

We looked quickly at the palsied, gibbering creature that had been Thomas Mottram.

CHAPTER—VI

OU see," explained Lavender, when Cloud had removed the wretched Mottram to the jail hospital, "the case against Mottram was latent in my mind from the beginning. Naturally, I could not name him until I was certain of his guilt, and nothing really could have been proved without his confession. In the beginning there was only my suspicion. He *could* have done it. He reported the body, and it struck me as a singular coincidence that he, of all men, should have found it. To others that coincidence appeared as merely tragic—a situation making call on the sympathies. It was, of course, evident that the wound on the head *could* have been made with a golf club; yet it might also have been made with the butt of a heavy whip or with the shoe on a horse's hoof. Mottram, however, had been in knickerbockers when he found the body; he carried his clubs.

"That was my first thought, and I realized its weaknesses. A motive was absolutely imperative, and in the circumstances it seemed about the hardest thing to find. A possible motive, however, was supplied by Sally Stagg in one of our first conversations. She mentioned, quite casually, that her sister had blamed herself for her fiance's death. She had been the first, it appeared, to urge that possibly—just possibly—the elder Mottram had resented this. He was fond of his boy: it was his custom, returning from the club house, to stop in front of the Glencoe memorial and read his son's name. We learned that from his story of how he came to find the body. In other words, if Thomas Mottram were fanatical enough, he might develop a dangerous antagonism to the girl who sent his son to death. Barbara, of course, had been killed by blows on the head, not by a bullet. The bullet, as we know, glanced off.

"It was all suspicion of the intuitive sort, at first, but it had some foundation in reason. Later, I learned that Mottram, although garbed for play and carrying his bag of sticks, had not been on the course after five-thirty o'clock that afternoon. The records show that clearly. He found the body, however, about seven o'clock. Certainly it didn't take him an hour and a half to stroll from the clubhouse to the scene of the murder. Where was he, then, I wondered, between, let us say, five-thirty, when he left the course, and seven o'clock, when he reported he had found the body. He had come on the body, he said, while going home from the club. He might have been around the clubhouse, to be sure, but I could find no one to recall him. I didn't ask specifically about Mottram, but I did ask specifically about all who were known to have been around during the period under suspicion Mottram wasn't mentioned. One further point: Why was he going home on foot? And carrying his bag of sticks?

"These questions were all in my mind. I dared not ask them point blank, for fear of alarming him too soon if he were guilty, or doing him a serious injustice if he were innocent. But Mottram owns a car. Certainly, sometimes, I argued, he must use it

in going to and from the club. In point of fact, I believe, he had no regular habit in that connection—at times he drove, at other times he didn't. Yet, on the day that he did *not* drive, one would think he would leave his clubs in his locker. Anyway, on Friday he walked home, and his bag of sticks went with him. The fact could not be overlooked.

"While I mulled over many things, the immediate excitement centered around the man on the green bicycle and, later, around this fellow Babcock. Not to mention a dead bird, in the beginning, which

"One inclines to think he killed her with the club....."

was at least puzzling! When the cases against Carter and Babcock appeared to fall through, I was at liberty to return to my earlier suspicions—to develop them. That is what I did.

"What happened, I think, is this: Mottram, nursing his hatred and waiting an opportunity to do Miss Stagg an injury—with perhaps no actual plan in his mind—from a spot near the seventh tee, last Friday, saw Barbara part from young Carter at the crossroads. He assumed a new lover, and it was enough to inflame him to violence.

"He left the course, hurried over to the trail, and hid himself among the trees until Barbara returned. There was a scene. What was said, we can never know. She dismounted, however, to talk with him. It may be that he did not even then intend to kill her; something she said may have urged the deed. Exactly what followed is not clear — I mean, the order in which things happened. Did he shoot her at first, then kill her with his club? Or did he swing the club before he used the revolver? There are arguments either way. The club would be most convenient and, perhaps, most certain. Also, a club, if he carried it in his hand, would not arouse her suspicion, while a revolver would. If she had seen the revolver, she might have screamed and somebody might have heard her. One inclines to think he killed her with the club, then endeavoured to inflict a bullet wound that would turn suspicion of murder on some one elese.

"But, to inflict such a wound, it is difficult to conceive the angle or the position from which he must have fired. The body would be on the ground; Mottram probably would be standing. Yet the bullet struck the head, glancingly, and fell some feet beyond in the road. Could he have been down on one knee? That he fired hurriedly seems certain. Nevertheless, the difficulties here incline one just as surely to think that he first fired at her, while both were upright. The bullet glanced—possibly she fell, stunned. And then—the murderous, swinging club!

"Either way, he killed her. Then, with her whip, he thrashed the horse until it ran away. Thereafter, I think, he made a wide circuit—to kill time—and ultimately, and quite deliberately, returned a second time to stand before the body, as if he were coming on it for the first time. Afterward, of course, he hurried to the clubhouse and reported his discovery."

We had listened in silence to this long recital; and for a time after he had finished the silence continued. It was broken by Lucas, the President of the club.

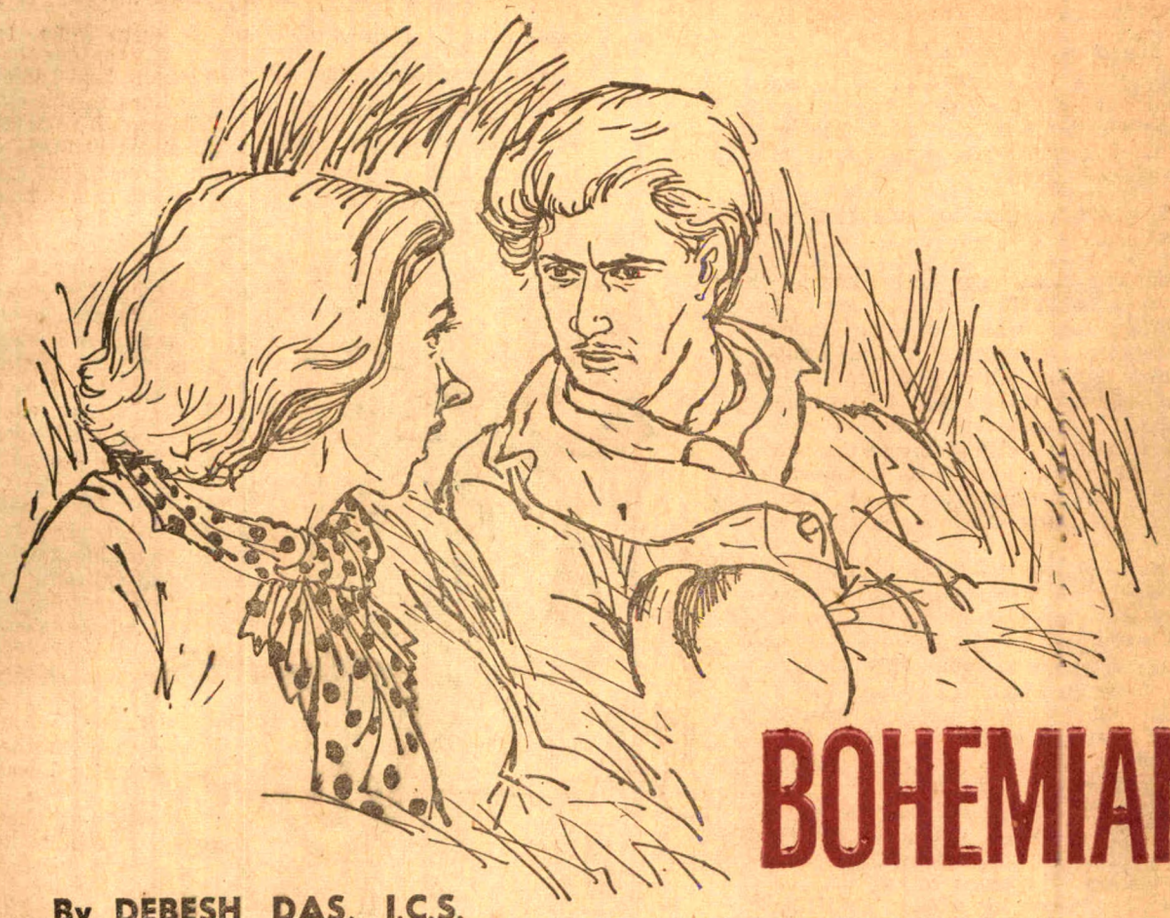
"But the revolver, Lavender," he questioned. "You mean—he carried it about with him, waiting an opportunity to kill her? I thought you said—"

"The revolver and the whip," answered Lavender, "are two very puzzling features of this case. I have no notion where the whip is, unless it has gone on a journey in the back of somebody's truck. Mottram had plenty of time to dispose of it. He concealed it, somewhere, to mislead us. As for the revolver—well, I've been thinking that over. I don't think he carried it with him. I think the sight of Barbara and Carter at the crossroads furnished the spark that made him completely murderous; and it probably caught him without a weapon except his clubs.

"But somewhere he had seen a revolver and was able to get it!" He laughed a queer little laugh. "I'm going to be very clever, now, or very stupid," he announced. "I think he got that revolver here at the club, Lucas. Think a minute before you speak. Has there ever been one around that you know of? One that could be safely abstracted, and then put back? If so, it will be exactly where it has always been—where Mottram replaced it, just before he made his sensational report to you and Benson."

"Great God!" cried the President of the Airedale Golf and Country Club. "*My* revolver! My wife's rather—a little thing—no bigger than—" He laughed helplessly. "There was a burglar scare at the

(Continued On Page 48)



BOHEMIAN

By DEBESH DAS, I.C.S.

In this colourful life story of a Bohemian, his dreams, pleasures and philosophy the distinguished author of EUROPA has caringly revealed the Indian and the Western views on love and marriage through the other party's eyes in a searching analysis which is cleverly woven.

JUST think of the situation. I of all persons have come to Soho in search of the Bohemians. I consider myself a very mature and respectable citizen of India, a true representative of all the conservative traditions of that old country of mine I have heard that there is a place called Mont Martre in Paris where also I could come across those strange creatures called the Bohemians.

I do not know French. Nor do I understand why they suddenly put into the shade with such gusto letters like *S* and *N* in the midst of their conversation. But the people who resort to such unreliable behaviour in conversation may prove equally undependable in other spheres also So I dare not go to Mont Martre and decided to explore Soho instead. I wanted to have a first-hand acquaintance with that strange type called Bohemian. My wife at home had asked me to do so

But I could not ask anybody or everybody about Soho. I might be misunderstood That is why I cast furtive glances in all directions and approached the old liftman of the Indian High Commission when nobody else was nearby I drew him aside and put the question straight to him The old man had a smile on his lips while he gave me the direction.

But then so many other people also, particularly strapping young English girls, smile at me. The younger they are the more charming are their amused smiles

But I don't feel surprised. I know that a canoe rocks on water much more than the heavier yacht. I also realise that after passing three score years in India I have now come to England for the first time. There I have been sixty winters My business in iron and steel is in its Indian summer. I came here to promote my business interests further It is rather unfortunate that my expenses in London and the English winter seem to be competing in a race to make me uneasy. It is a surprise that young men and women are running about here without pullovers and overcoats. Girls particularly seem to defy the cold and the standards of decorum.

I was noticing all this while sipping a cup of tea in a small restaurant in Soho I started with a small place first. I had to write a letter to my wife at night giving her a faithful account of what I have seen. She is more interested in these things than me. I must give an eye-witness account of

many places including Scho which figure in several of the educative novels my wife has read in Indian language. Otherwise I would not have visited Soho in my present respectable advanced age.

A young man of about 35, a countryman of mine, entered the restaurant and had a square look at me. Why did that young man look at me like this? Half a glance would tell you that I belong to your country. But your looks are so persistent as if they are cross-examining me.

He took a table next to mine and very gravely placed his order.

"I want two boiled eggs, so hard boiled that you have to use a hammer to break them. I want overdone toast which must be more black than brown. And please give me a cup of tea which is more water than tea."

I was amazed. What does this young fellow mean? Has he started drinking even at this time of the day? Probably he has had enough of gin which looks like water and that is why he must have tea which also should look like water. May be, it is a new joke.

The waitress too was taken aback. She thrust the pencil in her mouth and looked on. Then she started smiling and said, "The afternoon has turned out nice, hasn't it? Spring seems to be round the corner."

This young man from my country had a scarlet scarf of silk round his neck instead of a tie. He started tying it harder and harder and briefly said, "I want them strictly this way, you understand."

The waitress shrugged her shoulders and went away saying, "Yes, sir." The young man brought out a long pipe and started smoking. It seemed to me that he was trying to sharpen his wits. I kept him under observation.

The waitress placed these things on the table and suppressed a smile on her lips. Then she leant forward and asked, "Anything else, sir."

"Yes. Now please take a seat in my front and start nagging me. Nag me hard. As hard and as well as you can."

The girl was at her wit's end. Failing to understand anything she placed the stub of the pencil again in her mouth.

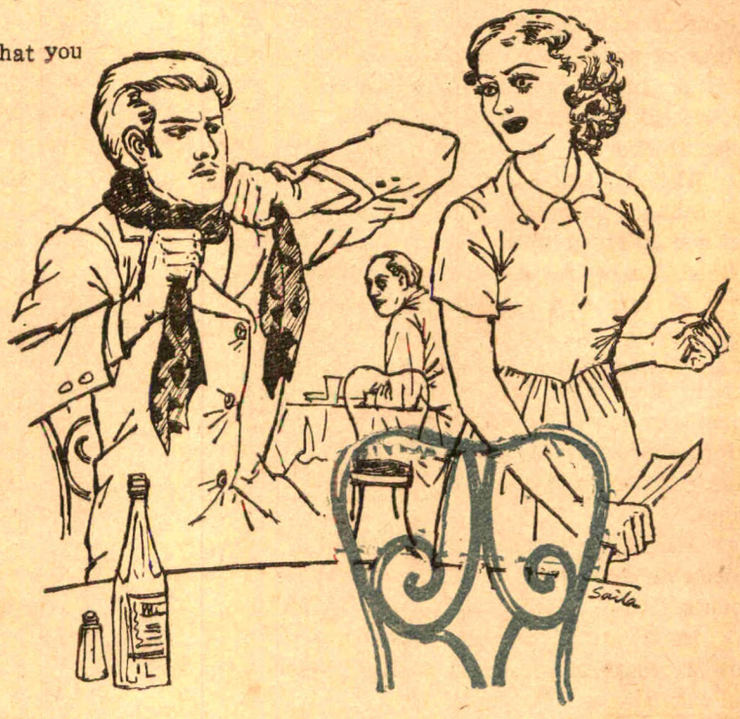
"Don't you understand me? I want to have an advance rehearsal. That is why I have ordered for these things."

It is a custom in England to please the customer. Nobody could pull on a long face while doing his duty. The girl broke into laughter and said, "Now I understand, sir. Probably you are thinking of getting married to a film star."

The young man took the pipe down from his mouth and said, "No, no. I fought in the last war and I have no intention of starting a second front."

"You are right, sir. You are very wise. Probably you are thinking of running a flat yourself and you are practising how to do it." She then broke into laughter. But she had other customers to look after and went towards their tables.

Here is a drama in life and book in my very presence and certainly it would be worth while to try to have a good inside look into it. The young man has cultivated a distinguished kind of French cut beard and moustache. Probably he wants to pose as an intellectual. Anyhow he might agree to lift the curtain over Soho for me to have a proper view. I



This young man from my country had a scarlet scarf of silk round his neck instead of a tie. He started tying it harder and harder and briefly said, "I want them strictly this way you understand?"

felt brave enough to approach this subject while remembering my wife's order.

"Excuse me, please. I have come to this country only recently and I want to explore the inner mind of the people here. You also seem to have come from my country. Won't you help me a little?"

I put forward the usual stereotyped pleas. The young man was apparently pleased and gave orders for tea again. This time it was fresh tea.

After half an hour we two were walking down the streets of Soho. He was 35 and I 60, but we had become good friends in spite of the scarlet scarf round his neck and the woollen handknit comforter round mine. Sinha invited me to his private club in Soho. There he would show me the working of the true Bohemian mind

Half an hour later Sinha warmed up considerably. As it is, the atmosphere of this club had a

good amount of colourfulness in it. It was in a basement with the stairs starting right from the street pavement. These were of bare wood with no carpet covering anywhere. At the entrance the name of the club was shown in winding letters of bronze—"The Cave." Indeed it was a cave. As I bowed my head to enter the low-roofed room I found myself straight inside a door. The counter was not of wood, but made of green bamboo shoots. These had the effect of corrugated iron sheets and looked interesting. The walls had a facing of rough wood panels instead of wall paper. The chairs had seats made of strings of variegated colours and the backs were made of Singapore cane. The lights were probably electric but the bulbs had the appearance of candles veiled thickly by red shades.

With one jerk I shed 25 years off my life.

Sinha drinks only wine but no liquor. His object was to enjoy wine and not to be drunk, he explained. There was another solid reason for this. Once he very nearly fell in the hands of Germans while trying to discover Scotch whisky in France when that delicious country was under Nazi occupation. Since then he has taken a vow not to take liquor any more. He added a little comment to this information, "Whisky has no taste once you have been initiated into the mellow pleasures of French vines."

Alas! I am ignorant of the tastes of both those delectable drinks and I put in a question in rather doubting voice, "Sure that you are not telling a lie?"

He burst into a loud laughter and asserted, "A lie? My foot! Of course, it is only intellectuals like me who have a right to tell lies."

He had another sip of vine rouge and added, "Have you got the guts to trade in lies?"

I had by that time ceased to be upset by such questions, but I whispered, "There are certain things like heaven and hell."

"Yes, may be. But heaven is crowded with gods. I want a little more exclusive place."

With quite an air of intimacy I asked, "What about hell?"

He threw up a ring of smoke and replied, "No. That's far too proletariat for me. After all I am an intellectual."

Raising an eyebrow I commented, "Then this is the place that is ideal for you, isn't it?"

By this time I was looking furtively in another direction. A strapping young girl had come into the room. She was like the ripening and yet green luscious guava fruit of India. It did not take much time to gather a crowd of admirers round her. Sinha probably never knows what decorum or restraint is. He flashed out a question to me. "What are you looking at sir? Are you trying to find out whether the straight lines of that young girl have turned into curves?"

I was a little embarrassed. After all I am not young and am long past the age of such inclinations. In fact, I have come here only to comply with the command of my wife at home. Still I replied. "Neither her age nor her desires could lie concealed to a pair of searching eyes."

Sinha smiled as he began to rock his wine glass mildly, "You see a girl's age is written on her body and her desires on her eyes. How can she, poor young, hide either of them?"

While saying this he projected forward his well chiselled face set in the framework of French cut beard. He looked rather funny and inexplicable. Has he already come under the influence? All his wines were "on me." So there was nothing to prevent him from continuing his long drinks one after another.

But in a very low whisper Sinha confided, "But I have been able to conceal everything. I have grown old."

His voice was definitely wet and he said, "I admit that the most discussed thing in Europe is existentialism. It is not satisfied with the tragedies of everyday life and its philosophy is prepared to allow you to have a gay irresponsible attitude towards it. If you are living a life of careless abandon, you just pose as an existentialist and nobody could blame you for that. You could do all sorts of unapproved things and make convenient excuses of the theories of life which you may seek to discover in the writings of Andre Gide or Jean Paul Sartre."

Of course, I do not presume to understand this theory. Moreover, I could not possibly have the opportunity of sampling it in my country of conventions and strict codes of morality.

So I decided to sound Sinha thoroughly to get at this pleasant sounding theory. In a very intimate tone I asked, "Why? Certainly you have tasted the joys of existentialism."

Fingering the scarf round his neck affectionately he said, "The joys. I want to drown myself in joys. But probably you do not know that a man becomes old not on account of his own age but that of his wife's outlook?"

"I am very sorry to hear this. Is your wife.....?

"No, no. I haven't yet been saddled with a wife. I'm afraid there's no escape now. My father is coming here next week. He has given me notice that I must go back to India with him and get married to a docile and well groomed girl of his choice."

"Good Heavens. You are no longer a kid. Surely if you explain everything to him your father will understand."

"I have tried my best, but I fear that this time I won't be able to escape my parents."

I was also warming up considerably. With a

smile I said, "On such occasions our Indian boys become really good boys and obedient sons. It suits both the son and the parents. Moreover, your bride may be beautiful."

Sinha did not respond. On the other hand he became more depressed and said, "It would be a sheer misfortune to have a wife thrust on by others. You won't understand the misery of it. The sheer prospect is making me extremely unhappy. Indeed it has already left a deep stain on me."

"Oh! But I understand that alcohol is a good stain remover, more effective than even petrol." I felt that the young man was passing through a mental crisis. I must try to understand it. I myself went up to the bar and fetched another glass of wine for him.

By that time Sinha started to unburden himself. He began to lift the curtain over his student days in London during the war. Since 1943 the bon patriots of France started forming groups of commandos and took small groups of Nazi soldiers by surprise. The whole world began to applaud them. In England too many desperate young men became anxious to earn approbation in a like manner. Their life was nothing but a dream, probably a short dream. Why should not they dream of immortality in life itself?

Sinha also felt the urge to do something like that and embarked on a fishing boat for some unknown part in the south coast of France. The story that followed was genuine no doubt and did not contain any exaggeration. He joined the Maquis in the south of France and took on the guise of a rustic peasant living on the land. His adventures with the Maquis were deeply printed in the shape of scars all over the body. Young boys and girls, old men and women, all sorts of people were operating as Maquis. They had to lie in hiding in caves and forests, in hide-outs and vineyards day after day, night after night. The war brought quite a new and undreamt of situation in the life of this twenty-two-year-old young man, a son of a well-off, respectable family of India and a student of textile science in England.

He had gone to the United Kingdom for higher education with a noble outlook and a clean mind. But those who ceased to attach any value to their life had also discarded all the restraints of convention. Any day they might become dead mutton in the hands of Nazis. Any tree might be used as gibbet for hanging by the neck. What was worse, a bomb or a hand-grenade might throw some limbs up in the sky like a kite cut off from its string. In such a situation life and death, cleanliness and chastity assumed a different meaning. The Maquis saw many deaths in front of their very eyes, many escapes from death with consequences worse than death itself. Standing in the midst of death they tasted the nectar of immortality.

They tasted the poison of life also, a poi sweeter than nectar itself. Moral restraint natur ceased to have any binding force. As it is, the c cept of morality in Europe is quite different f that in the East Moreover who was going to w about this when there was neither society nor pe ful life? Sinha, of course, completely overlooked aspect in the life of exuberant boys and girls. sole ambition was either death or glory nobler t death. Glory or death.

One day Nazi soldiers laid a cordon round th whole area and started putting all villagers through the sieve. Whosoever was suspected of hostility towards Germany was killed without question or hesitation. There was no room in the concentration camps where internees had to be given food. It was much easier and less expensive to hang prospective internees by the neck till death from the nearest tree. Moreover this process had the additional advantage of holding up an example to other villagers. Many people were caught in the Nazi net but the real resisters were all away in hills and forests. The only way the Maquis could deal with the situation was to create a diversion so that the Nazis would have to move away from this area So it was decided to dynamite a railway bridge a few miles away. But no fuse wires were available and the objective had to be secured in such a way that those who would undertake the job would have to be prepared to lay down their lives on the spot Everybody in the crowd pleaded for the privilege. They started to scramble for

RAVEN'S CLAW

(Continued From Page 44)

club, Lavender—about six months ago. I loaned that gun to Myers, at the night desk! He keeps it behind him, on a shelf, out of reach of the caddies."

"But where any one, knowing it was there, could snatch it in passing," said Lavender. "Mottram had seen it, I suppose, and—"

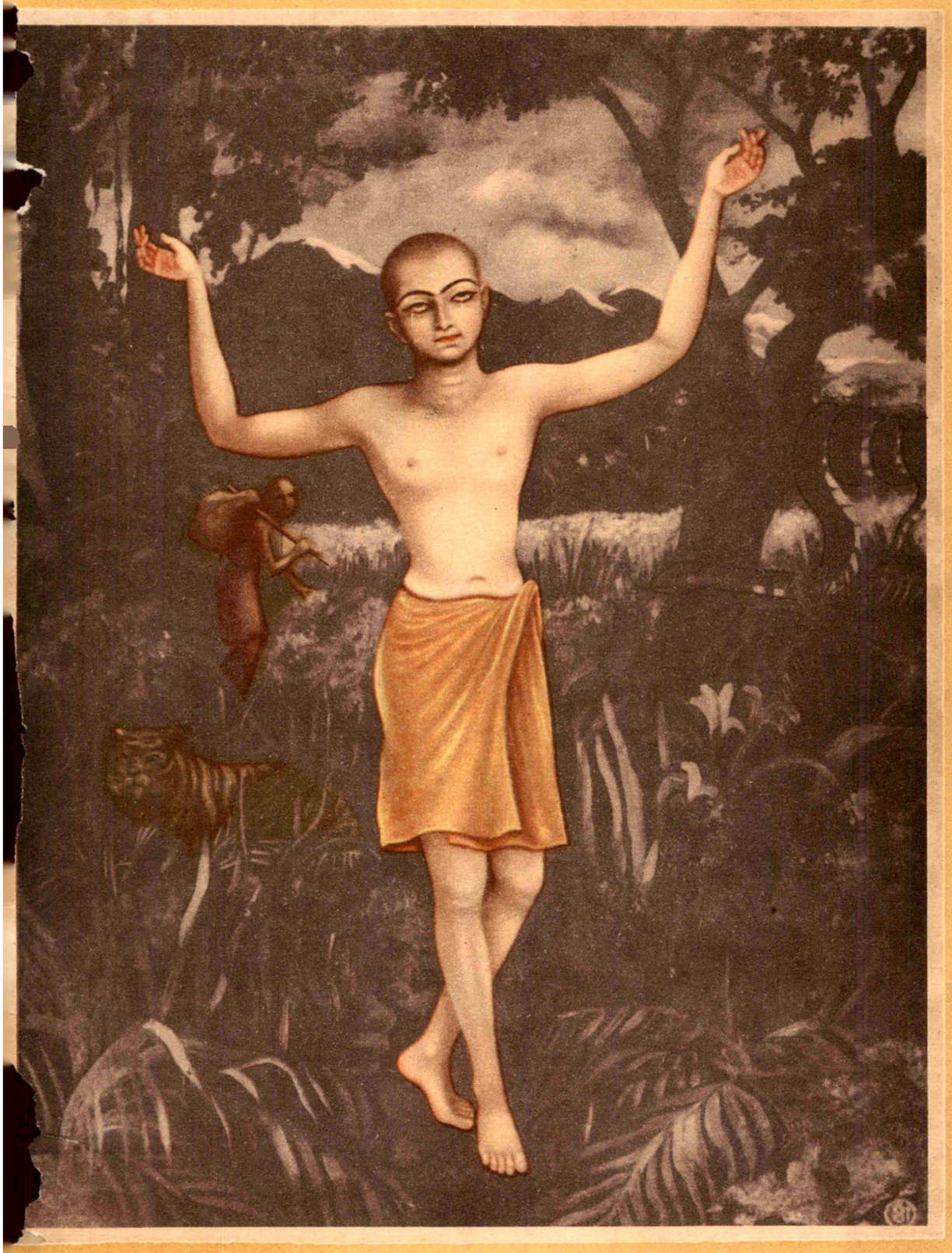
He stopped. Lucas was hurrying from the room. When he returned there could be no longer any doubt about the weapon that had been used. A single shot had been discharged from the dangerous toy—we could almost smell the odour of the discharge.

Lucas looked at the thing with horror. "I think," he said soberly, "that Myers and I are very lucky this was not found earlier."

"Mmmm," agreed Lavender. "Perhaps!" Then he laughed. "But the luckiest fellow of us all," he added, "is John Hamilton Carter."

Which, as it turned out, was exactly true, for the amazing individual is now—in effect—Mister Sally Stagg. It was the least Sally could do, after she had made his acquaintance.

"For he really does need a guardian," she told me seriously, the last time I saw them in their home.



Sree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu on the way to Brindaban

In a lottery the names of Sinha and Jeanne came up.

the right to commit suicide. In a lottery the names of Sinha and Jeanne came up. Jeanne was a very brave and resolute girl. But the unkindness of the Creator was very prominent on her face and body. Nobody dared even throw as much as a long glance towards her. She too knew how ugly she was. May be on account of this or of the conservative traditions of the French, she had never given expression to any youthful inclination so common and natural in such situations. Now she and Sinha started on a mission together. It was not an engagement between a young man and young woman but an engagement of both with death itself.

The bridge would have to be bombed before the early hours of the morning. They had to lie concealed in a haystack together from the evening. They made a small hole in a haystack and lay in waiting together, very close to each other so that the change in size of the stack remained unnoticed.

At dead of night Sinha felt on his body the warmth of Jeanne's youth. She had nestled close on him. She was not speaking but her whole body gave vent to her desire. The whole night seemed full of it.

Sinha resisted, "No, Jeanne, no. We have got a duty to perform. We must go out in half an hour's time."

She replied warmly with her lips.

"No, no, Jeanne. Move away from me. Do please move away. Just now we can't divert our attention. We will be failing in our duty. Just think of it, your country."

In reply she only produced a warbling sound from her lips. The reply could not be understood but it was clear that she was not listening to any protest.

"Jeanne, sil vous plait, do give all your attention to the mission entrusted to us. We cannot think of anything else now. Besides, your....."

"My what? My looks are ugly? Is that what you mean?" Her words sounded like the roar of a tigress interrupted.

It was her anger that came to Sinha's rescue and he said, "Yes. Just picture in your mind your own face. It's distorted. Those two eyes of yours have different colours and your nose seems to be protruding like a revolver ready for shooting out."

Jeanne was now mad with rage. She was gnashing her teeth. Her revolver, not the revolver of the nose, was tickling somewhere on Sinha's body. He now tried his last weapon, the only weapon left to save himself from a woman spurned.

"Do you know Jeanne, that your figure is the supreme example of modern French art? Just like a painting of Picasso. Ho Ho Ho."

What neither protest nor the country's cause could do, this satire achieved immediately. Jeanne, poor ugly Jeanne covered her face with both hands and began to sob violently in the haystack. Making any noise was risky. Shuffling in the hay was riskier. Sobbing under restraint from all sides made her pain more unbearable.

But it would not do to let Jeanne go on weeping in this way. She must steady herself. There was stern duty right in front. It was either death or glory.

Sinha decided that Jeanne must be pacified as quickly as possible and the best way was to discuss with her this very affair. So he explained to her, "Just try to understand, Jeanne, that I am an Indian, a Hindu. It's a sin for us to have physical relations until the parties are religiously married as man and wife. In our country our parents arrange the marriage. The most that's done before the actual marriage is a little acquaintance between the bridegroom and the bride-to-be. But they do not have any physical relations before the sacred union. Just think of it. Could I do anything which won't be honourable to you?"

She was very much surprised and kept quiet for

some time. Then she said, "What a strange and unbelievable thing! A boy and a girl don't know each other and yet there won't be any sin if only these two are tied together with or without their consent by the parents on both sides? I can't understand how that's possible. It should be a sin if a man and a woman, unknown to each other, live together. It would be a matter of shame. An unclean affair."

Sinha tried to explain the sacred ties and philosophy of Hindu marriage. He of course dared not explain further that according to the orthodox Hindu custom the husband is as much a god incarnate. But these theories did not appeal to Jeanne. She only shook her head and said, "No, no, that's a shame, a matter of dishonour. I don't understand at all how girls of your country can surrender themselves to strangers in this fashion."

"Why! You yourself don't see any wrong in voluntary surrender on the part of your girls? That surrender only reflects the desires of the parents."

Sinha laughed as he said, "All right I shall check up this aspect of the matter when I go back to my country. But what about these unapproved affairs outside the wedlock in Europe?"

In a deep voice Jeanne answered, "This is neither irregular nor dishonourable. The lovers approach each other completely, voluntarily, with the approval of all their judgement and conscience. How can one withhold anything from one known for long, loved for long, with whom there has been an exchange of hearts? If you don't know him, don't love him. You can only beg or loot. That would be a shame we can't even think of in our free countries, in our free societies. Just think of this, I have known you so intimately and for so long. . . . . ."

Sinha did not let her explain the theory further. The reference to himself might again produce an undesirable effect. On the other hand it was time to blow up the railway bridge. They must reach it quick. Beneath their feet was spread out death and heaven above their heads.

Jeanne has left for that heaven. I have not been able to meet her last desire. But I am carrying on my body the stamp of the love of the last moment together. A shrapnel burst over us and killed her. But it left me a lifelong witness of our journey together. In that immortal moment I could not give her even a drop of water. But I gave to her lips my first kiss, last drop of tears.

Sinha became silent. I began to look all round me embarrassed. He had burdened me with this story by taking advantage of the situation in this basement club. The burden of this, the philosophy of love outside the wedlock is rather too heavy for me. If I try to explain it to my wife while writing to her an account of Soho, she might misunderstand me. I would rather get out of this Bohemia. But I must produce a reasonable excuse for getting out.

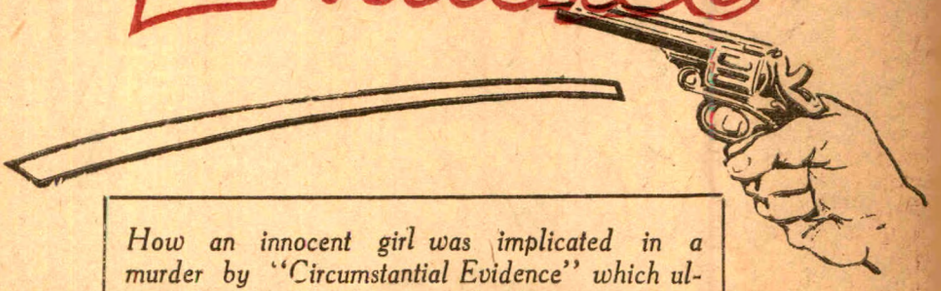
But there was no need to do so. Sinha has already shaken off the blues. May be he has concealed them with an effort. He was thumping his fingers on the table in tune with the rock'n roll number that was being played in the next room:

We live only till morning,
Come and dance here, darling:
Burn the candle at both ends
While you're afire, darling.

Well, I also went on seeing the candles burning at both ends.

A shrapnel burst over us and killed her. But it left me a lifelong witness of our journey together.

Circumstantial Evidence



How an innocent girl was implicated in a murder by "Circumstantial Evidence" which ultimately fell through. An enthralling crime story.

WILLIAM P. McGIVERN

HIS wife was supposed to meet him at their regular restaurant at six o'clock but she was late. He didn't mind. He was in love with her and he enjoyed sipping his drink and thinking of how she'd look when she hurried through the door, smiling and looking about for him, a little flustered and excited. When her eyes found him she'd smile with relief and come toward him with her quick graceful walk. She was a bright shining girl with hair the colour of a new penny and eyes that seemed full of tiny dancing lights; and when she'd pulled off her gloves she'd smile into his eyes and tell him a funny, exciting story of why she was late.

So he didn't mind waiting a while for her; she was worth waiting for; forever—for always and all time.

Their regular waiter, a stocky genial Austrian named Herman, smiled at him and picked up the empty Martini glass.

"Another, Mr. Halliday?"

"No, I'll wait and have one with my wife," he said.

"She's a little late, eh?"

"Yes, a little bit. I guess she stopped to do some shopping when she left the office. She'll be along pretty soon."

"Maybe she stood you up, eh?" Herman smiled.

"That's an idea," Sam Halliday smiled, too.

He passed the time by looking over the menu. He knew it by heart but he read it the way a man will read a railroad time-table when he hasn't anything else to read. There was tomato soup, onion soup and consomme. Shrimp cocktail or oysters in season. Whitefish, fillet of sole or salmon patties. Breaded veal cutlets, roast beef, pork chops, liver and bacon, steak. Salads. Pie, ice-cream, cheese cake. Coffee, tea or milk.

They ate here at this restaurant on Western Avenue every Thursday night. Then they'd take in a show or, in the summer, walk over to the park. They always sat at the same table, they always had Herman as their waiter and they generally ordered the same food. There wasn't anything exciting about it, but it was what they liked to do once a week and they enjoyed it.

He found himself glancing up occasionally at the door. His wife worked as a typist for an insurance company on Jefferson Street, about a ten minute walk from the restaurant. She was through at five-thirty, which gave her plenty of time to make their date at six. But she usually spent a few extra minutes in the powder room on Thursday nights and even on the short walk to the restaurant she could generally find some little thing to stop and shop for.

He smiled unconsciously and went back to the menu. His thoughts drifted around to his own work—he was a book-keeper in a department store—and the minutes ticked away faster and faster.

He was thinking about his assistant, a young man who had spent two years as a draftee in the occupation army in Europe, and was having a tough time getting adjusted to the humdrum routine of civilian life. He liked the youngster and felt grateful to him in a strange way; because of that he

ductions kidnappings, sex
imes ..... he read the
ries daily. Nothing like
t could happen to Ann.

22-A

wanted to help him and he was thinking of how he could do it, without seeming obvious or intrusive.

The minutes flowed on in a sluggish stream.

When Herman came to his table again and asked him about a drink it was seven o'clock.

Sam Halliday looked at his watch with a start. "She's never been this late," he said, feeling annoyance. "Better bring me another Martini, Herman."

While Herman was getting the drink he went to the phone booth which was located near the front door. He called her office and got the janitor on the phone. The janitor assured him that the office was empty. Everyone had gone home. He hung up and called their apartment. There was a chance —a bare one—that she'd forgotten it was Thursday night and had gone on home. But there was no answer at the apartment.

He went back to the table and finished his drink slowly. He sat there while the restaurant slowly emptied and another hour passed.

Now it was eight o'clock. Now, eight-thirty.

He wasn't thinking about the young assistant at the store now. He wasn't glancing idly at the menu he knew by heart. His eyes were on the door, his hands on the empty glass were tight and strained, his imagination was leaping.

When the hands of the big old-fashioned clock on the wall touched nine o'clock he couldn't sit still any longer. He stood up and walked quickly to the phone booth.

He didn't know who to call, so he stood with his thumb holding the hook down, trying to think. He didn't want to call the hospitals or the police because that gesture would somehow make his fears a reality. He knew, as an objective fact, that people were struck by hit-and-run drivers every day in the city. That every newspaper carried stories of abductions, kidnappings, of sex crimes. These things weren't unusual. He read such stories every morning as he sipped his coffee in their small cozy apartment. Nothing like that could happen to Ann. Those things happened to other people. They happened to middle-aged men returning from work. To drunks. To girls with names like Mary or Evelyn or Sally or Janet.

But finally Sam released the hook, dialled Operator and asked for the police. The words sounded strange in his ears. He was thirty-four years old, a book-keeper, a modest average man. Slightly taller than avearge, perhaps, but in no other way different from thousands who worked and lived and loved in the city. And now a strange impersonal voice was asking to connect him with the police.

"This is Central Station," another impersonal voice said.

"My name is Halliday. My wife is missing. I don't know if I'm talking to the right department, but I'd like to report...."

"I'll connect you with Missing Persons," the voice cut in.

"All right. Thanks."

"Just a minute. What's your name again?"

"Halliday, Sam Halliday. My wife's name is Ann Halliday. She was supposed to meet me at six o'clock for dinner, but....."

"Just a second," the voice said. There was more interest in the voice now.

Sam Halliday loosened his collar. It was suddenly warm in the booth. He tried not to think.

"You're Sam Halliday, eh?" a new voice said

"Yes, that's it."

"Okay, get down here right away. You know where Central Station is?"

".....No." His throat was dry and tight. "What do you want me for?"

"Central's at Eleventh and State. Check in on the ninth floor. Homicide."

"Wait a minute. What's all this?" His voice sounded loud and cracked in his ears. "What's this got to do with my wife?"

"Your wife was booked on a murder charge two hours ago, Halliday. Better get down here soon as you can."

The building that houses Central Station is in a neighbourhood of warehouses, railroad yards and cheap bars.

Halliday scarcely noticed its surroundings or the loungers in the lobby as he hurried into it and to an elevator. He had the feelings his mind had snapped.

This was not real. Police headquarters. Ninth floor. Homicide. Ann booked on a murder charge.

No. They'd smile when he asked for his wife. They wouldn't know of any phone call, because there hadn't been any. There *couldn't* have been.

He got off the elevator on the ninth floor and at the end of the ominous hallway—on his left—were double, glazed-glass doors with Homicide Division lettered on them in solid black letters.

He walked toward them slowly. Noises from the building were around him but he seemed to walk in a vacuum. He took the knob of the door, feeling the metal, cold and slick against his damp palm, but for an instant he was without strength. His breath was coming with an effort—as if the vacuum he moved in was being pumped dry of its last oxygen.

He wet his lips and pushed open the door. A uniformed policeman sitting at a desk looked up at him. He was a young man, with a square red face.

Halliday let the door swing shut behind him, then walked slowly to the desk.

"I'm Sam Halliday," he said.

"Okay," the young cop said. "Take a seat."

He turned from an involved doodle which he'd been drawing on a pad of scratch paper to a phone on his desk. He twirled the dial. Then said: "Halliday's here."

He put the phone back and went on with his doodling.

A door behind the desk opened and a man in a gray flannel suit came out. He glanced at his visitor.

"You Halliday?"

"Yes." He stood up, holding his hat with trembling hands.

"Okay, come on in here."

CHAPTER—II

THE detective stood aside while Sam Halliday walked through the door into a larger room, furnished with two cigarette-burned desks and some chairs. A bare, two-hundred watt bulb burned from the ceiling.

The man closed the door and haunched down in a chair.

"Sit down if you want to," he said.

"I came down here about my wife," Halliday said. "I phoned about ten minutes ago and somebody said——"

"Yeah, yeah," the man said.

He was short but wide, with pale skin and eyes set in pouches. His hair was black and the veins in the backs of his hands were the thickness of lead pencils. There was a smell of tobacco smoke about him. He carried a gun under his left arm.

"I'm Sergeant Norrin. I been assigned to your wife's case. Do you know anything about it?"

"I don't know a thing. Somebody told me to come here. That's all I know." Sam, who had remained standing, came closer to the detective. "Where is she? Is she here? I want to see her! I know this is all a mistake. I want to get a lawyer. He'll straighten this all out. You police can be wrong, you know," he said in a rising voice.

"Take it easy," Norrin responded. "You'll see her. Did you know a guy named Willie Peters?"

"No. But what's that—"

"Did your wife?"

"No. I don't know. Maybe she knew somebody by that name before I met her. She never mentioned that name to me. What difference does it make?"

"Your wife shot a guy named Willie Peters," Norrin said. "People generally know the people they shoot. You can see her now for a while. I'll talk to you later."

Norrin took him to his wife. Ann was in a small room with a policewoman. She sprang up when Sam came through the door. He caught her in his arms and held her close to him. She sobbed his name over and over against his shoulder.

Norrin and the policewoman went outside but left the door open.

He made her sit down and he pulled a chair close to her and held her hand tightly.

"What happened, honey? I know the police are wrong."

She stopped crying and dabbed at her eyes. Her face was pale and her eyes were swollen and red. The bright coppery hair was disarranged and she needed lipstick. One of her stockings was twisted. But she never looked more wonderful to him because she needed him now as she had never needed him before. And he trembled with anger at whoever was to blame for this.

"They keep saying I shot a man," she said. "A man named Willie Peters."

"What happened, honey? Just tell me. I'm going to get a lawyer."

"I stopped at a cigar store to get some cigarettes." She tried to smile. "You used to say I never got the habit—of buying."

"I didn't mean that."

"I know. Anyway there were three or four men in the store. As I opened the door a shot sounded. I don't know just what happened then. I screamed and I must have fainted. When I came to the police were in the store. I was on the floor and some men said I shot a man."

"Men? What men?"

"Oh, I don't know, Sam," she said. She was crying again. "I kept telling them to get you, but they just kept asking me questions and then they brought me down here. I didn't shoot anybody, Sam. You know I wouldn't shoot anybody, don't you, Sam? Please get me out of here, I can't stand it!"

"I know they've made a crazy mistake, baby. They'll soon know it. I'll talk to them, baby. I'll get a lawyer. Just don't worry about it a bit longer." He tried to get confidence and cheer in his voice.

Halliday let his breath out slowly. He didn't want to make things worse for Ann. This was the Law. This was Power. He brought his voice down.

"I swear this is some awful mistake. My wife couldn't be the woman who killed the man, whoever he was."

He found Norrin in the room with the desks and chairs. His voice was louder now. "What kind of a cock and bull story have you guys cooked up? My wife never had a gun in her hand in her life."

Norrin looked up from his chair.

"Don't go shouting at me, goddamit," he said.

"Your wife shot a guy named Willie Peters in a bookie joint on Western Avenue. She walked in and blew a big hole in him. We got two witnesses who saw it. We got the pawnbroker who sold her the gun."

Norrin pounded his fist on his desk. "It may be hard for you to believe, but we got her cold."

Halliday shook his head, and tears came to his eyes. "It's not true, it can't be true. Somebody's

"I didn't shoot anybody, Sam. Please get me out of here!"

lied, or it's a joke or something!"

"It's always tough for a man to find out his wife isn't what he thought she was. We don't play practical jokes around here. Better get her a lawyer. She's going up to the grand jury as fast as we can make it."

The lawyer that Sam Halliday retained was a young man named Nelson. He was short, with sandy red hair and stubby fingers. After talking to Ann he studied and investigated the evidence the State had presented to the grand jury. He talked to Sergeant Norrin and to the Assistant State's Attorney assigned to the prosecution of the case. Then he met Halliday.

"I want it straight," Sam said. "I want the truth. What are her chances?"

A week had passed. Somehow in that time Halliday had gotten accustomed to the realization that his wife was still in jail, charged with murder. The grand jury had turned in an indictment.

"They don't look good," Nelson said. He drummed his fingers on his desk then shrugged his shoulders helplessly. "Maybe you ought to try somebody else, Halliday. Damn it, I'm not running out on you, but I know that getting your wife out of this is going to take some doing. There's a great deal in her favour, I'm sure, but the State's Attorney doesn't dream up a case like this, particularly against a woman."

"But what proof could they possibly have?" Halliday exclaimed, in pain.

"Well, here's the State's case. Your wife walked into a handbook at ten minutes of six, Thursday evening. According to the State's witnesses, there were three men in the place. Willie Peters, the man who was shot, and two men who operate the book. Their names are Bill Dineen and Sol Smith. These two men—Smith and Dineen—tell this story. Your wife came through the door and when she saw Willie Peters she stopped and said, 'You asked for this!' Then, according to their sworn testimony, she took the murder gun from her purse and fired one shot into his body. After that she screamed and fainted."

Halliday pressed the palms of his hands against his temples. There were times during this week that he felt like breaking into insane laughter. Ann! His Ann, with the coppery hair and bright dancing eyes acting like a movie gun moll. "You asked for this!" Words that were like lines from a bad script. Something they'd see together in the neighbourhood movie house and laugh about on the way home.

Ann with a gun in her hand firing a bullet into a stranger called Willie Peters. Impossible! Yet....

"Hang on to yourself," Nelson said.

"Go on. I'm Okay."

"All right. Now about the gun. There's a man named William Morton who claims he sold your wife the gun. Morton runs a pawn-shop on State Street. He's about sixty years old, been in the business all his life. He swears that she came in one day a week or so ago and bought the gun from him. The gun, according to his story, was left with him over a year ago and never redeemed. He has the pawn ticket and a description of the gun, everything all in order. That's his story and he's ready to go on the stand and swear to it."

"He must be lying," Halliday said. His hands were twisting together spasmodically. "Can't you see that?"

"Maybe I can," Nelson said, "but that won't do us any good. Your wife certainly seems innocent to me. But against the testimony of these eye witnesses we need more than my opinion. We need something to break the stories of the witnesses. If they're lying we've got to prove it."

"What are the police doing?" Halliday almost yelled. "Do they sit on their fat behinds and believe anybody who comes in with a wild story? Aren't they checking these witnesses? Good God! Do they send people to the electric chair like this?"

"The police are still investigating, if only to make the case completely airtight. They may have even stronger evidence that we don't know about to uncover at the trial."

"When is the trial?"

"Probably in a month," Nelson said.

Halliday somehow lived through the month.

CHAPTER—III

THE courtroom was crowded but quiet as the State presented its closing arguments.

Halliday sat beside his wife and Nelson.

The State's attorney — a graying cautious man of about forty—didn't feel it necessary to be dramatic. He had an airtight case based on facts. The jury of nine women and three men had those facts and he was content to remind them of their obligation.

Bill Dineen, a middle-aged Irishman with reddened face and blood-shot eyes, had been a good witness. So had Sol Smith, a dapper, cocky young man of about twenty-five. They identified Ann as the girl who shot Willie Peters.

William Morton, a paunchy, silver-haired little man who looked like a kewpie doll, testified that she had bought the gun from him. Ballistics and finger-print experts showed that Ann's fingerprints were on the gun; that it was the gun which had killed Willie Peters.

The State's attorney pointed out that the age and sex of the defendant was irrelevant. She was a murderess and the jury's responsibility was to decide her guilt on the basis of the evidence produced.

Nelson made his closing argument after the noon recess. Dineen and Smith were bookies, race touts. Dineen had served time for forgery. Smith had been picked up by police for questioning many times. William Morton, the pawn broker, had done nine years of a twelve-year term for receiving stolen goods.

Nelson did a fairly good job but he didn't have a strong lever with which to pry apart the structure of evidence the State had built about Ann Halliday.

The jury was out three hours.

When they returned there was an expectant stir in the courtroom. The bailiff rapped for order.

The foreman of the jury rose and cleared his throat. The verdict, he announced in a quivering voice, was murder in the first degree.

The bailiff had to rap for almost a minute to get order restored again.

Halliday found Ann's hand under the table. He pressed it hard. She looked at him and her lips were trembling. She said his name once in a low voice.

First degree murder carried a mandatory death penalty.

Halliday knew that but it was a fresh shock to hear the sentence when Ann stood, supported by two policewomen, to hear the judge pronounce the sentence. The words hit him in the heart and stomach like rupturing blows.

He got up weakly, but summoned strength to dart to her aside. There was terror in her eyes. He grabbed an icily cold hand of hers and pressed it with all his strength, trying to reassure her.

"Don't let them," she said with a moan.

"I won't, Ann. I swear I won't. This will be appealed. They'll find this was all a mistake."

She was led away and he and Nelson fought their way from the courtroom, trying to get past reporters and photographers. The glare of flash bulbs was continuous.

"I'm sorry," Nelson said to him. "Is there anything else——"

"No," Halliday said, savagely. He was still stunned.

Halliday went to his apartment alone that night. It was a four-room apartment that Ann had decorated and furnished. It had been bright and cheerful, exciting and colourful, with gay green drapes and low comfortable furniture. Every week Ann bought fresh flowers for the living room.

He sat down and put a cigarette in his mouth automatically. The flowers of a month ago were on the mantel and they gave the room a musty smell.

He put a hand against his forehead and rubbed it slowly. The flowers were dead. Ann was going to be dead.

He had to make himself accept that fact. Get that set once and for all. Make it just another fact about Ann. Ann has bright coppery hair. Ann can't carry a tune. Ann is going to die. He broke down and sobbed.

. . . . The next morning they let him see her. He brought a small bunch of flowers.

"They're lovely," Ann said. "They'll be something nice to look at."

"I thought the place needed cheering up," he said, trying to smile naturally.

She was pale, but she had herself under control.

"Is there any news?"

"I phoned Nelson this morning. He's preparing an appeal, of course. There's nothing to worry about yet." He wished with all his heart that could be true.

Ann played the game for his sake. "I still feel I'm going to wake up any minute and find myself in the apartment with the alarm ringing."

Sam caught her hand hard, but there wasn't anything to say.

"I'll be back tomorrow."

"I'll be here." She almost grinned.

When he went down to the street, he found a cab and gave the driver an address on State Street.

William Morton's pawnshop was on State, near Harrison. The traditional gilt globes above the door were cracked and peeling, and the windows were cluttered.

Morton was seated behind a counter, reading the Daily Racing Form. He recognized Halliday. He stood up and put the paper down.

He could have been a country grocer or a small town doctor. The gold chain across his vest, the spectacles that perched on the end of his nose, the well-scrubbed, pink-cheeked friendliness seemed out of place in a pawnshop.

"I want to talk to you," Halliday said.

"About your wife, I imagine."

"That's right."

"I was sorry about that business, Halliday. I don't like being helpful to the police. I don't like informing on anyone, but with my record they don't take no for an answer." He shrugged his plump shoulders. "They showed me the gun and asked me what I knew about it before I had any idea of what it was all about."

"You didn't remember exactly when my wife came in here?"

"That's the truth. Your lawyer made a lot of talk about that, but it doesn't mean anything."

"You remembered the gun, all right. You remembered my wife well enough to identify her," Halliday said. "But you don't remember the day."

"It was close to six o'clock," Morton said. "But the day I couldn't and still can't remember. It was a week or so before the murder, I know that much. But one day is pretty much like another in here." He waved a hand at the dusty stock. "I sit here and read the paper and take care of anybody who comes in. The rest of the time I look at this junk and wonder where I'll find suckers to buy it. Sometimes I forget it's Sunday until I hear the bell ringing for Mass at St. Peter's. Sunday, Saturday, Monday—they're all the same to me."

"Did she say what she wanted the gun for?"

Morton looked annoyed. "I went over that a dozen times. She just came in and looked around. Then she asked me if I could sell her a gun. And I did. She put it in her purse and went out."

"You can't sell a gun to a person who doesn't have a permit, can you?"

"I'm not supposed to, but Sergeant Norrin gave me a break because I testified."

"I see," Halliday said. This was a point that hadn't come up in the trial, but he didn't know what good it would do now.

"Didn't you make a sales ticket or receipt on the sale of the gun? That would have a date on it."

"I didn't because I wasn't supposed to be selling her the gun in the first place," Morton said. "Besides, I don't keep records most of the time. I got the whole business in my head."

Halliday nodded and walked out on the street. There had been a frame-up, and that was why Morton wouldn't risk naming a date. Because it might have turned out that Ann would have an alibi for a specific day. Whoever had planned the frame-up didn't take chances. How to prove that?

He sold her the gun, William Morton admitted.

CHAPTER–IV

SAM Halliday went into a restaurant and ordered coffee. When he finished it he walked to Western Avenue and caught a bus going north. He got off at Jefferson Street and walked a few doors down to the handbook where the shooting had happened.

There were bright placards in the window advertising standard brands of tobaccos. Bookies used them to give their places a legitimate appearance.

He opened the door and went inside. Sol Smith was standing behind a counter on which there was a green felt dice board. There was no one else in the place.

"Hello, Halliday," Smith said.

"I just want to check on—" He stopped and shrugged. "Just anything, I guess. You know how the case came out. I can't sit around and do nothing."

"I know how it is," Smith said. "A hell of a note." He was slim, small, beautifully dressed. His nails were carefully kept. "But I don't know anything that will help."

"Who was Willie Peters?"

Smith shrugged his well-tailored shoulders. "Just a guy out for a buck, like all of us. Horse player, gambler, that kind of guy."

"Did you know him well?"

"You know. I'd seen him around. Not too well, I guess."

Bill Dineen came out from a back room. He wasn't wearing a coat and there were dark patches of perspiration staining his shirt. He had a hat pushed back on his head and his skin looked blotched and red. He looked at Halliday, then at Smith, and back at Halliday.

"What the hell does he want?" he said.

"Take it easy," Smith said. "He's just looking around for some dope about this guy his wife shot."

Dineen looked at Halliday. "We don't know anything, buddy. We did our talking to the cops."

"I'm just looking around."

"Well, there's nothing to see here."

Smith was looking at Dineen. There was colour in his face. "Will you shut that flannel mouth of yours? Go sleep off that load you're carrying."

"Go to sleep yourself," Dineen said. "What's this guy bothering us for?"

"His wife is in a bad spot," Smith said softly. "He likes his wife. He wants to help her if he can. Could you understand that?"

Dineen's mouth worked loosely and he tried to smile.

"Yeah, yeah," he said. He looked nervously at Halliday. "Sorry I was edgy. I know how you feel, fella. But we can't help you."

"Yeah," Smith said, looking away from Dineen. "We were the two most surprised guys in the world. Willie Peters was standing right there talking to us —then the door opens and your wife comes in. Bang! Willie wasn't talking anymore. The dame conks out on the floor, and the next thing ya know the place is alive with cops. That was all there was to it."

Halliday heard the door behind him open. He looked around and saw a girl standing inside the door. She was smiling and when she walked toward the counter she swayed a little.

"Hello, boys," she said.

"Hello, Ginny," Smith said.

The girl stopped in the middle of the floor and looked down at the black and white linoleum squares. She kept smiling in a vacant sort of way, and Halliday realized there was an unnatural stillness in the room. He glanced at Dineen and Smith. Smith was watching the girl and his eyes were cautious. Dineen's mouth was working loosely.

"He fell right here," the girl said. She kept smiling, speaking in a sing-song voice. "Little Willie fell right here. I wonder how much it hurt him? He used to moan like a baby if he cut himself shaving. I'll bet he didn't like it when that bullet went into him. One of the docs told me he didn't bleed much. Did all of his bleeding inside where it didn't show."

She looked up at Halliday. "You're her husband. I saw you in court. I saw her, too. She's a nice-looking girl. Real sweet." She kept looking at Halliday and her eyes started to burn and the smile slid off her face. "Yeah," she said quietly, "a real sweet kid. Do you think she looked sweet when she blew that hole in Willie? Oh, I watched her in court. White-faced little tramp. Twisting her hands together, looking at you with big sad eyes. Did she look at Willie that way?"

"Was Willie Peters your husband?" Halliday asked.

Smith said,

"They were friends. She's been on the booze since it happened." His voice was low but the girl heard.

She looked at him, weaving a little. "I guess I have," she said. "When they burn her I'm going to have a little drink for Willie. I'll say, 'Willie, they just burned that sweet-faced little tramp that shot you. Does that make it any better, honey?"

"This is her husband," Smith said.

"I'll drink to him, too, then. I'll drink to all of you bums." She started to cry and Halliday saw that Dineen was looking sick. Smith had nothing in his face.

"Need any dough?" he said.

"I'm all right."

Halliday nodded to Smith and walked out of the place. He went down half a block and crossed the street. He came back on the opposite side of the street and stepped into a doorway where he could watch the front of the handbook.

He was going to know more about this Ginny. She might be a link to something else. No one had mentioned her in the trial. She hadn't come forward herself. It was only luck that he'd come in contact with her.

* * * *

He waited for an hour. Finally, she came out and walked south on Western. He crossed the street and followed her, keeping a half block behind. She was easy to follow. She walked slowly, almost aimlessly.

She had once been an attractive girl. Now at about thirty, she was hardened and cheap. The blonde hair was streaked from irregular peroxide applications and the tan polo coat she wore needed cleaning. Her figure was still slim and her legs were those of a dancer—shapely slender, muscular.

She passed Elm Street and turned in at a cheap bar. Halliday waited outside a moment then

went in. The place was dark and there were brown wooden booths along the left wall. The bar opposite ran the length of the room.

Three men were on stools at the bar drinking beer. The bartender was watching the traffic on Western.

Halliday saw the blonde sitting in the last booth staring down at the table. He walked down and slid into the booth seat opposite her. She looked up at him without recognition.

"I'm Halliday," he said. "I talked with you a while ago at the bookie."

Her eyes focussed. "Yeah. What do you want?"

"Can I buy you a drink?"

"No."

A sloppy waitress appeared from a back room and came over to their booth. Halliday ordered two bourbons with water. The waitress brought them back and looked at the blonde with the contempt that women who work have for women who drink bourbon at eleven in the morning.

"I said I didn't want a drink."

"It might make you feel better."

She drank the drink and shuddered. She fumbled for the water and drank some from the glass. Some of it went down her chin and she wiped it away with the back of her hand.

"I'm sorry about Willie Peters," Halliday said.

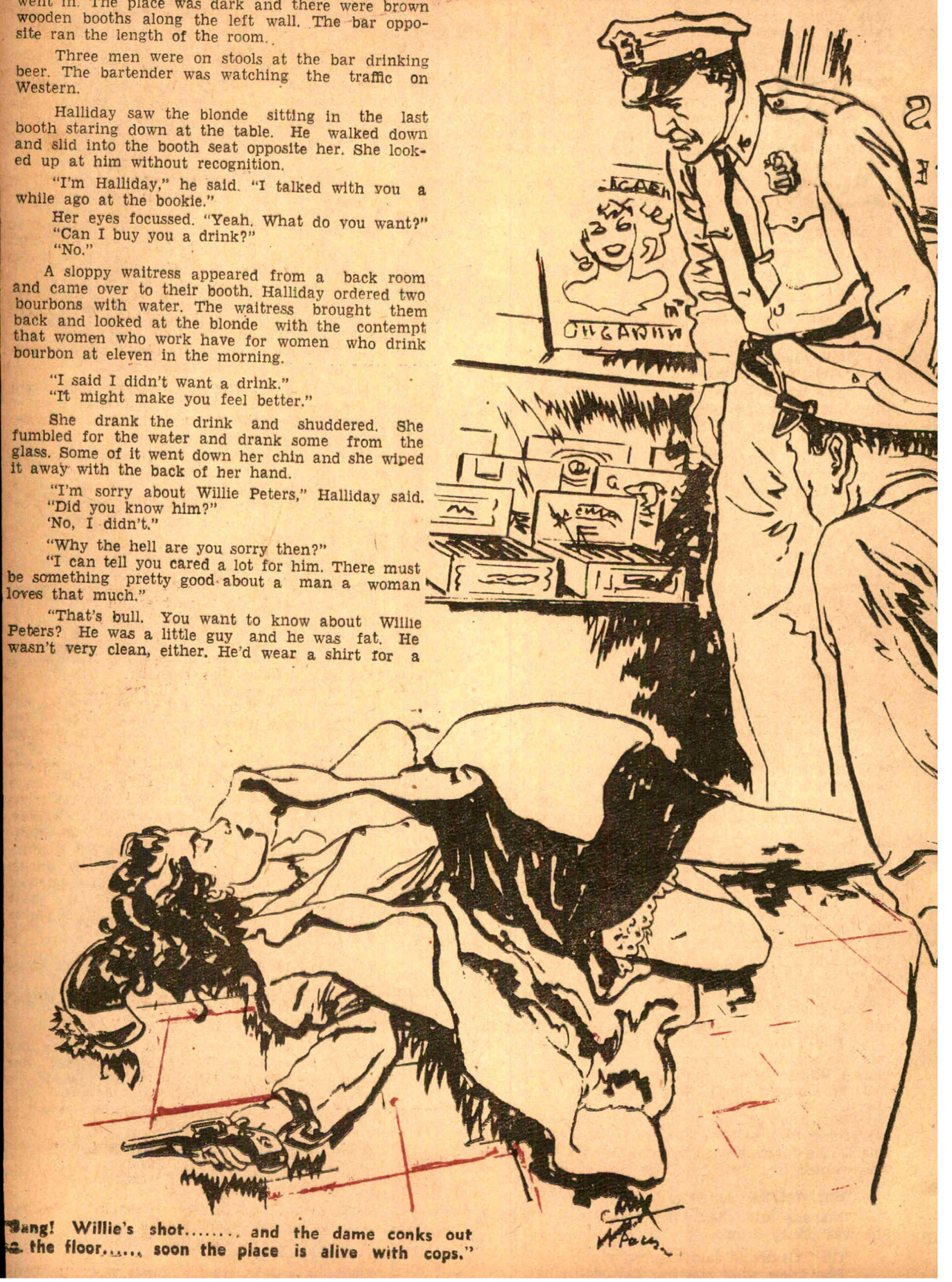
"Did you know him?"

'No, I didn't."

"Why the hell are you sorry then?"

"I can tell you cared a lot for him. There must be something pretty good about a man a woman loves that much."

"That's bull. You want to know about Willie Peters? He was a little guy and he was fat. He wasn't very clean, either. He'd wear a shirt for a



"Bang! Willie's shot..... and the dame conks out on the floor..... soon the place is alive with cops."

week unless I took it off him. He wore white felt hats and his vest used to pull up about three inches at the waist and show his dirty shirt. He smoked cigars and let them go out. Then he'd chew on the cigar like a cow with her cud. That was Willie Peters. The big horse player. God, he thought he was hot. Always going to take the track for a big loss. Always had a winner. He'd sit around our place with a dope sheet and come up with six winners. None of them won. That would make a smart guy mad. Maybe a smart guy would have gone to work and said to hell with the horses. But not Willie. He never got mad. He'd laugh and keep trying. Never got mad at anybody."

"You loved him, didn't you?"

"How do you know?"

"You just told me you did."

"Yeah, I loved him," she said. "Now what do you want?"

"My wife didn't kill him," Halliday said. "The jury said she did."

"The whole thing was a frame. I don't know why, but that's the God's truth. Did your Willie ever mention her? Did he know her?"

From under layers of alcoholic fog her mind seemed to be turning that over slowly. "He didn't never mention her. He told me about everything. Always happy about everything."

"He never cheated on you, did he?"

"Who else would have had that fat little guy?" she said scornfully.

"Then he didn't know her. And she didn't know him. Yet Dineen and Smith claim she said, 'You asked for this,' and then shot him. That's a lie. Someone else shot Willie Peters. Who would want him out of the way? That's the person we've got to find."

"I don't know," she said helplessly.

"Who didn't like Willie Peters?"

Her face was hardening. "So then you'll run to the cops. You want me to rat so you can save that wife of yours. Maybe she killed Willie. Maybe you're just talking too fast for me."

"I want to save my wife," he said. "I also want the man who shot Willie Peters to get what's coming to him. You want that too, don't you?"

"I'm no squealer. I'll take care of the guy myself if he did it. Now let me alone."

Halliday's heart leaped with hope. For in the bookie joint, Ginny had talked as if she believed Ann was the killer. If he could just talk to her when she was sober.....

"All right Ginny, I'll leave. But when can I see you again?"

She shrugged. "What difference does it make?"

CHAPTER—V

HALLIDAY got the blonde's home address and went out and hailed a cab. He had the driver take him to the Criminal Courts building. After asking questions and waiting for half an hour, he walked into the office of the State's attorney who had prosecuted his wife's case.

This prosecutor's name was Granville. He was graying, though only about forty. He sat behind a neat desk with his back to a window, with a taut expression.

"What is it, Halliday?" he asked.

"I've been trying to find out something to break this frame-up against my wife," Halliday said. "You and the police are through with the case but I'm still working."

"Now just a minute," Granville said. "Believe me, I know how you must feel. It was hard for me, too, to believe your wife was mixed up with Willie Peters and a killer. But the police and this office had to do its job. We presented the evidence to the jury. Your wife's lawyer had every opportunity to refute it. You know yourself the judge was very fair in his rulings. And the jury decided your wife was guilty."

"But I have found something new! Willie Peters had a girl. I talked to her half an hour ago. She claims Willie Peters didn't know my wife."

"How would she know?"

"She knew all about him. She wouldn't tell me everything because she doesn't like the police. But this is the important thing: she knows of someone who wanted to get rid of Willie Peters."

"She wouldn't say who?"

"No, she said she'd take care of him, herself. She was pretty drunk—"

"Oh," Granville said expressively.

"She knew what she was saying, though."

Granville shrugged and lit a cigarette. "What do you expect me to do?"

"Do?" Halliday was indignant. "You and the police didn't try to locate Willie's girl, this Ginny, and talk to her when you were supposed to be getting the facts. Why don't you do it now?"

"The case is closed," Granville said. "I'm not just interested in convictions, Halliday. I like to see justice done. But what you've told me isn't enough for me to suggest re-opening the case. You've talked to a drunken women who thinks maybe somebody shot her boy friend. Tomorrow morning she'll have forgotten she ever talked to you. She may not even have known Peters. You couldn't believe, Halliday, how many persons get the idea, in their imaginations, that they know something vital about a murder. Halliday, take my advice. Put your hope in an appeal, a new trial, and a better deal from another jury. Don't waste your money chasing around these drunken hopheads. They'll tell you anything if you're buying the liquor."

"Okay," Halliday said, bitterly.

Granville spoke softly. "I realize what you must think of me."

"What I think of you would get me ten years," Halliday said.

* * * *

He tried to see Ginny the next day and the day after, but it was a week before he contacted her again. They went to a bar in her neighbourhood, a small place that smelled of beer and unwashed human beings. They sat on stools at the end of the bar and he ordered drinks.

"How's everything?" he asked tonelessly.

"Okay," she said. She wasn't drunk. She'd been drinking but she was rational.

"What kind of trouble was Willie in?" Halliday asked without further preliminaries.

"What makes you think he was?"

"Somebody shot him."

"Yeah, he was in trouble. Little fool. If you

wife didn't kill him I know who did."

"Won't you tell me?"

She looked at him bitterly. "I told you I'm no squealer. I'll get the guy who did it, but the cops won't get him."

"All right," he said. "Have a drink."

Halliday saw Ginny again three days later in the same place. She wasn't drunk this time. Her eyes were clear.

"You look like hell," she said. "Don't you ever go to bed and get any sleep?"

"I've stopped trying. It's no use."

"You're crazy about this wife of yours, aren't you?"

'Yes," he said. "She's not very big, you know. Built like you, but not as tall. That's what really sticks in my mind. Doing that to someone so small. She's holding up pretty well. She tries to smile when I'm there. They let me see her every day."

"You been married long?"

"About three years. I'm older than she is. She was just out of business school when I met her. She was just twenty. I was thirty-one."

"She likes you, doesn't she?"

"Yes, I think she does."

"You're getting me mixed up," she said irritably. She was quiet for a long while, staring moodily at her drink. "When does it happen?"

Halliday swallowed. It was a question he couldn't ask himself. But he knew the answer.

"A few weeks," he said.

"See me tomorrow night in here," she said. 'I've got to think.'

"You'll tell me who it was tomorrow night?"

"I'm not sure I know. But Willie was trying to start a book. I told him he had to be in with the syndicate, but he just laughed. Said he was too small for them to worry about. He didn't have a place, took bets on a street corner. They told him to lay off, but he laughed. He told me they were kidding."

"And somebody in the syndicate killed him?"

"I don't know. Let me think about it until tomorrow night. I'm not trying to make you sweat. But I got to think."

"All right, Ginny."

* * * *

Sergeant Norrin was still wearing the gray suit and the greasy gray hat. He still smelled of tobacco smoke. He listened to Halliday's story, grunting occasionally.

"Maybe you got something," he said. "But this babe—this Ginny—what proof has she got?"

"I don't know. But if she knows the man—or thinks she does—you can work on him, can't you?"

"Yeah, we can do that," Norrin said.

They were in Norrin's office with the dirty blinds and the cigarette-littered floor. Norrin was slumped in his chair, feet propped on the desk. He worked a tooth pick from one side of his mouth to the other.

"You're seeing her tomorrow night, eh?"

"That's it."

"And she's going to tell you who she thinks killed Willie Peters? Okay, you keep that date. Then get in touch with me and let me know how it goes."

* * * *

"You know the one I mean," Halliday said to the bartender. "I've been in here with her a couple of times. A blonde."

"Yeah, I know her," the bartender said. "You sat down at the last two stools. Drank bourbon."

"Sometime this afternoon two guys came and got her. She didn't go willingly. God no! She put up a fight."

"Yeah, that's her. Well, are you sure you haven't seen her tonight?"

"I'm pretty sure she wasn't in. Yeah, I know she wasn't. Any message if she shows up?"

Halliday looked at his watch. Nine-thirty. He'd been waiting since seven. "Just tell her to wait," he said.

He went outside and walked down the block quickly. Ginny lived just a few blocks away and he knew he had been foolish to wait so long at the bar. Maybe she was sick. . . . . .

. . . . Her landlady wasn't very interested.

"She owes me four dollars," she said. "She'd better come back."

"When did she leave?" Halliday asked.

"Sometime this afternoon. Two guys came and got her. Said they were from the State whisky commission. They said she was drinking too much."

The landlady was an elderly woman with dirty gray hair and a breath that reeked of gin. She looked half drunk.

"Did she go willingly?" Halliday asked, dreading to hear the answer.

"Did she what? Oh, I get you. No, God no! She put up a fight. They gave her a shot or something to quiet her down. Then they put her in a big car and drove away."

* * * *

"Norrin? This is Halliday. Look, I've got some-

thing definite now."

Sergeant Norrin's voice was interested. "Let's have it."

"Okay. I'm phoning from a place about a block from where this Ginny lived. Her landlady said a couple of guys picked her up today. They gave her a phony story about being from some alcoholic league."

"Let's have that again," Norrin said.

Halliday gave him the whole story. "What do you think?" he said, when he finished.

"I think you've scared up something," Norrin said. "Where are you now?"

Halliday told him and Norrin said, "Okay, hang on. I'll get a squad car and come and get you."

. . . . Norrin picked him up at ten-fifteen. He was alone in the car. Halliday climbed in beside him and Norrin let out the clutch.

"I've got an idea," Norrin said. "I think I got an idea about who this babe Ginny was talking about. Now this ain't official. I mean I'm working on my own time. Do you want to take a run out to a joint where we may be able to contact this guy?"

"Of course," Halliday said.

They drove to a dingy neighbourhood that had once been a residential section, but had slipped gradually. For a few years it had maintained an aura of respectability as a genteel boarding-house district. Then the big homes had been bought by speculators who broke them down into two and three-room apartments. The neighbourhood went down another notch when the railroad put a spur through the centre of the community, and after that the disintegration was rapid.

Soon the area was one of the hot spots of the city; then vice moved further south and the neighbourhood was left to transients and gangsters. With this element came disease, vermin and peddlers, until the once aristocratic section had decayed into an area of crumbling mansions, cheap beer joints and Salvation Army tent meetings.

Norrin stopped the car across the street from a dark home which was surrounded by rusted iron fencing. He turned off the ignition and glanced at Halliday.

"Let's go," he said.

They walked across the street through crazily leaning iron gates and up the creaking steps to the front door. Norrin loosened the gun in his holster and pounded on the door with the flat of his hand.

There was a long wait; then footsteps, and the door opened. A young man stood in the doorway. He was dark and slim and even in the dim light it was obvious that he was carefully dressed.

He was Sol Smith.

"Well?" he said.

CHAPTER—VI

HALLIDAY glanced uncertainly at Norrin. Norrin took the gun from his shoulder holster and put it deliberately against Halliday's ribs.

"Okay, Halliday. Inside," Norrin said.

Halliday looked at him in confusion. "Wait a minute," he said. "What kind of a deal is this?"

"Get inside," Norrin said.

The gun dug into his back, shoving him ahead. Sol Smith stepped aside with a little smile as Halliday stumbled into the darkened vestibule.

The door slammed behind him. Norrin said. "Up those steps. Take it nice and easy."

Sol Smith went ahead. Norrin followed him. They took him to a lighted room on the second floor. There was a big man in a chesterfield overcoat sitting on a chair in the corner. The room was cold.

On a bed against the wall the blonde was lying. There was a smear of blood on her cheek and she was breathing heavily. She was unconscious.

The big man said to Norrin, "This the guy?"

"He's the guy."

The big man scowled and got to his feet. He had large fleshy features, hard black eyes. He looked important. There was a glittering diamond ring on the little finger of his left hand, and a diamond stickpin in his tie. He looked at Halliday and shook his head.

"Damn," he said.

He sat down again and took out cigarettes. Norrin held a light for him, which was accepted without comment. He looked at his big hands and shook his head again.

"Damn it, why don't I use my head?"

Halliday said to Norrin, "What's this all about?"

"Just keep your mouth shut," Norrin said. "Will you do me that little favour?"

The big man said, "It's been screwed up since the start."

Norrin said, "I did all right."

Sol Smith grinned a little and said, "I did what I was told."

"I don't feel like any jokes," the big man said. He scowled and dropped his cigarette on the floor. He looked at Halliday with a pained expression.

"What do you do?"

"I'm a book-keeper."

"A bookkeeper. That's fine." He made a gesture of resignation and looked at Norrin. 'You hear that? He's a bookkeeper. Probably makes fifty lousy bucks a week. A real big wheel," He spat on the floor and looked gloomily at his hands.

"I'll tell you something Mr. Bookkeeper. I'm a gambler. I got gamblers working for me. I make fifty thousand a year. And you're causing me trouble." He seemed to be talking to himself and he continued to stare gloomily at his hands. "That's hot, ain't it?"

"I don't know what you're talking about," Halliday said.

"Listen close, Mr. Bookkeeper. About a month ago I killed a guy named Willie Peters." He nodded slowly. "That's right. I killed him. You'd think a guy making fifty thousand a year could kill a punk without causing himself any trouble. I shot him about six o'clock at night in a bookie joint. He was stepping on our toes and he gave me a little lip. So I got mad and shot him. Wouldn't you think a guy with my dough would have better sense? I got guys on the payroll to handle jobs like that. But I lose my head and shoot him."

He lit another cigarette. "Right after I shoot him a babe walks in. A nice looking babe. You got good taste, Mr. Bookkeeper, 'cause this babe is your wife. She takes a look and falls over on the floor. So I tell Smith and Dineen to tell the cops she done it. I get a pawnbroker to make out he sold her the gun. It goes okay. The babe don't know from nothin' and the jury says she done it."

He shrugged impatiently. "Then you find this dumb broad, Ginny, and she knows about me. And you start agitating. Start calling the cops. You're going to raise hell. That's how you, a fifty-dollar-a-week bookkeeper, get in my hair. Hell of a note, ain't it?"

"You're the guy who framed my wife," Halliday said.

"That's what I been telling you," the big man said. "Ain't you got ears?"

Norrin said, "So what do we do?"

"I think we get rid of the broad," the big man said thoughtfully. "I don't know about this guy. He's pretty hot. The papers will be after him when his wife goes to the chair. They'll want stories from him. Maybe if he ain't around they'll start agitating. Maybe we just better hold him for a while."

He nodded to Sol Smith. "Go down and get Dineen. We better go to work."

Smith went out of the room. The blonde was starting to come around. She rolled her head weakly, then began to moan.

The big man smiled and walked over to the side of the bed. "Ain't this nice," he said. "Little Ginny's coming around. Little Ginny with the big mouth."

He shook her shoulder gently. "Ginny? It's me. Nicky. Say hello to Papa."

The blonde opened her eyes and began cursing weakly.

"You ain't strong enough to talk, little Ginny," the big man grinned. "You better take another nap."

He drew his hand back and slapped her viciously across the mouth. She groaned and turned her face away. He hit her again and she lay still.

The big man looked at Halliday. "See how nice she goes to sleep?"

Halliday said, "Do what you like to me, but stop hitting her."

The big man grinned. "A real g e n t l e m a n, ain't he, Norrin?"

Halliday looked at Norrin and the bitterness in him was coming to the surface. "What kind of a man are you?" he said, almost wonderingly. "You'll stand by and frame my wife for a murder this man committed. You stand here while he slaps a helpless woman around. Why? Does the money he pays you make up for the way you must feel about yourself."

"Shut up," Norrin said casually.

The big man sat down again and lit a cigarette.

"What's keeping Smith?"

Norrin shrugged.

"Go get him. Don't stand there and shrug your shoulders."

"Okay."

He walked out of the shrugged shoulders and they heard him going down the dark stairs. The house was quiet except for the thudding of his footsteps.

The big man frowned at Halliday.

"Mr. Bookkeeper, you certainly made a mess for me."

"I'm thinking about my wife. You made a mess for her."

"Better her than me, Mr. Bookkeeper."

Halliday twisted his hands together. He felt he was caught in something it was useless to fight. The police, the syndicate, the big men with diamonds—all were linked tightly together. They could send his wife to the chair, they could slap a helpless drunken blonde around and laugh about it, they could do what they wanted to him.

They heard footsteps coming up the stairs. The big man got to his feet and grinned. "You're not going to worry me anymore, Mr. Bookkeeper."

The door opened and Granville, the cautious, graying State's attorney, walked into the room. There were two men behind him, with guns in their hands.

"Okay, Nicky," Granville said, in his dry, careful voice.

The big man's mouth dropped open foolishly.

"What's this?"

"Don't waste my time," Granville said. "We got Smith and Dineen downstairs. Morton, the pawnbroker, is down at Central singing so loud you can hear him in Squeedunk. We got the whole thing, Nicky. Let's see you beat this one."

The big man looked down at his hands and

"Little Ginny's coming around. Little Ginny with the big mouth," he taunted.

began to swear eloquently. Finally he glared at Granville and said, "Mr. State's Attorney." His voice was bitter. "And how much do you make a year, you crumb?"

"Let's go," Granville said.

"I started working on it after you talked to me, Halliday," Granville said. "We checked on this girl Ginny and kept a tail on her. We found out about his trouble with Nicky. Tonight we picked up Morton and told him we were arresting Dineen and Sol Smith. Morton sang sweet and loud. The tail followed you and Norrin out here. We got in the house and got Dineen. When Smith came down we got him. Next was Norrin. They're all talking a mile a minute right now."

"Thank God," Halliday said.

"Take a little credit yourself," Granville said drily. "Your wife is being released in your custody until we can go through the formality of getting her discharged in court."

. . . . They brought Ann out of her cell when he got to the Criminal Courts building. A matron took him to the waiting room.

"She'll be right in," she smiled. "She's packing her things now."

He lit a cigarette nervously. He couldn't believe the nightmare was over. It would take him time to get used to the idea that Ann was going to live. He'd have to work at it. Ann has coppery hair. Ann can't carry a tune. Ann is going to live.

The door opened then and he jumped to his feet. Ann came in and they walked toward each other, smiling.

LOTTERY

By SANTOSH KUMAR DE

MR. Carey was not exactly my boss in office, but a senior colleague. In our office parlance he was a jolly "My dear" sort of fellow. We were his inferiors in office, in rank as well as pay, but he never felt superiority complex. Even if he felt it, he never displayed it.

He had his follies and foibles, and his character was not exactly what they call "spotless". He was not very particular as to how he spent his money, and oftener than not he *misspent* it. His fondness for alcoholic drinks was well-known. And he was a bachelor. "A confirmed bachelor" some of us used to call him. We speculated on why at his advanced age he had not yet worn the matrimonial halter round his neck. Some said he preferred freedom to slavery. Some said it was a broken heart affair. Some said.....but why multiply our conjectures? The fact was that we could not come to any final or satisfactory conclusion as to the why of his bachelorhood.

Encouraged by Mr. Carey's easy approachability, his remarkable "my dear"-ness and his more remarkable lack of thrift, I tried to sell him some lottery tickets. Let me tell you here that selling lottery tickets was my hobby and side business rolled into one. Each book of lottery tickets included one free ticket for the seller of the book; that one free ticket, that free access to an opportunity of becoming rich overnight, was my chief attraction. But try as hard as I might, Mr. Carey was adamant against buying lottery tickets. He always gave me a straight "No."

I had in my school days read the story of Robert Bruce's perseverance which at last brought him success. I was determined to emulate Robert Bruce, the great perseverer. Year after year I tried to sell at least one lottery ticket to Mr. Carey. And year after year I failed. A lottery ticket was mere a matter of two rupees which meant too little to Mr. Carey. No, it was not miserliness. There must be some special reason why he had an allergy for lottery tickets. He would sooner throw twenty rupees down the drain than spend two rupees on a lottery ticket. So at last I gave up emulating Robert Bruce and decided not to press Mr. Carey to buy a lottery ticket any more.

But one day Mr. Carey himself — wonder of wonders!—offered to buy lottery tickets from me. It took my breath away at first, and I wondered whether Mr. Carey had suddenly gone mad. Then of course the matter became clear to me. Mr. Carey himself clarified it. Let me explain, for that is my story.

I was returning from the pictures after the evening show when someone unmindfully bumped me from the opposite direction, nearly making me lose my balance. And who was it but our "my dear" Mr. Carey, behaving like a tipsy fellow.

"Hullo, isn't it Doss?" he cried jovially. My surname is Das, but he always pronounced it "Doss."

"Doss, my dear fellow!" he said. "I am the happiest man on earth today. Congratulate me."

"Congratulations on your being the world's happiest man." I said. "But what is this happiness for, Mr. Carey, if you don't mind my curiosity?"

"Come, and I shall tell you all." said Mr. Carey, and dragged me into the Bristol bar nearby, though he knew full well that alcoholic drinks did never agree with me.

We sat side by side, or rather face to face. He took a peg (or what do they call it?) of light cocktail and I was given a glass of lemon squash. He sipped slowly and went on chattering.

"You still sell lottery tickets, don't you?" he said. "You do? That's excellent. Give me some. Say a dozen, or even a couple of dozens. I don't mind. I was a voracious eater—I mean buyer of lottery tickets, don't you know? Haven't I ever told you? Well then, let me tell you now....."

And he told me. He was then working in the firm of Ludley & Cotton. Mary was a steno there—a wonderful specimen of feminine loveliness. One day she shyly intimated to Mr. Carey that she sold lot-

tery tickets, and he could buy some if he felt interested.

Carey nearly fell in love with her at first sight, and felt that it was not for nothing that their names rhymed with each other. Interested in Mary, Carey naturally felt interested in her lottery tickets too. Carey, who never before had thought of buying a single lottery ticket, bought tickets after tickets from Mary, the sweetest steno in the world (as Carey thought). It was not a case of monetary lottery only, but a lottery in another, and deeper, sense too.

Now, Jackson, young fellow, was a jetty clerk in Ludley & Cotton, though he always put on air as if he was Office Superintendent or Secretary. And this fellow Jackson also drew the attention of Mary; or was it Mary who drew the attention of Jackson? Anyway, Jackson too started buying lottery tickets from Mary, sweet Mary.

And this led to a lottery-tickets-purchasing competition between Carey and Jackson. If Carey purchased two tickets to please Mary, Jackson purchased four. To outdo Jackson, Carey purchased half dozen. Not to be outdone, Jackson purchased a full dozen. And so on.

"There seemed to be a tacit understanding between Mary and myself that we would become man and wife soon after either of us won a prize in the lottery. Probably such was also the understanding between Mary and Jackson," said Mr. Carey.

"At last the first prize was won—by Mary! And on a free ticket too! Mary seemed to be in a fix as to whom she should choose between us—me or Jackson? It was a powerful case of the eternal triangle.....

"We at last decided on a duel—between Jackson and myself. The winner would win Mary, it was decided between me and Jackson. So we three went to the Maidan near the Red Road one afternoon. We started our free fight while Mary kept watch on us, at the same time reading a book of Agatha Christie's crime stories.....

"We grabbed each other, Jackson and myself. Down we came, and started rolling. Desperately we tried to overpower each other, but love and determination had made us both stronger than our normal selves, and the fighting and rolling continued.....

"Suddenly a taxi pulled up rather close to Mary, and somebody whistled and got down from the taxi. And who was he but Mr. Aratoon of the firm of our auditors? He put his arm round Mary's waist and they both got into the taxi which then sped away, leaving us duellers behind, wondering, wondering and wondering.....

"Well, we must say this of Mary and Aratoon that they cordially invited us to their happy wedding and gave us a good treat. Plenty of first class drinks. I resigned from Ludley & Cotton and came to this firm on a lower salary. Jackson also resigned and went away somewhere I don't care to know...."

"And that is why you. . . . . ", I said.

Mr. Carey stopped me in the middle of my sentence and said, "From that day I gave up buying lottery tickets. The very mention of lottery tickets caused a sort of burning sensation in my heart."

"But why are you now so keen on buying lottery tickets, Mr. Carey?" I asked.

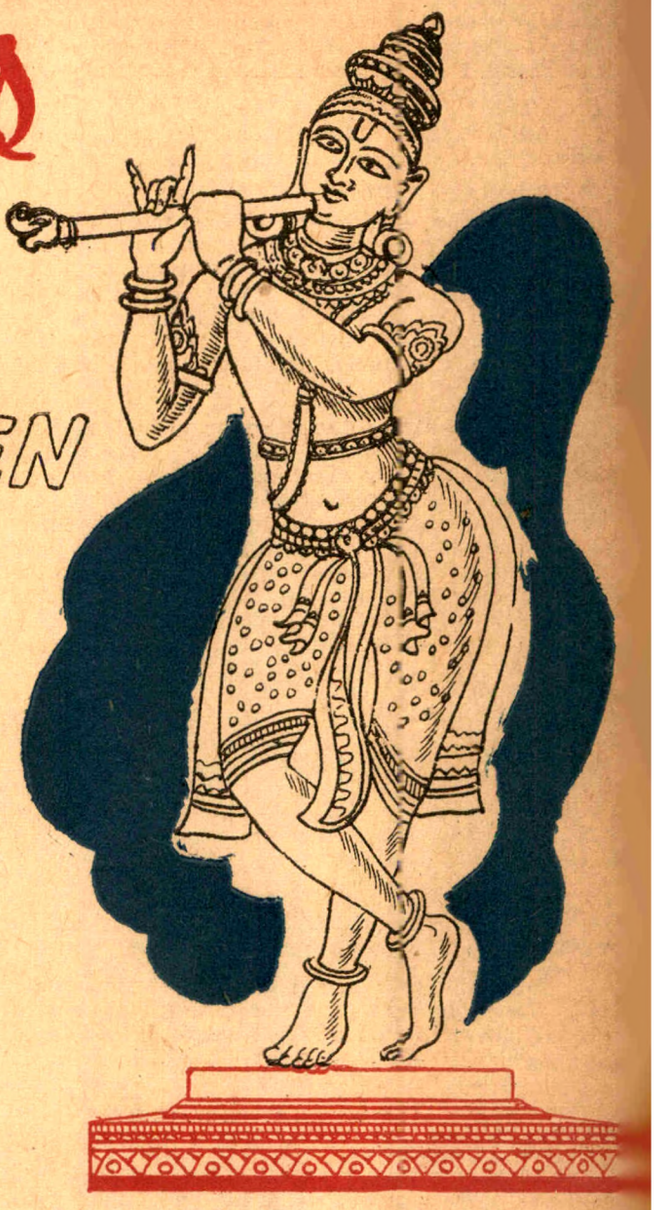
"After so many years I met Mary only today," said Mr. Carey, gleefully. "They have divorced. Aratoon has left her for another girl, or may be woman. Mary is wonderful still. How nicely she behaved! We shall be meeting again tomorrow, and .....and.....well, she loves me to distraction still, don't you think?....."

And he swallowed his cocktail with great gusto, not waiting for my answer.

(Adapted into English from the author's Bengali original, by A.K.B.)

"We started our free fight while Mary kept watch on us."

Miracles DO HAPPEN



By DILIP KUMAR ROY

CONTEXT : Asit, a Bengali devotee of Lord Krishna, visits America with his daughter-disciple, Tapati, who hails from the Punjab. Everywhere they sing of and lecture on Krishna and His Grace. In one of their soirees they meet Miss Barbara Brown, a young Catholic, about to leave New York for a Carmelite Convent in Rome. Attracted by Asit's songs on Krishna and Tapati's lecture on Mirabai, Miss Brown visits them at their hotel where, day after marvellous day, Asit relates to her life-stories of Krishna-lovers dealing, incidentally, with Divine Grace extricating them from unheard-of predicaments. In the present story Asit reminisces about Sati, an educated girl and an heiress into the bargain.

AS Tapati poured her a cup of coffee, "Thanks", said Barbara. Asit stirred his coffee with a spoon and looked at her, a half-smile flickering on his lips.

"You do me injustice again, Dada, for I assure you I did believe all that you told me last night about Mandira and the miracle that intervened at the eleventh hour to save her. Nor have I called at this early hour to cross-examine you about the miracle. I could not help coming because a question gave me no rest."

Asit nodded, sipping his morning coffee.

"What I am curious to know is: supposing a modern girl today, called by your Krishna, decides to leave her worldly life and seek refuge with a Guru to be guided home, can she find one? Or, to be more precise: would a sadhu accept a woman-disciple and let her stay with him permanently?"

"What a question!" Tapati protested. "One would almost think you never clapped eyes on such a thing as your Didi! Or perhaps you think I am not modern enough?"

Barbara pulled a long face.

"But this is unfair, Didi! You know full well how elusive you are. I know hardly anything about your radiant self, and aren't you dead opposed to Dada's telling me? So how can I help being in the dark when you simply won't shed the light?"

Asit laughed approvingly.

"Its a good rejoinder — that." Then holding Tapati's eyes: "After this you have nothing for it but to let me tell her all about the light you have been hiding under the bushel of your elusiveness."

Tapati gave an embarrassed smile.

"But the light so far has been little more than

a spark. Tell her rather about Sati and her burning aspiration which will be more apposite and convincing, besides."

Asit gave a sigh of resignation.

"Since you won't come out into the open, I will *have* to comply." Then turning to Barbara: "Lend me your ears then, insistent damsel! Only I warn you it's a long story and a drama rolled into one—yes, Tapati, I can do with a second cup, thank you!"

* * * * * * * *

Asit composed himself on his sofa, sitting cross-legged, and sipped his coffee slowly. Then he began:

"Her father wanted to give her a modern name: Anima. But her mother, pious lady, was horrified and called her 'Sati', a name not only holy but surcharged with meaning. Unfortunately, it is untranslatable. But if you insist on knowing its full import I would ask you to roll three English attributes into one: chastity, faithfulness and above all, purity.

"Yes, the name described her to perfection. I have often thought that it was not a name really, but an epithet, a title she could claim in her own rights. For she was so spotlessly pure that most people misunderstood her and insinuated — especially our womenfolk—that it was just a *pose.*" He smiled. "It's the old feud between the exceptional and the mediocre who have always been at odds—since the dawn of Time. That reminds me—" Asit gave a reminiscent smile—"Once, years ago, I hung a cage with a koel in it in one of the trees in our garden at Gaya, the holy city, where the Buddha attained Illumination. But then a strange thing happened which gave me mine." He laughed to himself and went on: "Everytime my poor koel called—'koo, koo, koo' the Parliament of crows round her met her ecstatic trill with a raucous protest—'ka, ka, ka'—scandalized to the core that one who looked like a croaker should dare behave like a warbler."

Barbara laughed.

"Gracious Heavens, Dada! I didn't know you were an expert in crow-psychology as well!"

Tapati cut in with a laughter: "The more you will come to know him the more you will agree with me, sister mine, that your Dada has to be *seen* to be believed."

They laughed in chorus.

* * * * * * * *

Asit lit a cigar and resumed:

"In all climes and ages the wise and their critics have agreed on one point, at least: that God and Mammon never hit it off well together. Your Lord has compared the rich man striving to enter the Kingdom of Heaven to the proverbial camel struggling to enter the needle's eye. *Our* Lord preferred to sigh—as He did, in the Bhagavat:

'A pauper, I, am loved on earth
By paupers alone and so
You'll seldom catch a man of means
Wooing me here below.'

"But to thank Him for small mercies, He—unlike your Messiah—has left a tiny loop-hole, presumably for some freaks among the rich, like our Sati. For why else should she, an heiress, and a lovely heiress at that, have turned so early to our Pauper Lord? But to debouch from the Prologue into the First Act of her life's incredible drama."

* * * * * * * *

Asit blew a ring of blue smoke.

"The name of her father was Ramapada Bagchi, a Brahmin by caste. 'He was born under exceptionally lucky stars'—his devout wife was wont to say with some pride. His admirers called him a 'born aristocrat.' But from the Brahmin's point of view he was a 'renegade', for he returned from England, a *pucca sahib* who, preferring wealth to wisdom, grew rich trading in Assam tea. And the more he prospered the less he liked our Indian lack of initiative till, in the end, he made people gasp by building a resplendent ultra-modern mansion with air-conditioned rooms, a Japanese garden, and a swimming pool. His one naive boast was that he was a free-thinker-cum-iconoclast who believed in vim, good living and progress and as such could have no truck with orthodoxy, medievalism or astrology.

"So he declined to be grateful to his 'stars' for his health, wealth, good looks, a beautiful wife, an inexhaustible fund of vitality and a large number of friends and admirers. And though he did frown on the old-world ideas of his sweet wife, Mahamaya, he both loved her for her beauty and respected her for her character. That is why he built a lovely temple for her and installed therein, with due ceremony, a beautiful Image of the Lord in white marble. Did he not boast he was an ardent liberal who believed in *laissez-faire?*

A VERITABLE PRODIGY

"When Sati was born, there was great rejoicing: Mahamaya fed 10,000 beggars in Gauhati and Ramapada sent a donation of Rs. 30,000 to a 'chic' girls' school in Calcutta. They differed in many things, but concurred in this that Sati was a godsend and as such must be hailed with due eclat.

"The little new-comer amazed all early enough: for not only was she endowed with a breath-taking beauty and precocious mind but quickly developed into a veritable prodigy. She mastered our whole Bengali alphabet in a day when she was barely five and by seven had memorised nearly all the long and high-sounding Sanskrit hymns which their temple-priest used to intone before the Lord's Image. But the most amazing thing about her was that she never once fidgeted while her mother prayed in the temple—morning and evening, for full two hours and often joined in herself, in a strange absorption! And last, though by no means the least, she insisted, at eight, on learning Sanskrit, saying that she did not care for English."

"How did her father react to all this?" Barbara asked.

"He was at his wit's end. Her amusing interest in the temple he had condoned thinking that she would learn sense with age, but how could he sit by, smiling, now that his only daughter and heiress seemed to be going off the rails, scouting English in favour of ancient language which did nobody any good? They would put the clock back, would they? Nay, not while he was living! Sati must *not* grow into a replica of her mother—a disconcerting anachronism! She must flower out into a modern woman *par excellence* — a true 'phantom of delight'—educated, accomplished and refined to her finger-tips. 'The little lunatic must go to an ultra-modern school to be exorcised at once!'—he thundered at his wife.

"But unfortunately, Gauhati did not boast an ultra-modern school. So he decided to send her to Calcutta where the school after his heart—the one he had endowed when Sati was born—was transforming the raw material of Indian womanhood into finished, resplendent, modern products approved by 'the enlightened.' His brother, Kalipada, a ris-

ing Barrister of the Calcutta High Court, lived in a large and lovely house in Camac Street, the Fifth Avenue of Calcutta. Sati was henceforth to stay with him and be purged of her dross by the most efficient cultural goldsmiths of Bengal."

Asit blew another smoke-ring and smiled ironically.

"I happened to be Kalipada's next-door neighbour and he happened to be not only fond of music but a connoisseur as well. So I used to be a frequent guest of theirs singing mostly to fashionable high-brows in their beautiful drawing-room. I grew to like more and more both him and his charming—if,

But the most amazing thing about her was that she never once fidgeted while her mother prayed in the temple.....

a trifle garrulous—wife, Mohini. I used to call her *Bowdi*, that is, sister-in-law as we, in Bengal, often do when she is not a relation. And she, good lady, reciprocated my affection with all her native effusiveness, so much so that soon enough I came to be treated almost as a member of their family. The result was that, thanks to her uninhibited garrulity, I had been put wise to almost everything about Sati's antecedents—long before her arrival.

"She had just turned eight when she came to Calcutta to be hammered and chiselled out of recognition. But here our Lord played a trick as He usually does and sent her to me as it were—but I must not go ahead of my story."

Asit smiled reminiscently and went on:

"We took to each other like duck and water, so that within a few months Sati and I grew into intimates drawn by a mutual affinity which thrilled us both. She called me uncle — *Mamababu* — and felt a genuine filial affection for me, and I had a rapturous experience: the awakening of the sleeping father in me towards one who forced me by her pure and compelling love to adopt her as my spiritual daughter.

"But I was even more thrilled by her moving *faith* in me, for she trusted me with all the native purity of her guileless, loyal soul. And I simply adored her. Who wouldn't—face to face with her incredible loveliness?" Asit paused and then went on half-dreamily: "Her beauty. . . . . I wish I could describe it. . . . . with her twin eyes soothing like the star-twinkle. . . her face modelled as it were by a divine sculptor, her complexion made of milk and roses and, above all, a mystic radiance round her which only a blue-born soul could weave round a clay-born earthling—" Asit halted with a start: "I was dreaming—forgive me." He gave a smile: "I'll come down to earth—straightaway."

* * * * * * *

Asit remained silent for a space, pulling at his cigar, then slowly resumed: "She used to visit me at all hours. Sometimes, when I was singing to my Lord alone, she would creep in stealthily and sit listening, utterly absorbed. And I marvelled again: was it possible—for a *child* to respond so wholeheartedly to devotional songs offered to a mystic Entity?

"And not music alone. She would, now and again, step softly into my study when I was composing a song or a tune, and calmly start exploring my library. Then she would take out several volumes at a time, open one at random and instantly get similarly absorbed. But what amazed me still more was that it was not light literature or *belles lettres* that interested her: I never once found her pouring over a novel, story or play. She only read our epics — Mahabharata or Ramayana—or else our mystic literature, like the Bhagavat, Bhaktamal, Chaitanya-Charita, Ramkrishna Kathamrita and so on. I was, naturally, deeply impressed by her taste for books such as these but used often to ask myself what sort of sustenance she drew from them—a wisp of a girl ! She was about twelve at the time."

SCHOOL INCIDENT

Asit began again after a brief pause:

"She had a downright nature which jibbed at inhibitions. Little wonder she got into trouble often enough and, whenever flurried or roused, would come running straight to me for relief or solace. I shall never forget her words when, one evening, she bounced into my sanctum like a nomad gust of wind. She had just turned thirteen.

'Do you know *Mamababu*, what happened this morning? You know Miss Bose, don't you, our new Head Mistress? I can't bear the sight of her! She is impossible, I tell you!'

'Why? Because she found it possible to tweak your nose?' I laughed, drawing her to me.

'Don't, *Mamababu!*' she reproved disengaging herself. 'Why she—she was laughing at us, Hindus—in company with an Anglicised dandy, a *pucca sahib:* How superstitious we were—how credulous and backward and idolators and what not—till I could not help bridling with anger: "Why, what is wrong with us? Didn't Sri Ramkrishna himself approve of Image-worship?" She stared wide-eyed at me for a while, then said hotly: "Sri Ramkrishna? What did he know—an illiterate rustic who actually said, poor simpleton, that you could have a tete-a-tete with God Himself?" Then I saw red, *Mamababu!* To call Ramkrishna a simpleton! I retorted: "Do you mean that he, a saint—who had seen the Mother Herself—didn't know, and *you* know who are too blind to see anything beyond your nose?" She was furious and said: "Impertinent girl! I will report this to your father?" I said: "Do and I will also report to

him how you go on insulting us and our saints." Now tell me, *Mamababu,* was I wrong?' and so on!

"But it was not only with our modern scoffers, or her flippant class-mates that she came to clash every now and then. She simply could not bear when girls giggled vulgarly, nor draw in her horns when the wiseacres talked pompously. Once it so happened that Mohini *Bowdi's* Guru was lecturing her, in Sati's presence. He was saying that all who would be saved must accept first a Brahmin Guru. Sati flushed and butted in impetuously: 'Then what happened to those who accepted Swami Vivekananda or Rakhal Maharaj as their Guru?' Amused but a trifle alarmed too, I asked: 'Did you bandy words with him before *Bowdi?'* She pulled a long face. 'I know I should not have hurt her, but what could I do, tell me? Keep mum—when people get above themselves and say things which are not true?'

CHAMELEON OF MANY MOODS

"But she was a chameleon of many moods. Once I was telling her the story of Mirabai and how she had suffered, an utter derelict, crying her heart out because her Lord Krishna would not come. Then just as I had started humming to her one of Mira's lines: *'ab darshan do ya prana hi lo'* (which means —either come to me or make an end of me), she held up a pleading hand with a 'Don't, *Mamababu!'* and then, burying her head on my shoulder, sobbed and sobbed. When I had pacified her, she said: 'Our Lord *is* hard-hearted, *Mamababu* — even cruel, I should say.' I admonished: 'You mustn't. For you who love truth above everything else will have to admit the truth about Him: that He is the soul of compassion.' 'But how can I admit a truth I can't see or understand as truth?'—she argued. I did not know how to meet this, so evaded with: 'Well,—you'll understand it all when you grow up. For the present let us take it from those who have seen and understood that He is All-good, All-beautiful, All-love.' She pondered this awhile with bowed head, then nodded, brightening: 'Yes, *Mamababu,* I think I have got an inkling: He gives us pain because we cannot learn to love Him as we should till we have suffered. Isn't that why you were singing this morning: my incense has to be burnt so that it may give out perfume?' It's something like that, isn't it? Forgive me, *Mamababu,* I won't judge Him again, I promise.'

"I do not claim that at this time—she was about fourteen then—the mystic longing had fully emerged in her inner being. For her soul, though highly evolved and extremely precocious, had not yet experienced the true *vairagya*—distaste for this worldliness — which was to come to the fore a few years later. But I did feel even then—for the signs were unmistakable—that an incipient yearning for Krishna had already burgeoned in her fertile heart. That is why she would besiege me again and again with questions about juvenile devotees like Prahlad and Dhruva who moved her most. But side by side, one question had begun troubling her sorely, if intermittently: our Guruvad. She would often ask me why our saints had all advocated it so unanimously. Why *must* one have a Guru—an intermediary? Why should the Lord refuse to answer if approached directly? I did not know the answers at the time, so could only evade again with: 'The saints also say, don't they, that the Guru comes when the time is ripe? So why not wait and see?' She never liked evasions but how else could I fend off her pointed queries?"

"I wish I could meet her!" said Barbara wistfully.

Asit smiled.

"You may, some day—who knows?"

"Sorry for the interruption, Dada. Pray continue. No, wait: just one question. She never felt like marrying?"

"I am coming to that."

* * * * * * * *

A MIRACULOUS ESCAPE

Asit said:

"She matriculated at the age of fifteen, standing first among the girls and fourth in the general competition among eight thousand boys. She had brains, you must admit.

"When the results came out she was at Gauhati with her parents. I wired to her my felicitations. I was expecting her reply when the terrible news came: a devastating earthquake had laid the beautiful town of Gauhati in ruins—an appalling number of victims, houses reduced to rubble and so on.

"My heart stood still for a while. Then I ran to Kalipada's for news.

"As soon as I stepped into their living-room I saw Kalipada prostrate on the floor with Mohini *Bowdi* applying ice-bag on his head, her eyes red, her face pale, pinched. . . . . .

"She handed me a telegram murmuring in a husky voice: 'From Arun, the Magistrate. His house has escaped. . . . . Sati is with him. All the others' —she broke down and sobbed disconsolately. The telegram read:

'Terrible earthquake. Sati's parents, relations and servants all dead. Sati is with me. Come at once.'

"Mohini *Bowdi* found voice at last, and implored me to fetch Sati. Kalipada opened his eyes and muttering: 'Please Asit—go at once,' closed his eyes again.

"I will not even try to describe what I saw in Gauhati. I will only say this that it seemed that a colossal Demon had run amok and pulverised the houses to bits with a giant mace. In Arun's house too one wing had toppled down. But the hall and an outhouse which were made of stone had survived. In the hall I found at least a score of men and women huddled together like cattle with only one child among them."

"And Sati?"

"She with two other orphans was in the outhouse with Arun. As soon as I arrived she threw her arms round my neck and cried:

'I have none now to turn to, *Mamababu*—none except you! Don't leave me, I implore you!'"

Barbara wiped her eyes.

"And then?"

"We started for Calcutta the same night. Arun, a handsome youth, had managed somehow to secure a coupe for us through his personal influence as the Magistrate and caretaker of the town.

DREAM THAT SAVED HER

"In the train Sati told me all. It is not possible nor necessary to repeat all that she said. I will only tell you about the strange dream that had saved her—in her own words."

Asit dropped his voice.

"Sati said: 'Day before yesterday at about midnight, *Mamababu,* I saw a horrible dream. I saw that everything was rocking, buildings crumbling like houses of cards, trees crying hysterically and the sick earth spewing out inky filth. As I woke up, in a cold sweat, I fancied hearing a low voice press-

ing me to get out of the house without delay. I threw a shawl round me and rushed out, terror-stricken. I knocked madly at my father's door and screamed: "Come out—come out—at once!" I heard his startled rebuke: "What's all this?" My mother shouted back: "Get back to bed, child, I am coming." I was about to explain but couldn't: Some unseen hand seemed to push me towards the door.

'I ran out like one possessed and made for the lawn ahead when, all on a sudden, a deep growl issued as it were from the very womb of the earth. I sprang forward on to the lawn where I stood numb with terror. For as I looked back, I saw, in the clear moonlight, the facade of our house swaying violently. I covered my face, ostrich-like, when a horrific cacophony broke out and stabbed the midnight stillness—men shrieking, women screaming, children whining in staccato, dogs barking, cattle bellowing. As I opened my eyes the ground under my feet shook and I saw just in front of me the earth yawning and swallowing a rose-bed. With a cry I leapt back when lo, the dome of our temple crashed bang at my feet! I thought it was the end and then saw, amazed, our Lord's lovely Image lying at my feet, His helpless eyes looking straight into mine. I forgot everything and gathered Him to my breast, like a mother, a deep tenderness upsurging within me. I had never before quite believed that an Image could be a living thing but at that fateful hour I felt vividly as though He were a child who clung to me helplessly for protection. I stood there hugging Him with not a trace of fear now in my heart even though everything round me roared and crashed and the earth went on belching forth smoke and shafts of soot-black water. A strange peace invaded my being and I shed tears of bliss.

'But the ecstasy, ebbed away after a few minutes and left me stranded, a petrified witness to the eerie landscape of devastation weeping under the laughing eye of the moon. Gazing at nothing, I stayed sitting there, just supinely brooding over the futility of it all. What pitiful puppets of moods we are, *Mamababu!* Only a moment ago I was in rapture, but now blank despair was my sole companion! And then, strangest of all, the last few lines of a song of Dwijendralal's you used to sing floated back to me again and again:

The world we hail is vain and frail
And swiftly fades away :
Our laughter and tears, our hopes and fears
Nought ever comes to stay.
He's fain to play with dolls that pray
And sing and dance and cry
And so He makes us and then breaks
We all live but to die!

* * * * * * * *

"And then?" asked Barbara in a thick voice.

Asit had not heard. He went on pulling at his cigar abstractedly. Tapati placed a gentle hand on his knee. Asit started.

"I just had a vision of her in the train, sobbing silently with her face buried in my lap. . . . . But to resume.

"I did not say a word to console her. . . . After a time she rose, wiped her tears and then, in due sequence, put me abreast of all that had happened during the last few months at Gauhati. It is a long story which I need not repeat. But I must tell you in brief how she—who had vowed to be the Lord's maid—came little by little to be caught in the toils of the fates.

"I have told you that her father was a normal, hefty worldly man and loved his wife and daughter just as his likes do. So, naturally, he wanted Sati happily married. She declined. He insisted, hectored, argued and pleaded—till, in exasperation, she blurted out that she had decided to live a life dedicated to her *Lord*—like Mirabai. He winced, turned pale and then burst into tears. 'If you do not marry,' he faltered out, 'I swear I will shoot myself.' She felt frightened and at last a compromise was reached: She agreed to marry but on condition that her father's choice was a man her heart could accept in joy.

'I would never have relented, *Mamababu,*' she said, 'had I not loved my father passionately, with every fibre of my being. But to be perfectly honest,' she added, reddening, 'I should never have decided as I did had I not met Arun already and known that he had fallen deeply in love with me. Besides, as I had come to like his adoration for me, the more I came to know him the less unacceptable he seemed. He was well-built, handsome, generous, refined, and above all, a manly man of sterling character. To cut a long story short, he showed me a letter my father had written to him a few weeks before that fatal night. Here it is—Arun has given it to me to keep.' I opened it and read: 'We know how you feel about Sati and I want you to know that we have accepted you. In case anything happens to me—I have had a strange premonition lately—please show this letter to her so that she may know what her father's last wish was.'

"I returned her the letter without a word. She waited for a space, then said thickly: 'I find it impossible now to resist, *Mamababu*—may the Lord forgive—' she broke down and sobbed. . . . . .

"After a few minutes she wiped her tears and asked: 'What do you say?'

"I smiled wanly and said: 'What can I possibly say when—when you have finally made up your mind?'

"She appraised me in silence for a few seconds, then asked:

'And may I ask—since when have you made up yours to be so hard?'

"I patted her head and said, with a mirthless laughter: 'Don't be absurd. You know full well I could never be hard with you even if I tried.'

'Then why don't you say something—anything. Tell me: Could I have done anything else after knowing my father's dying wish?' She looked at me accusingly as her eyes filled again.

"I took both her hands in mine and said: 'I won't answer that. But since you insist I will tell you this that I do have some misgivings.'

"She held my eyes. 'Tell me. No, you must answer.'

"I shook my head: 'You must answer me first: do *you* feel you are cut out for marriage?'

"She bowed her head and evaded: 'What do I know of marriage? So. . . . so how can I answer you. . . . one way or the other?'

"I looked into her eyes for a few seconds, then said: 'Why then not ask—Him?'

"She looked startled: 'Him?—You mean—'

'The Image—the Lord you love,' I assisted.

"She stared at me: 'The Image? Are you laughing at me?'

"I said: 'I have never been more serious and I say again: you can have the answer if only you will.'

"She protested: 'But how can I? Surely, an image—a stone— can't speak.'

"I said: 'He can—to one who loves Him—as . . . . as He did to Mirabai you adore.'

"She averted her eyes: 'I wish I could believe it,

Mamababu! But I.....I.....don't know.....my mind is in a whirl . .. . And.....I have not kept faith with faith . . . . . ' And, burying her face in her hands, she wept. . . . . "

* * * * * * * *

Asit flicked off the cold ash from his cigar and relighted it.

"Their wedding took place in Kalipada's house. Arun, having now been made a Commissioner in reward of his splendid relief-work in Gauhati—they went straight back to Shillong after their honeymoon in Manipur. I did not hear from them for well over a year. Then one day I received a short letter from Sati telling me that she had a child and named him Rajat. Just that and a few casual enquiries about how I was getting on. Not a word about herself. I stifled a sigh, persuading myself that she was happy.

"I lost touch with her completely after that—for five long years. I did wonder, often enough, why she never wrote but did not feel like enquiring, the less so as I myself was pretty busy touring India in quest of musicians who could teach me various styles of our classical music, my *grande passion*. There was, indeed, all the time, a dull ache gnawing at my heart, but I argued with myself that she was too young still and the Lord, unlike us, could possess His soul in patience and wait till one was ripe. For all that, I could not quite get reconciled to her protracted silence and kept asking myself how one called by the Lord could succeed so easily in following a lesser call when, suddenly, I had a disquieting vision: she looked utterly worn out and was crying her heart out. The next morning, as I was trying once more to tell myself that it was just a mental formation, a long letter came—a letter of the Sati of old I had known and cherished—the little bird of paradise who could not help but long for the Moon which had set the deep of her heart aheave.

"The dominant note of her letter was what we call *vairagya* that is, a deep aversion for the worldly life of attachments, ambition and the pleasures of the senses. It is difficult to convey through words the agony it conveyed—the poignancy of her loneliness and frustration—"

"Why not rather read it out to her?" Tapati interjected, and got up. "Yes, yes, you must, I will get it for you—half-a-minute."

And she disappeared into her bed-room.

Barbara met Asit's eyes.

"Do you tour the world with your friends' letters, Dada?"

Asit smiled.

"It was Tapati's idea. She says she wants to read them again and again as they give a fillip to her aspiration. In fact I found her reading them again last night—here she is!"

Tapati handed him a thick blue envelope.

* * * * * * * *

THE 'FULL TRUTH'

Asit threw away his cigar and said: "I will omit the first half in which she describes at some length Arun, Rajat and the social whirl in fashionable Shillong—here it is, listen."

He read out:

"I hesitate to broach the subject not because t *is* delicate, but because I fear that even you may find it difficult to believe. For I remember a favourite saying of yours: 'We can never tell the full truth about ourselves so long as we want to be appreciated be it ever so little.'

"I know you are not one for mouthing platitudes and yet I claim I did tell you the 'full truth' about myself once, at least, on that night in the train. And do you know why I could keep back nothing? Because I have always hated half-truths about myself. During the last five years I kept silent only because I could not bring myself to tell you the full truth. But a time has come when I must — if only to live. I feel a dark void closing round me and I must have light and air to breathe. So I am going to tell you all about it—all without any reserve. And you must believe me however incredible it may seem.

"The first thing you must believe is that I had never been attracted by what people call 'romance.' That is why I never read novels or stories, as you know. They just bored me. I did, indeed, catch many a girl in my school giggling at smutty jokes but the vulgar hints only repelled me through and through.

"The girls resented 'my superior airs' and called me a prig, but I cared not a row of pins—because I was too proud to be swayed by their titter. The point I want to make is that I stayed ignorant about marriage—things which I might have come to know had I not been too proud to be inquisitive about men and their demands and desires.

"How clearly I remember your question that night in the train: 'Do you feel you are cut out for marriage?' I remember because I was startled, because I knew you had hit the nail on the head. But I persuaded myself—my pride again—that I did know how to be a good wife and a good mother.

"It was only after my marriage that I realised my ghastly mistake and saw that I should never have been disloyal to the vow I had taken to be the Lord's maid. *That* would have been my *swadharma*, my duty—to follow the call of His mystic Flute. Not that I did not love Arun. I not only loved but respected him for his manifold qualities of the head and heart. So I tried to serve him with all my faith and fervour and to please him with every gift I had as a loyal Hindu wife should. I harked back to what dear mother used to tell me again and again: that the Lord was best pleased with a wife who served and pleased her husband. So I went on persuading myself, day after bleak day, that if I fulfilled my marriage vow faithfully, I must, at every step, come closer to my Lord.

"Arguing thus, I tried desperately to adjust myself to my new life even though it led daily to a deepening of the void in my heart. You wrote in a song, *Mamababu*, that a sigh once wakened could never be put to sleep again. But, to be fair to myself, I did not truly know at the time what exactly it meant. Its full import dawned on me *after* my marriage—alas, too late—when I realised as never before that one could *not* serve two masters—that a vow once taken to belong to the Lord alone did mean that one could not belong to anyone else.

"Still I struggled on with myself to adapt myself—wanting to accept it all till I found it impossible and had to tell Arun—just after the birth of Rajat. I told him that henceforth I could be to him only a loving comrade and friend, but nothing more.

"So Arun had nothing for it but to agree and promise to accept me on my own terms. He has kept his word. Otherwise of course I would have left him long ago.

DEBT TO LORD

"This is the whole truth about our marriage. Now what do you advise me to do? I do love Arun still and respect him for keeping his promise. But as he still expects from me what I can never give nor 'comport myself like a normal being' as he puts it, I cannot but feel that I am causing him pain all

the time by my very proximity. But what can I do? When I ask him to marry again he only smiles sadly and says: 'After having known you? Let us talk of other things.' My only joy now is that we both love Rajat. But now that I *have* paid my debt to Arun by giving him a son he wanted, I must spend the rest of my life in trying to redeem the debt I owe to Him, my Lord, whose call I first heard through you, *Mamababu,* when you used to sing of and to Him in Calcutta, day after marvellous day. How well I remember that memorable afternoon, when, as I stepped into your room, you said: 'Listen to a song I composed this morning to dedicate to you'. 'Why *me*?' I asked in thrilled surprise. You smiled: 'Because it's you, my little maid of Brindaban, who inspired it.' And you sang:

I'll love thee every hour,
Live for thy union,
As lives the loyal sunflower
For her one Lord, the sun.

"Yes, *Mamababu*: you alone understood me because *you* had awakened the 'Brindaban maid' in me. That is why I turn to you again in this my hour of need. You must give me the light's lead as I can't see my way in this deepening darkness of despair. I can't go on living thus where I do not belong. Why must I stay on here, owned by a world my heart has disowned? Just because I have not the strength of will to leave the husband I chose? Don't say I must when I can't, nor remind me of Mirabai. Every winged insect is not a butterfly, nor every striped beast a tiger.

"Still I might have steeled my heart and cut away from my moorings if I had been childless, like Mira. But when one has ushered a helpless child into the world how can one disclaim her maternal responsibility? And if I can't, must I accept my doom supinely? Is there no way out for me—an exit I can make out of this stifling maze without despising myself as an escapist? You *must* advise me now, *Mamababu.* To whom else can I turn if you desert me—you who used to sing so beautifully:

O Thou who rulest galaxies
And yet remainst our dearest Friend!
Who leanst to the derelict who cries:
'On Thee alone, Lord, I depend!'

"Once upon a time I loved this song, *Mamababu,* when I simply believed, with a child's trustfulness, that He would answer it if we appealed to Him. But how can one retain one's faith in faith if experience gives it the lie at every turn? How often have I not implored Him to come to life in the Image as He did to Mira—to tell me what my duty is now! Oh, *Mamababu,* don't tell me again that He will speak through Image if I can love Him with all my heart. For how can I deprive Rajat of his home in my heart—when I quail at the very thought of rendering him homeless? How can I say to him: I will only love the Lord from this day, so begone! Has He not given Rajat to me to love, to nurse, to look after?

YEARNING FOR A GURU

"And yet, *Mamababu,* there are times when I feel that I could leave him, too, if I were able to glimpse my Lord ever once. To see—to see! For surely faith is not seeing—only believing blindly, on hearsay and rumour—words, words, words! Didn't you once sing in just a mood:

I've heard, Lord, from my childhood days
Of miracles of Thy Love and Grace:
Now give me the Eye
Of Light — I cry!
To rend the words' veil and see Thy Face!

So tell me: what must I do to be able to *see* Him! I can't just go on indefinitely believing in His miracle Grace unless the miracle happens and dissolves my chains of ages. I have come to such a desperate pass, *Mamababu,* that I would even accept a Guru now if you could indicate one to me You used often, of old, to speak of the great Swami Swayamananda of Kashmir. Tell me: have you met him since? If so, what is he like? Do you advise me to visit him? If you do, I will go tomorrow and see if I can accept him as my Guru. Do send me a prompt reply. I don't know what I shall do if you decline or fob me off with evasive answers again."

Barbara heaved a sigh. "Poor girl!" Then after a pause: "And what was your answer?"

"I first thought that I would ask her to visit Swamiji in his Dumel Ashram, but knowing Sati as I did, I thought her proposed visit might well make confusion worse confounded. She would find herself in the thick of a crowd of three hundred noisy disciples whose ways and movements might well bewilder her. Besides, she needed a Guru with whom she could have a day-to-day personal contact and Swamiji had too little time to spare for individual aspirants. About ten or fifteen minutes' talk a week was about all that even a disciple of his was granted. What real help or support could she get there in such an atmosphere?

"So after pondering the question I wrote to her that since she insisted I could only give her one advice—to live for a few months in solitude away from society—an advice Swamiji himself had given me. I wrote to her also what I had myself planned to do: to go to some far-off place with just a servant and concentrate on the Lord for long hours at a stretch. For, I wrote, we could hardly expect Him to lean down to us unless we on our part were ready to fulfil the conditions in which His Grace could descend. One of these conditions was solitude, another —to pray and meditate, centering all our thoughts on Him and Him alone. In the end I wrote:

'As Mira is your ideal, I will quote one of her songs I recently learned:

On the bank of the Ganga, far
from the world's din,
Where the snow-range is kissed
by star-light serene,
I will build a little sweet
temple of dream,
Bedecked with flowers of
beauty and gleam
There, singing thy Name, soft
sleep will me claim
And I'll open my eyes, again
singing thy Name!'

"Lastly, I added, in a post-script:

'You say you have read and heard enough about Divine miracles and are now longing to verify — attest them. That is as it should be. Only, my dear child, you are making a cardinal mistake we all make in our ignorance—of warting to get before giving. In other words, you are forgetting that one can never win any lasting Vision or Boon till one has learned to give. Give all—all of yourself without reserve—all you have and are to Him and you will find that He *will* give you Himself—the stone Image *will* come to life. Don't think that I am now talking

down to you as a superior. For believe me when I say that I do *not* feel I am a bit more evolved than you, my dear maid of Brindaban! I say all this because I feel that I too, like you, stand now at the parting of the ways and as such must put into practice what I have preached to you—or shall I say, to myself, disapproving of my own self-will. For I too have gone on, so far, insisting like you, on having His Vision on my *own* terms. In a nutshell, both of us must now cease, once for all, to clamour: I want this, I want that. It is high time we learnt to do a little heart-searching and find out what *He* wants. For till one knows that how can one do His will, and till one does His will how can one expect to get rid of one's ego which shuts Him out?"

Barbara sighed. "Too true Dada! We all claim we want to serve Him and do His will, but in practice we only want to do it all in our own way, saying to the Lord: 'We want, indeed, to love you but not in the way that pleases *you* but in the way that tickles *us*. I realised this as never before when you related to me the other day how Shyam Thakur accepted his Guru's lead. But forgive me for the interruption. Tell me what Sati wrote in reply."

Tapati handed Asit another blue envelope and smiled. "Having foresight, Dada, I knew you would need it directly."

Barbara's eyes sparkled: "Her letter again! Oh, thank you, Didi!"

* * * * * * * *

SECLUSION

Asit read out in a pleased voice:

"Your letter, *Mamababu,* was welcome as the first downpour after summer is to the parched earth. Yes, *Mamababu,* I can say honestly that it thrilled me to the core—especially the lovely song of Mira's you quoted. It went straight to my heart.

"On an impulse I made the mistake of showing it immediately to Arun. His face grew dark with pain and I felt so sad for having been the cause of it. But it's no use crying over spilt milk. And who knows—perhaps it was all for the best? Anyway, I had to tell him pointblank that if he refused to let me go away somewhere for a few months I will die here of heart-ache. He was silent for a long time, then said with a sigh: 'I won't try to keep you where you are so unhappy, even though—' his voice grew thick—'I will miss you. But let that pass. I have only one request to make. I will write to my mother and sister at Rawalpindi. They have a large house where I am sure you can live for six months or even longer, should you so wish. They will not disturb you—I will see to that. Only don't go to an Ashram. I say this as I don't want you to burn your boats, still hoping—against hope— that you will, in the end, come back to me.' And so he went on and on—so mournfully that I burst into tears. But that is neither here nor there. For you are surely right: We can't win Him if we mind pain and baulk at doing His will. May His will be revealed to me more and more in my prospective seclusion at Pindi—that is all I pray for. And so I say again that I will even accept a Guru if I am sincerely persuaded that that is His will. What more can I say or do? But let me tell you now about what Arun and I have come to.

"I will go there alone—leaving even Rajat behind—and stay there for at least six months to start with. I will take with me a cook, a servant and a chauffer, for Arun insists I must take my car with me wherever I go.

"Lastly, I would make a humble suggestion. Since you also want seclusion, why not come and join me there? Arun wrote to them and they have just replied that I will have a whole wing to myself with a suite of three rooms. So do come there, please, *Mamababu!* My sister-in-law with her husband and mother will leave us alone. But to make sure that you will have all the seclusion you need I will go there first and see for myself. If I find it all right I will write to you and then you are to come and stay with me as my guest—as long as possible. Oh, *Mamababu,* what a joy it will be if you can come! But no—I won't have you decline. You *must* come. We will then drive one day to Dumel and see Swami Swayamananda. Maybe it's he who is my destined Guru—who knows? Anyway—Guru or no Guru—you mustn't fail me now. Will you?

"I will say only one last word and be done: Should it be revealed to us there that *you* are my Guru and no other, beware turning me down! I know you are loath to accept disciples but, to quote your own words against you, remember it isn't what *you* want that matters but what *He* wants. If the rule holds good for the disciple it must for the Guru as well, mustn't it? For it can't very well be that what is sauce for the disciple-gander is not sauce for the Guru-goose. Am I not brilliantly apposite, *Mamababu?*

Your Undismayed
Sati"

Barbara clapped her hands.

"How rapturous, Dada! And what did you write back to her?"

"I wrote that I would come but only if she could assure me that her three custodians wouldn't fret and fume overmuch, for I didn't want to prove a stormy petrel there. To this she replied —after a fortnight—from Pindi—"

Tapati handed him a third blue envelope.

"Yes, this is it," Asit said. "thank you for being so thoughtful."

"I am so overjoyed *Mamababu!"* he read on. "Oh, to think—you will come—really come! Do you know how long I have not seen you, sparred with you and above all, heard you sing? Just six years, two months and five days. But to answer your question first.

"You need not be afraid. My three custodians won't 'fret and fume' at all, though, to be perfectly frank, they may scowl or frown a bit, now and then. But we may easily keep out of their way altogether—should you be so disposed. As it is, I meet them only at dinner—once a day, a very stiff and formal sort of affair, you know—just to keep up appearances. I did try to be friendly at first, but as I am as unlike to them as chalk is to cheese, I have given it up. We have just a little half-an-hour's table-talk and then I retire with a 'thank you' to my little temple, to pray. My brother-in-law tries though to be friendly as, personally, he does not dislike me. But of course he agrees with his kith and kin that I am a bad wife and a crank into the bargain. But let me not be as hard on them as they are on me, since I can understand, after all, when they can't understand me. When you come we will have all our meals here in my temple, so you won't have to meet their glum faces. So let us not talk of them—they don't count, anyway.

DESPERATION

"But during the past fortnight, *Mamababu,* my main and bitterest struggle has been with my own nature. Sometimes I feel a black despair gaining upon me. How can I help this feeling when I am daily more and more shocked by my own reactions to things? You were wont to pat me on the back saying that I was strong as steel. But here it has

dawned on me that I am weak as a reed. For here in this solitude I have found out truths about myself I had never suspected before. For one thing, I find that though I don't want to be a wife to Arun, I still love him and miss his loving company. For another,—I am scared to discover that I literally pine for Rajat—so much so that I can't concentrate even for ten minutes at a time on my Lord. My mind flies back, again and again, to my little one's bell-like laughter, his ceaseless babble and, above all, his snuggling against my breast at night and asking me, with his tiny arms twined round my neck, to sing him to sleep. How can I give myself entirely to my Lord when I am still so divided within? Can it possibly be that the main plank of my strength was not God-love but brittle pride sustained by solid self-love? But then on what shall I stand now that my pride, too, is crumbling, faced by this mortifying self-diagnosis? I am, indeed, utterly shaken. I often ask myself now-a-days if I had so long only indulged in my fancies, telling myself I was 'a maid of Brindaban' when the truth was that I was just a common worldly mother? Am I insincere then? Or just a baby-fool who would be spoon-fed with illusions? I fear my faith in my strength and call is fast oozing away. If this petering-out is not arrested how can I help becoming a shell, a husk? — O *Mamababu,* I dread to think—shall I have to go back, with my plumes furled, utterly humiliated? My sister-in-law told me sarcastically the other day that those who hug butterflies too close find that it is just a worm. My mother-in-law—the bluntest of the trio—says, with a sneer, that one who can't keep faith with one's master on earth is unlikely to be faithful to the Lord beyond. My brother-in-law tries his best, now and then, to throw sops but even he can't help thinking—as he said last night laughing—that I am chasing the rainbow. I bridled: 'It looks as if everyone in the world knows what is wrong with me—everyone except my pitiful self,' and left the table. A little later they all came to apologise.

"But all that is neither here nor there. What gives me no rest is the disconcerting question: have I been deceiving myself all along and play-acting to shine as a modern Mira? During the past week I have often enough tossed on my bed for hours, tormented by this query, till last night I could bear it no more. I got up towards the small hours of the morning and started writing to you not to come—confessing that I was defeated and must go back to my moorings I cut away from so pompously—just when I heard a Voice in my heart: 'Don't revel in self-pity nor fool yourself. One can no more take back what is given to the Lord than one can make a released arrow fly backwards.' Perhaps I imagined it all, yet the voice had such a strange ring of authority that I sat down to pray again, in tears, till slowly my strength returned.

"But O *Mamababu,* why are you delaying? You wrote in your last letter, a week ago, that you would be here within a fortnight or thereabouts. But why a fortnight—when you are your own master? Please—O please, come *immediately.* Wire to me on receipt of this that you will be here by the end of this week. This incessant see-saw may well make me go off the rails—who knows?—for, often enough, I see strange, live shadows hovering round me and I am a little frightened. I do not feel courageous as of old. A song of Rajani Sen's you used to sing haunts me often, now-a-days:

'My myriad nomad cravings race
in my soul's Night, O Friend!
I know not when the deep Abyss
Will claim me in the end.
O Saviour mine, come now, stand guard
Against Dark's down-pul-call sky-ward
My fool desires to thine own feet:
On thy Grace I depend!'

Yours derelict, Sati".

"I felt dismayed and sent her an express telegram. As far as I remember the words were something like this:

'Don't lose faith. These God-hostile forces attack us oftenest through dark defeatist suggestions whenever we want to climb God-ward. Be loyal to your soul's call. He cannot fail to answer if you give yourself to Him. I am starting tonight, Sunday, for Delhi by train. Do write to me there care of my aunt. From Delhi I will fly to Pindi. So expect me by Wednesday morning at the latest. Love and blessing'.

* * * * * * * *

Asit resumed:

"I reached Delhi on Tuesday night, at nine.

"I had planned to fly to Pindi next morning but the moment I alighted at the railway station my aunt ran up to me with a tense face and cried: 'O Asit, you can't go to Pindi tomorrow. The Muslims have started massacring the Hindus.'

"My heart missed a beat. I faltered out: 'How? ....Why?

"My aunt's eyes glistened.

'How can we say? All we know is what the Radio announced an hour ago—Oh, I forgot Sati's telegram. It arrived this morning. She writes: Overjoyed. Expecting you tomorrow.'

"We went straight to a high Muslim official I knew. His noble face was grave, his eyes sad. After hearing all I had to tell about Sati he said:

'There is no denying it looks ugly and probably tomorrow it will be uglier still when no trains or planes will ply between Pindi and Delhi.'

"My aunt and I tried our best to put on a brave face, hoping against hope, but the Radio finally dispelled our optimism at eight next morning, announcing that all planes and trains between Pindi and Delhi had ceased to ply.

"I called again on my Muslim friend and said that I must drive in my aunt's car straight to Pindi.

"He held up his hands, aghast!

'Please don't entertain such a mad project. You are sure to be held up on the Pindi border. I will tell you what I will do for you: I will telephone to the Police there to enquire about your niece and let you know by noon. Meanwhile, for Heaven's sake, don't do anything rash. Surely you don't think you are going to help your niece by getting killed on the way!'

"I came back to my aunt's—in an indescribable state of gloom and felt restless the whole afternoon. Why had I not gone to Pindi earlier—was the one question that kept lashing me.

"As the night before I had not slept at all, I fell into a doze in the afternoon and saw, in a dream, Sati driving in her blue car with the Image in her lap.

"I woke up a trifle relieved and prayed to the Lord to protect His 'little maid of Brindaban.'

"The evening paper published in bold headlines: 'Brutal massacre of the Hindus at Pindi, their houses burnt, women abducted'—and so on.

"At about ten at night I was pacing restlessly up and down our verandah when a car wheezed in and

Sati alighted with the Lord's Image.....a Sati in a torn sari, bare of ornaments, hair dishevelled, eyes red with weeping.....'

* * * * * * * *

Asit resumed after a brief pause:

"When our meal was over Sati told us all—in my bedroom. I will try to recount her story in her own words as far as possible.

"I got your wire, *Mamababu,* day before yesterday at nine in the morning, I was overjoyed and started praying, in tears, before my Lord, when my chauffer who was a devout Hindu came in and told me that a great sadhu from Hardwar had just arrived and was going to give a discourse on the Gita in a temple-hall near our house.

'A great sadhu?' I asked. 'What's his name?'

'Anandagiri,' he replied.

"I felt a thrill of joy. Anandagiri, the Guru of the great Shyam Thakur! I thanked the Lord once again and drove at once to the temple.

"Punctually to the stroke of ten he came flanked by two disciples. O *Mamababu!* I have never seen such a face, radiating light! And what a discourse he gave, with tears in his eyes and beatific smile on his lips! He ended with our Lord's pledge to Arjuna:

'Who worship me and think of none but me
Are by me sustained everlastingly.'

LONG AWAITED HUMAN SAVIOUR

"As he intoned, in conclusion: *'Namah Krishnaya namah',* all joined in and many among the audience folded their hands and bowed down to the ground with glistening eyes. I cannot describe, *Mamababu,* the heave in my heart! I was reminded of a simile of Sri Ramkrishna's that when you light a candle in a cave where gloom has reigned for centuries, the shadows don't take centuries to melt away but vanish in a flash. It was just so with me: all my cherished hostility to the Guru as the Lord's deputy, all my strong arguments against accepting a human intermediary as a Divine Leader, all my loud vauntings about walking on one's own legs to the Goal as against riding on an obliging deputy's shoulders evaporated in the twinkling of an eye. My whole soul cried out: to him, to him — my Gurudev — the human Saviour I have been waiting for so long, unknowing.....

"When the discourse was over I shed all my diffidence and, going straight to him, kissed his feet. As he placed his palm on my head a shiver of ecstasy coursed through my blood, my sinews, my tissues. Oh, *Mamababu,* what fools we are to struggle against the greatest blessing that can attend us!....

"He looked into my eyes and asked: 'You want to say something'?

'If you can spare me a few minutes — but alone,' I stressed.

"He nodded and said to one of his disciples: 'Take her to the next room, I want to speak to her for half-an-hour—alone'.

"After a few minutes, he stepped in and closed the door. I remained standing, with folded hands, in an intoxication of bliss.

'Sit down, little mother,' he said, taking his seat on a deer-skin.

"I rested my forehead on his lap without the least hesitation . . . . My tears were unleashed.

"He patted my head tenderly and said: 'Krishna, Krishna! So I came in time, little mother, didn't I? . . . . . Now tell me all now that I have been sent. Yes, yes, of course I meant what I said: He heard your prayer and bade me answer it. That is why I came here last night.'

"And I told him all — hiding nothing, even though, strangely enough, I felt that he had known it all, all the time. Still I went on confiding in him—for the sheer joy of confiding. I simply could not help it, *Mamababu!* For I felt as though I had been waiting all the time for just this—to have someone to carry the load of my ego so that I might travel light.

"When my long recital had come to an end, he tenderly gazed at me smiling faintly. I asked:

'Why don't you speak, Gurudev?'

"His smile grew broader. 'But I have spoken—to your heart.'

"I felt a trifle bewildered and gave an embarrassed smile. 'I am so unreceptive, Gurudev!..... I know so little about.....things occult.....'

'YOU HAVE HEARD THE CALL'

"He laughed out: 'So you too take me for an occultist, do you?' Then he added, his laughter trailing off into a half smile: 'You will feel a little more at your ease when you will have seen that I too know—very little. Only I know one thing which, perhaps, you don't know yet—fully: that when His Deep calls, one must leave off counting the waves from the shore and take the plunge.'

"My heart beat faster as I felt a tremor of fear —for the first time. I said: 'But what about my moorings, Gurudev? My duties.....responsibilities .....my child.....'

'All that must go,' he interjected curtly.

'Go? But how can I.....I fear I can't.....'

'You *can,* my little daughter: We all can—only we *won't.* And that is just why I am sent here to tell you, for it is the only thing you don't know yet —as you should.'

'I should—?' I murmured.

"He nodded. 'Yes, and do you know why?—Because you have heard His call. And those who have, can only own to one duty—to answer it. For those whom He has called can take orders from none else—and those who have come to love Him are absolved overnight from all responsibilities'.

"I felt elated. But the next moment my diffidence stepped in and I said hesitantly: 'But Gurudev....Sometimes I feel dubious about....whether I have really heard His call or . . . . or loved Him truly. Maybe I am deceiving myself.....'

"He held up an admonitory finger. 'Don't little mother—just don't encourage doubts, our very worst foes on this path. And I'll tell you one thing more: you are being held up now only by this old habit of yours—of trying to understand the Lord's Grace with the mind and its ignorant reasonings. Otherwise you could never have doubted what is so obvious—especially after having heard His Voice which rescued you on that night.'

"I was thrilled and yet, strangely, a nameless fear succeeded my joy once again. I said: 'But Gurudev, the Goal is far and the way is dark.....'

'EVERY OBSTACLE FORTIFIES FAITH'

"A mystic smile lit up his face, and he hummed Govindadas's famous song:

'Sang Krishna's love-flute sleeplessly,
How could still Radha rest or sleep?
She rose and in deep ecstasy
Ran out in stealth her troth to keep.
On the dark bank she blindly sped
When lo, a huge snake stood revealed,
With a jewel flashing on its head.
She with her hands the light concealed,
Made fearless by His love-flute's call:
She'd stake her all for the One-in-all.'

"I listened, bewitched.....When the song came to an end he explained:

'Do you know what it means? It means that the love-mad bride-soul is not afraid even of the most fearful things when they come as lions in the path, to exploit an English simile. Our Vaishnava poet's image goes one better in that it portrays the *vyakulata* — irresistible yearning — of Radha's soul. She leaves her home in stealth, in the middle of the night, called by the Flute of her Beloved. She runs on blindly into the night and meets the proverbial snake with the mythical flame-jewel on her hood scattering light. She is afraid then not for her life but of discovery which may prevent her from reaching the trysting-place. So she tries to shade with her bare palms the light streaming from the jewelled hood! It is the most exquisite description I know of the peerless Radha's yearning for her Beloved, a yearning that counts no cost to win the Prize. And it is no mere poet's fancy mind you, but a truism: that for those who want Him above everything else every obstacle serves as a new fillip to their aspiration and fortifies their faith. If it were not so the *asuras*—the snakes and lions in the path—would never have been tolerated in His mystic play.'

"He paused once more, then went on: 'You asked me a little while ago—how was one to be sure that one had come to love Him? The answer was given you on that night when He chose to fall just at your feet to be picked up by you. Accident? Coincidence?—Nay'—he shook his head with a half-smile—'these words are but veils we weave to hide our ignorance from ourselves. But still, to remove your last doubts, I may tell you that I was sent here to give you the initiation—because you had come to love Him'. He then whispered a *mantra* into my ears—just a Name of the Lord. Instantly my whole being thrilled. I closed my eyes and saw an ocean of Light.....of Bliss.....closing round me.

"When I woke out of my trance of ecstasy, he placed both his palms on my head and said, with a lovely smile: 'You belong henceforth to Him alone and I claim you as my daughter-disciple in His Name. Agreed?'

"I smiled through my tears and nodded silently. Then I prostrated myself on the floor and held his feet.

"When we got on to our feet, he said: 'Now listen. I have booked a seat in the afternoon plane and will be in Delhi by evening. Could you come with me? I would like to take you straight to my Ashram at Hardwar.'

"Surprised, I asked: 'This afternoon?' He nodded. I hesitated for a little, then said: 'I have received a wire from my uncle yesterday who is coming all the way from Mysore only for me. Besides,' I murmured, 'I promised my husband not to go just now to an Ashram. Should I not therefore inform him and take his permission? I mean: would it be right to start on one's pilgrimage to Truth with a broken pledge?'

A SEER

"He looked pleased and said: 'I bless you, my child, for your qualms. For you are right: One should not violate a word once given. But what if he refuses?'

"I said: 'Then I will have to tell him that my duty to the Lord leaves me no alternative.'

"He drew a sigh and brooded awhile, then said: 'All right. But I want to tell you one thing: leave Pindi as soon as you can. Go anywhere, drive to Kashmir if you like, or to Amritsar—but leave Pindi, preferably today.'

"I felt alarmed and asked: 'But why, Gurudev?'

'Because,' he said slowly, 'I see a deep shadow hovering over this place.' He paused and said in a grave voice: 'That's why I suggested you accompany me.'

"My heart sank. Still I put on a brave face and said: 'My uncle wired to me he would reach here on Wednesday at the latest—that is, to-morrow morning. Suppose we start directly he arrives?—I have my own car and can drive up straight to Kashmir as I suggested to him.'

"He reflected for a few seconds, then nodded: 'All right. But don't on any account decide to stay on here—even a few days longer.'

"I returned to my temple in a state of mixed emotions. For while I could not forget my thrilling experience, I wondered if such an experience by itself could give me any lasting strength. It was about noon now and already my old misgivings were stirring again within me, even though I had definitely made up my mind to seek refuge at my Guru's feet at Hardwar. I recalled a remark of yours, *Mamababu*, that it is not so difficult to take the plunge in a moment of high emotion, but it is desperately hard to go on swimming when every wave opposes you. But I bit my lips hard and sat down to write to Arun at once asking him to release me for good. I went on writing—shedding tears to think I would see Rajat no more when one of our neighbours—a Muslim girl, named Ayesha—came in and told me, with a scared face that the Muslims of Pindi had started looting Hindu shops downtown and had taken a vow to murder the Hindus and abduct their women. 'That is why I came running—only please don't tell anybody that I have told you. For should they ever come to know—'

'No, no—rest assured,' I said.

'What will you do, sister?' she asked.

'I am leaving to-morrow,' I said.

'That's good,' she said, greatly relieved, for she had come to love me, 'only—I mean—why not today? Why delay and take chances?'

"I gave a start, recalling Gurudev's almost identical words and, dismissing her, made straight for the dinning-room. I heard my sister-in-law's shrill laughter.

'O hail, *Bothan!*' my brother-in-law said cheerily, as I entered the room. 'Great honour! Won't you join us at lunch?'

'No, thanks: I have my lunch waiting for me,' I said, remaining standing. 'I have come just to report to you what I have heard this minute: that the Muslims of Pindi—'

"My brother-in-law chimed in, laughing: 'I know: just a few roughs after mischief. It's true they looted one or two Hindu shops downtown this morning, but my friend, the Police Superintendent told me when I gave him a ring, that it's nothing to worry about—they bolted before a few cops like weak clouds before a gale.'

'These policemen are often better surgeons than diagnosticians,' I commented lightly. 'I wouldn't trust their optimism overmuch if I were you.'

"My brother-in-law frowned. 'You are unfair *Bothan*. If you knew my excellent friend—

'I don't doubt his excellency. I cut in, in a mood for pun, 'what I doubt is his infallibility. Anyway, I have decided to leave tomorrow as soon as *Mamababu* arrives. Why take chances for nothing?'

"My decision upset them visibly. My moth-

in-law looked startled. My sister-in-law broke in, with a sneer: 'So I see our modern Mirabai is somewhat less courageous than even us, worldlings!'

"Nettled, I returned: 'I see something different: that our modern graduates are somewhat more foolhardy than they need be—to refuse to furl the sails when a storm is brewing!'

'You can sting *Bothan*—I'll say that for you,' interjected my brother-in-law. 'Only may I be permitted to ask: who told you about the storm brewing?'

THE PARTING SHOT AND REMORSE

"I hesitated for a second, then answered: 'The Sadhuji I met this morning. He told me that the sooner we could leave the better—'

'You seem to have ripened pretty fast, *Bothan!*' he said, somewhat tartly.

"I bridled: 'What do you mean?'

"My sister-in-law intervened sharply: 'He simply means that you have decided overnight to take orders from a medieval ignorant rather than—',

'Be guided by the modern omniscients?' I assisted, testily. 'Yes, I see now why and where it rankles.'

"My brother-in-law flushed. 'You may look upon these pompous saints as supermen and scoff at us moderns, but they know better; that is why they slink away from our challenge and turn always to lachrymose women and superstitious decrepits to batten on.'

"I now fairly lost my temper and retorted: 'Your magniloquence reminds me of the proverbial frog who pitched into a passing elephant claiming that one quadruped could always challenge another.' With this parting shot I left the table.

"At night I felt a twinge of remorse: I was wrong to have retaliated in anger—the more so as I had just been initiated. Early next morning, in a penitent mood, I decided to ask my brother-in-law to forgive me for my rudeness, after having rehearsed carefully in what terms I would apologise.

"To my surprise I found them all three talking together in a state of extreme agitation. Before I could put in a word my brother-in-law rushed on volubly: 'You must forgive me, *Bothan*, for my unwarranted fling at the Sadhuji. For my friend, the Police Superintendent, rang me up a few minutes ago and urged us all to pack up at once. The Muslim rowdies, he says, have turned out to be a pretty tough lot, a well-organised gang and plentifully supplied with arms. They have already looted about fifty Hindu houses downtown, killed a good many Hindus and abducted a number of our women. So he advises us to fly immediately by the next refugee plane which takes off in about an hour from now. I 'phoned to the aerodrome people a minute ago. They said they would be sending an omnibus round to pick us up in about twenty minutes' time. So get ready at once as they won't be able to wait. And oh yes, they told me that as the plane will be overcrowded, having to accommodate more than a hundred refugees, no one must carry any luggage. Each of us will be allowed only one hand-bag weighing not more than five pounds.' He stopped for breath.

"My mother-in-law added: 'So *Bowma*, get busy and put all your ornaments and bangles into your blue air-valise. Off to your room at once, for the bus may be here any minute.'

'I WON'T BUDGE WITHOUT IMAGE'

"I stood dazed for a few seconds, my head spinning, then said feebly: 'But only five pounds? My Lord's Image weighs ten—'

"My sister-in-law burst out: 'Lord's Image? Don't be a ninny. It's out of the question.'

"But I can't go without Him.' I said.

'Don't *Bowma!*' pleaded my mother-in-law. 'Off at once—get your ornaments—or shall I come and help you pack them—'

'You can help yourself to my ornaments, if you like.' I interjected. 'but I won't budge unless they let me take my Lord with me!'

"My mother-in-law stared at me as though she had seen a ghost: 'Have you lost your head, *Bowma?* Don't you know what these Muslim hooligans are? Surely, the Lord's Image can't protect you when they will lay hands on you?'

"An unaccountable strength suddenly upsurged within me. I said with a quizzical smile: 'He claims—He can. In any event, I am going to test it, no mistake—I want to see for myself whether the Lord really meant it when He said in the Gita that His devotees shall not come to grief.'

"My brother-in-law faltered out: 'Have you.... have you taken leave of your senses, *Bothan?*'

"My mother-in-law pleadingly put her arms round me: 'Don't, *Bowma*—in the name of good sense! Or give me the key—I will see to your ornaments—'

'Please don't, mother!' I cut her short, disengaging myself. 'Fly and save your precious lives and leave me here, for I will *not* be saved alone—without my Lord.'

'Then stay here and go to blazes!' snapped my sister-in-law. 'Too pure to live with a husband!.... Let her be, mother! She deserves it—curse her—a wicked woman who poses as a saint and shirks her duties to be applauded! Let her go to hell. She will reap there what she has sown here and be served right!'

"But I paid no heed. A crazy ecstasy possessed me: Yes....I will test the Lord, test His Image—find out once and for all whether it was really living and could rescue the derelict!....

"But my vaunting mood melted away like an autumn cloud as soon as I reached my room. I called out for my servants but none answered. I felt deserted.

HE DOES NOT FAIL FIRM BELIEVERS

"Now, all at once, a strange prayer welled up from the deepest depth of my heart.....I felt almost as if my tears too sang with me.....I can't express it, *Mamababu*, for I vividly felt an Answering Presence as I prayed: 'Thakur—Thakur—though I don't know who you are—you, who know all, must know that whatever my faults and failings I am yours—to make or mar, to save or doom, and that I have wanted only you, not the world's lesser loves. So I cry to you now—not to be saved—if I can't save you. For though I love life—but not a life without you.....' And so I went on and on in an indescribable ecstasy—blended of love, defiance and loyalty.

"I do not know how long I prayed nor did I see anything, *Mamababu*. But I felt something .....I don't know how to put it in words.....I felt as

though an aura of light was round me—or shall I say a radiant gauze of Grace? I can't describe what it was. Only something within me whispered—in the voice of Gurudev—'Be not afraid. For He cannot fail those who trust Him.'

"Just then I heard an omnibus pass. As I looked out, I saw my brother-in-law in the front seat with my sister-in-law on his lap. It was crammed

"Then stay and see the fun!" replied my sister-in-law..... ".....Let her go to hell and reap there what she has sown here and be served right".

with refugees—men, women and children with scared faces, a good many of them crying.....I had a fleeting glimpse of my mother-in-law's tense face.....

"I felt relieved. At least they were beyond harm's way.....After a few minutes I was startled by a piercing scream: 'Oh save me.....save me!' As I looked out I saw a pretty young girl, in red sari, being shoved into a lorry by two human monsters.

"I felt suddenly sick. As I lay limp on my bed, I heard all sorts of shrieks punctuated by fiendish yells of triumph! The next thing I saw was a house adjoining ours on fire—the house of an old Hindu pensioner.

"My confidence now failed me, altogether. I fell at my Lord's feet again and sobbed: 'I don't mind getting killed, Thakur! But don't suffer them to lay hands on me.....'

ATTACK ON THE HOUSE

"As I was praying desolately, I heard the sound of thumping feet. Next moment someone battered at my door and thundered in Hindi: 'Open—open!' I sat still, as the battering went on louder and louder till the doors fell bang on the floor and in hurtled four or five vicious looking ruffians. One of them yelled triumphantly: 'The goods, the goods, God be praised!' As he rushed at me, reeking of foul alcohol, I cried out: 'Don't lay hands on me—take.' With this I took out my bangles, necklace, bracelets and earrings one by one and flung them on the floor, and they scrambled madly to grab them like dogs after bones. Then another bellowed: 'Where are the keys?' I flung them on the floor as before. Instantly they opened my wardrobe and almirah and shoved my shawls, scarfs and things in a lump into their sacks.

"Just at this moment a stalwart Muslim entered. As soon as he clapped eyes on me, he gave a start and stopped dead. The others were shouting and running round, grabbing whatever they could lay hands on, but he stood stone-still, gazing fixedly at me. He was a handsome elderly man with fine features, a chiselled nose, bright eyes grizzled whiskers and a fair complexion, evidently a Kashmiri. I was a little surprised that he did not start rampaging with them when I suddenly noticed that his eyes were sad.....

"As we stood thus, vis-a-vis, one of the ruffians gave a horse laugh: 'Here he is, our great Rahmat. Look brother! Just look! Isn't she luscious? How pleased our great chief will be with us!' With another guffaw he was about to seize me by the arm when the other, addressed as Rahmat said: 'Let her be!' A chorus of derisive laughter rang out. One of them said: 'Didn't I tell you—our big brother's heart is soft like butter?' The others applauded and

laughed and the man who was near me gripped my wrist. I wrenched myself free and flared up: 'Aren't you ashamed of yourselves? Or have you no mother or daughter in the house?' My outburst halted them and they exchanged glances when, suddenly, Rahmat stepped forward and said in a deep voice, ringing with authority: 'You go and see what loot you can find in the other rooms. I will take charge of this one myself.' They laughed again and saying—'True—business first'—rushed out of the room. The last of them, as he brushed past us, said to Rahmat, with a vulgar chuckle: 'After being finished with her we'll take her to Abdul—won't he purr with delight and give us a fat bakhsheesh?'

THE RESCUE

"As soon as we were alone Rahmat took a couple of steps towards me and spoke quickly, in clear Bengali: 'If you want to be saved, little mother, come out with me at once—without a word....Don't stand gaping. I speak Bengali as I was a bus-driver in Bengal—in Dacca—for fifteen years. But there is no time to explain—follow me, little mother and look sharp about it—if you would be rescued.'

"His words—especially his addressing me as 'little mother'—soothed my ears like music after rain. I said: 'I thank you, kind friend, but I can't go without Him, my Lord,' indicating the Image. He gave a start again as he darted a glance at the Image, then said: 'I see!' Then, after a split second, he unhitched a kukri from his belt and lifting the bed-sheet from my bed-stead, made deftly two circular holes in the middle. Next saying — 'Just try this—' he threw it over my head and said, in a low voice: 'Don't be afraid—trust me—this is what we call *burkha*—as you must be knowing—with which our Muslim women cover themselves when they go out. If people see you in this they will take you for a Muslim lady. Can you see through the apertures?' I nodded. Without another word he lifted the Image, hid it under his shawl and said: 'Now follow me if you want to be saved, and have no fear. You can trust me, my little daughter!' He gave a sigh. 'Once I had a daughter lovely like you.....but of her—later.' His eyes grew dim. I was moved and said: 'I trust you friend, and will do your bidding.' Then adjusting the *burkha* I followed him, my heart pounding away against my ribs like a hammer.

"As we stepped out of the porch, his eyes fell on the garage. 'I see you have a car there. Yours?' I nodded. He asked: 'How much petrol have you got in the tank?' I said: 'It's full and there are, besides, five tins stocked inside. We were to have left for Kashmir tomorrow, early morning.' He brightened and said: 'This is luck, indeed! Then we are saved! But remember one thing: keep huddled in one corner with your face carefully covered and, above all, don't speak while I am driving. For if they come to know you are a Hindu, we will both be killed like dogs.'

UNFORGETTABLE CAR JOURNEY

"With this he ran into the garage, took my car out and we started on our unforgettable journey.

"He was about to turn to our left from our gates when we sighted afar a group of armed row-

"I took out my bangles, necklace, bracelets, earrings one by one and flung them on the floor."

iles. Instantly he veered round towards the right nd plunged into a street which ended on a park. e drove on keeping the park to our right. I sight- d a couple of houses ablaze on the other side of the park and heard the same fiendish yells. My scared eyes fell here and there on derelict Hindu children crying on the footpaths, hanging on to their elders —mostly old men and women, and then my heart stood still: the blue air-liner omnibus stood wrecked surrounded by the ruffians!.....Its passengers looked aghast, stranded in the middle of the road where two men sprawled, with their heads bleeding profusely. I suppressed a cry when I caught sight of my brother-in-law, staring like one dazed, and my mother-in-law, crying piteously and beating her breast. I cried out: 'My mother-in-law!' Hissing 's-s-s-' Rahmat turned the car sharply again to the left away from the park and entered a lane. There was no other way—as in front of us, too, had gathered a big noisy crowd. We saw them stop two cars and drag out their occupants.

"This lane was so narrow that it could only admit of a one-way traffic. Fortunately we met no car coming from the other end of the lane. I could not keep silent any more. 'Rahmat Khan!' I said, 'I just now saw my mother-in-law—' 'Hush!' he muttered between his teeth and drove on. A little later as the lane seemed deserted he spoke in a low voice, in Bengali, as before: 'We had decided last night that we should leave no Hindus alive here in Pindi—and we had organised about sixty bands of looters and killers.' Then as we drove on, he whispered: 'Look, there are four of them prowling—ahead! Cover yourself well in your *burkha* so that they may take you for a Muslim lady and, as I am a Muslim, it is just possible they will let us pass. And—' He could not continue as just then one of them held up his hands and blared: 'Halt!' Rahmat drove on faster as though he had not heard till the fellow, about to be run over, leapt to one side with a foul oath, and fell plop into an open gutter. His three companions screamed and jumped aside similarly. Rahmat now pressed the accelerator. They gave us chase, yelling—'Kafir—kafir—' but we soon shot away beyond their clutch.

FATE OF THOSE FLED FOR SAFETY

"It was then that the full horror of the situation dawned on me as I felt certain that my sister-in-law had been abducted. And I shuddered at the thought that the same fate would have overtaken me had I consented to escape by the ill-fated bus. I hugged the Lord closer thanking Him for having saved me, however deviously, since it was for Him I had stayed behind. But the next moment I felt a pang of shame as my mind reverted back to my sister-in-law. I recalled the remark of one of the roughs about my being 'luscious' and how their great chief, Abdul, would 'purr with delight' to have a slice of me! Who knows if my beautiful sister-in-law was now in his harem, crying her heart out helplessly—doom staring her in the face! I could not erase this depressing picture from my mind, and the more I brooded the less thankful I felt towards my Lord till I came to formulate something like a grievance against Him for 'having saved one innocent at the expense of another' as I phrased it, irrationally. I sobbed once again, disconsolately. Rahmat flung a quick look back and said: 'Come, come, little mother! You mustn't rue the irremediable. Besides, it is just possible that your mother-in-law, being old, may be spared.' I asked between my sobs: 'But what about my beautiful sister-in-law?' He shook his head with a deep sigh: 'If she is beautiful, I am afraid, there's little chance of her being restored—and you know why.'

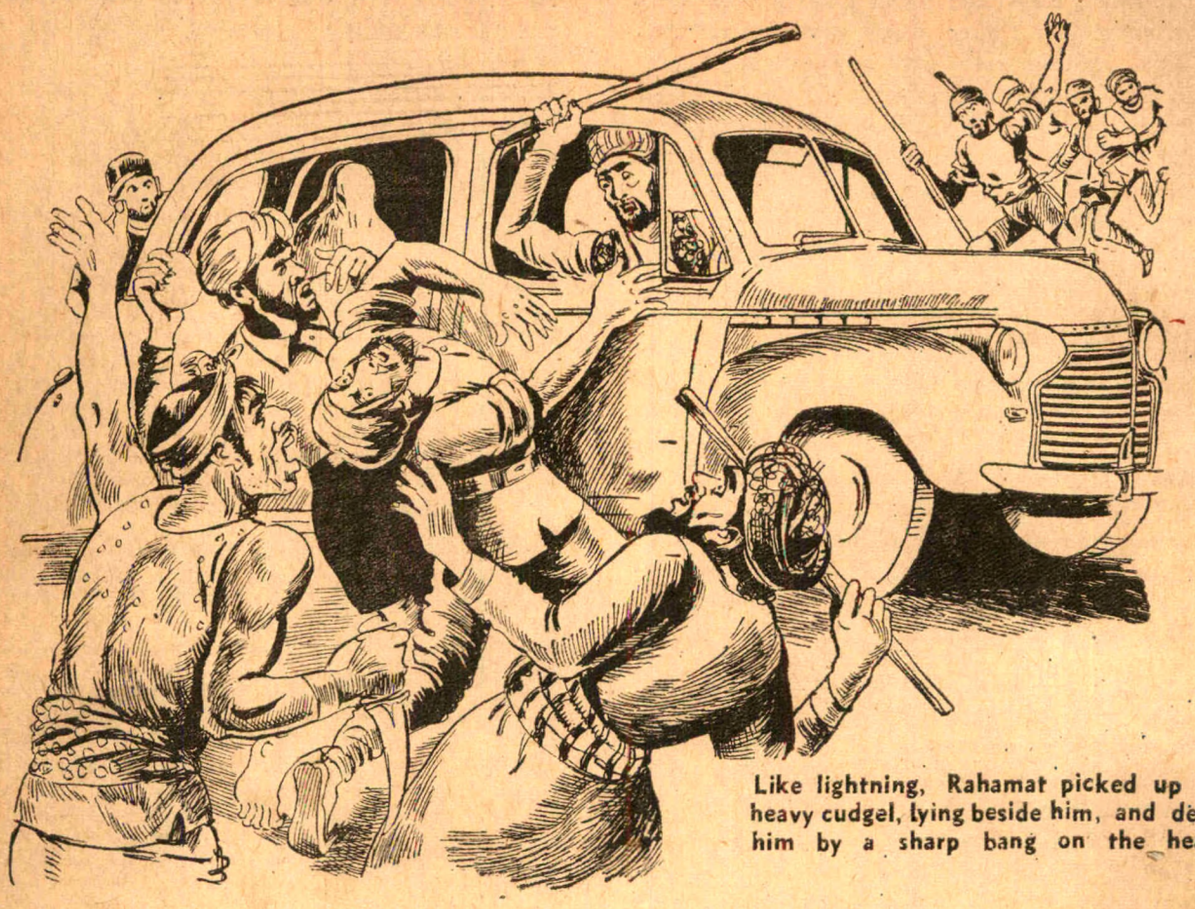
"The bright sunlight outside grew darker and darker before my eyes as he drove on. I felt miserable as never before when, suddenly, a lightning thought flashed across my mind—a curious thought which made me sit up, thrilled! To think that those who had scoffed at the idea of the Divine Protector and turned to a human agency to be saved should have marched straight into their doom, while I, whom they had cursed for loving Him, should have been rescued so incredibly and that by one who had come, vowed to kill! I wiped my tears, *Mamababu*, as a prayer issued from the core of my heart: 'O Thakur.....Thakur.....forgive those who cursed my love for you and do save my poor sister-in-law! Let her not lose what is the most precious birthright of a woman! Stand by her in her hour of need!.....' and so on.

IN DANGER ZONE

"But I could not continue petitioning for long. In a minute or two we came to a cluster of mean hutments flanking either side of the road. I had by now forgotten all about my *burkha* which had slipped down exposing my face. I had the broad vermilion mark on my forehead which had possibly attracted the attention of some passers-by. Anyway, they started a sudden hullabaloo: 'A Kafir, a kafir woman—halt!' Startled, Rahmat looked back and hissed: 'The *burkha*—the *burkha*—are you mad—cover yourself!' But it was too late now. Two of the group ran up and, barring the way, bellowed: 'Halt!' Rahmat lost his head for the first time and applied his brakes, so one of them now caught hold of the front door of our car. Like lightning, Rahmat picked up his heavy cudgel, lying beside him, and dealt him a sharp bang on the head. He gave an agonised yell, staggered and fell down plop on the road-side. Rahmat put on the accelerator again and ran full tilts against the man who stood in front. Our car gave a big bump and passed clean over him. Two men, who were mounting guard on either side of our car, were laid low almost simultaneously, hit by the mudguards. A howl of rage rang out but this time it was too late for *them*. Our brand-new Dodge had shot out forward beyond their reach, like an arrow of lightning!

"I swallowed my tears and, with my head spinning, reclined, exhausted against the back cushion, with my eyes closed, repeating: 'Thakur...Thakur...Thakur.....'

"How long I had prayed—I do not know. It must have been at least half an hour or so, for when I opened my eyes again I saw a long stretch of open road in front of us, with very little traffic. I sat up:



Like lightning, Rahamat picked up his heavy cudgel, lying beside him, and dealt him by a sharp bang on the head.

on either side of us now lay silent fields basking in the tranquil beams of a carefree morning sun, shining in a cloudless sky.

"Rahmat looked back quickly and heaved a sigh: 'Wasn't that a near thing?—I told you to mind your *burkha*.....' I replied penitently: 'I am sorry, I promise to be careful in future. You see, we, Hindus, are not used to your *burkha* and so feel so stifled.....' He laughed and said 'But one *has*, sometimes, to do things one is not used to, little mother! Do you think I am used to being held up by people and running over them?.....But you can take off your *burkha* now—we are a good seventy miles from Pindi. Here is my humble den: come down to rest for a few minutes.'

BRIEF REST AT 'HUMBLE DEN'

"Our car had drawn up beside a neat thatched cottage. As I alighted Rahmat took over the Image.

"After a wash I sat down on a mat and asked: 'You live so far from Pindi?' He nodded: 'I drive daily a bus from here to Pindi back and forth, you see.' I asked again, 'But supposing any of your neighbours should come to know?' He shook his head: 'I myself drove them all to Pindi to kill the Hindus. So we may rest here for a few minutes.....But to think, little mother,' he added after a brief pause, 'that I, their ring-leader should have let them down—but I will tell you all about it after you have taken some food!'

"He now made some tea for me and baked quickly four pieces of *chapati*, two of which he served me with a cup of treacle. No, little mother, you are my *mehman* now and I can't eat unless my guest also takes something.....Here are some apples and bananas. No, No, I insist—you must eat, we will have to drive for hours and even if I drive for seventy miles an hour as I propose to, we won't be in Delhi before nine or ten, tonight. On our way it will not be safe to halt again anywhere.'

THE PLOTTER'S CONFESSION

"So I had to break bread with him while he reminisced in a husky voice:

'I am looked upon as somebody by the roughs here and it will not be too much to say that I was at once their conscience-keeper and ring-leader.' He gave an ironical smile. 'You see, I come from a rather literate family and so can overawe the illiterate. But, joking apart, I may truthfully claim that it was I who had hatched the whole plot and organised the ruffians and got them the arms which subdued the Pindi Police. And do you know why I led this campaign of hate against the Hindus?—Because'—his eyes grew dim again—'because they had murdered my only daughter at Jullundur a few months ago in a Hindu-Muslim riot. I was at Dacca at the time. I saw red and took this vow to be revenged. To cut a long story short, at four this morning I drove with my men to Pindi and started the dance of hell. We had looted about sixty Hindu houses, murdered a score of them and abducted more than fifty of their women before we broke into your house. I had steeled my heart against all tender feelings—and everytime pity gained on me I conjured up my daughter's face. She was killed by the Hindus with a hatchet—in her bed.

'But the moment I laid eyes on you, I was startled. For you reminded me of my Daulat.' He

wiped a tear on his sleeve and went on: 'She was just like you, little mother, a flower among women. And what made my heart almost miss a beat was that she had, like you, a black wart on her chin and just your complexion, made of milk and roses. In fact we used to call her a rose—her twin cheeks used to flush pink every now and then—the same flush that lit your face when you cried out: "Have you no mother or daughter at home?" As I heard these words I felt as if somebody had stabbed me in the heart. The hell-fiend I had nursed in my blood fell dead and the man I was—the father who had loved his daughter more than anything else in the world—was reborn and enjoined on me to come to your rescue. Still I had some lingering qualms about it, not only because rescuing you would amount to a betrayal of those I had instigated, but also because I knew well what the stake was—what would befall me should I fail.' He gave a quizzical smile. 'But however incredible it may seem, what finally decided me was your remark that you would not leave without your Lord!'

LOYALTY TO LORD TRIUMPHS

'You know, mother,' he went on, after a pause, 'we are Muslims and so I have always somewhat pitied the Hindus as fool *butparasts*—idolators—who could worship a dead image for the Divine. But when you told me firmly that you wouldn't run away unless you could take your Lord with you, I felt unaccountably moved, nay, I was overawed as never before. What is this love—I asked myself on the verge of tears—which would readily sacrifice what we hold dearest on earth—our life—for something one has loved as the Lord in a dead dumb stone which cannot even make a response? Was such love possible on this earth? I am not a philosopher or thinker, little mother: I am only a common man who lives more in life than in thought. For all that, I could not help being stirred to my depths by your mystic love—and my pity gave place to admiration of one so loyal. We are Muslims, little mother, and if Muslims understand anything—it is loyalty. Your loyalty to your Lord conquered me then and there. After that Allah helped. You know the rest.'

"My heart was in a heave. 'My noble friend,' I said, 'you have placed me under a debt I cannot repay even with my life, for you have saved something I value more than my life—more than anything else in the world: my Lord. They would, surely, have thrown Him—I mean His Image—into the gutter. But even apart from it, how could I have sought to escape leaving Him behind who is to me not a mere chunk of dead stone, but a living reality bound up with my very existence? However, I will speak of that another time—if you are interested. Now I have an urgent request to make. You have called me your mother and so I ask you: 'will you kindly enquire after my sister-in-law when you will be returning to Pindi?'

"He smiled ruefully. 'Pindi, little mother? By tonight all of them will have come to know what I have done: probably I have killed the man I ran over—and for whom?—A kafir, a Hindu girl! Do you think that they, being what they are, will stick at anything to be even with me? By tomorrow a price will be on my head.'

'A price on your head!' I asked, aghast. 'What will you do then?—Listen: why don't you cast in your lot with me? I am going to Hardwar from Delhi —to the Ashram of my Guru. Why not make your home with me?—Do come, won't you?"

"His wan eyes kindled with joy. 'Would I? Rather ask a starveling if he would come to a feast. O little mother, how can I tell you what you are—what you mean—to me—you who came to me reminding me of my lovely daughter.....' his dark eyelashes were moist and his voice grew thick..... 'and.....and I glimpsed in you a new hope when all hopes were dead. Yes, little mother, you came to me as a symbol, a voice from Heaven to call me back to a life worth living. Only.....' he hesitated.....'I am told Hindu Gurus look upon Muslims and men of low caste as untouchables.....I want to serve you —not prove a burden.....' His voice trailed off into a sigh.

"I was moved to my depths. 'My son,' I said, 'you have called me your mother and so I must claim you as my son. I have a little son: you will be his elder brother. So make your mind easy on that score. For', I added with a smile, 'my Guruji who is a saint cannot very well accept a mother and yet shut out her brave son even though he may look a little too big for so small a mother. But, joking apart, what you said just now only applies to *Badgurus*—that is, to those who are not true Gurus and, therefore, judge people not by their aspiration and nobility but by their castes and creeds and labels. But the one who has given me refuge at his feet is a *Sadguru*—that is, one who lives in God and sees Him in all, and one to whom such a Vision is given gets beyond all castes and creeds, sects and dogmas.'

"His eyes sparkled with joy. 'Then, little mother, I give you my word that I will serve you to my last breath.....' he paused and smiled.....' 'and it is not pledge given with the lips, but with my heart's blood. How can I give a lesser pledge to one whom Allah, in His infinite mercy, sent to me to rescue me from my impending doom.'

"I laughed and said: 'Then we are quits, my big son: you save me from dishonour and I save you from doom. But to return where we left off: what about my poor sister-in-law? I can't think of her without a pang in my heart.'

"He brooded for a space, with bowed head, then said: 'I'll tell you what I'll do: I will write to a nephew of mine in Pindi who, I hope, will understand. But even if he does, I don't want to dangle any false hopes. Your mother-in-law, being old, may be spared, I repeat, but not your beautiful sister-in-law, I'm afraid. She will have to choose between death or a life far worse than death. Don't cry, little mother. I say all this not to cause you pain but to prepare yourself the better for what is all but inevitable. I wish I could be optimistic but.....' he paused and shook his head sadly.....'how can I.....knowing as I do—to what hellish depths we can sink in mass frenzy—we who call ourselves men—and I include myself when I say this. What was I when my Daulat was living? I could never hurt a fly, as the saying goes. And yet the same I—whom my Daulat loved to call a fraud, because I nursed a woman's heart in a man's body and who sang the praises of a merciful Allah ever since I had learned to pray—' he sighed and shook his head—'but self-pity can wait, little

mother, it is high time we started. If it's Allah's will, I will drive like hell—I am used to fast driving—so that we may reach Delhi tonight by nine or ten at the latest.

VOLLEY OF BULLETS

"He put in the car a flask of water, two loaves of bread, a few apples and a bunch of bananas. Then we started again, at eight.

"He was true to his word: my Dodge car flew as though on wings, at seventy miles an hour.

"After about four hours or so, while driving through Lahore, a Muslim ruffian at the cross-roads held up his hands. Nearby I saw again some houses on fire and a group of armed hooligans on the rampage. One of them held up his hands and cried halt. Rahmat in desperation, drove on and roared: 'Move off!' Scared and amazed, the man leapt off to one side and stumbled. We heard behind us a loud outcry. I looked through the window at the back and saw four or five rowdies taking aim. There were a number of instantaneous reports but they were a split second too late—a volley of bullets whizzed straight on past us, just after our car had turned the corner. They must have given us a chase but we had gone beyond their gun-range in half-a-minute. I looked at the speedometer: we were making eighty miles an hour.

Rahmat dabbed his forehead with a kerchief and shouted: 'Allah ho Akbar! It *was* a narrow shave! Had there been no turn just there, it would have been the end! Allah ho Akbar.....Allah ho Akbar.....Allah ho Akbar.....!'

"His thanksgiving to the Lord scourged me as it were with a flail: 'How many times did I think of Him who had not forgotten me once—during the last few hours?' I hugged my Lord once again and wept: 'Forgive me, Thakur, that we fail to thank you everytime you come to stave off doom. O Thakur! grant me this faith that when *you* stand guard no furies of hell can touch us!' And as I shed tears in an excess of remorse, I had one of the strangest experiences of my life: I felt as though the Lord's wings of Grace, hovering around, were flying ahead of our car. Now and then, I had fleeting glimpses of a beneficent Presence, a radiant Sentinel, whose aura sped with us like a luminous armour as it were!' She shivered in ecstasy and went on: 'I know wise men —and there are so many of them—will laugh and dismiss it as fantasy. But I do not care a row of pins because I know that the last laugh will be with me —not with them. Yes,' she stressed tossing her head defiantly, 'for how can I, who have seen, admit the 'No' of the blind who have not seen? I have seen, I tell you. I have, *Mamababu!*' She suddenly clapped her hands in childlike rapture: 'and I am blessed that He, in His infinite mercy, has revealed to me what great seers and saints often yearn for in vain!' Tears now fell fast from her eyes as she closed her eyes and went on with folded hands. 'O Thakur.... Thakur....you who know all must know this is not pride, but the thrilled offering of a heart which has met your Grace face to face and so cannot help singing. I have only one prayer to offer at your feet Thakur: You, who came to deliver me from danger, deliver me now, once for all, from the bondage of the world and make me your own—your bondslave, O Thakur, Thakur, Thakur who came to me as a helpless Image only to teach me how to love in helpless surrender!'.....And my aunt and I bowed our heads as Rahmat kissed her feet, in tears."

A silence fell.....

THE LORD CAME

Barbara and Tapati silently wiped their eyes.

"And then," Asit resumed, "a song welled up from the depths of my heart—a song she used to love when she was a child of twelve—a song of the unforgettable Mira:

"I, Mira, have attained to Him
My All-in-all I have attained:
As I opened my heart's temple-door
In sailed my King and Lord, O friend!

No ritual of censers, bells
And blooms I performed Him to win,
I had a world of things to say,
But when He came—my Evergreen—

I only gazed, a thrill, on Him
And mused, unvoicing a single word:
'Was ever one lowlier than myself,
Or one more merciful than my Lord?'

I hailed my Love in silent bliss
In my soul's virgin shrine, O friend!
And marvelled, in incredulous joy:
To think: my dream I have attained!"

* * * * * * * *

A silence fell.....

Barbara lifted her eyes.....Asit smiled: "What is it?"

Her eyes glistened still. She averted her face; then, after quickly wiping her tears, turned to Tapati with a forced laugh:

"Why not you tell him, Didi? You can read thoughts."

Tapati shook her head. "There you have me, learned sister! I don't know French."

Asit looked at Barbara, surprised: "You were thinking in French?"

She gave a smile. "Yes, Dada—but no, I happened to recall a line of Antoine de Saint-Exupery: *'Mais les yeux sont aveugle. Il faut chercher avec le coeur'."*

Tapati intervened: "What does it mean, Dada?"

"But the eyes are blind: one must seek with the heart," Asit answered.

Rendered into English
by the author from his
book "AGHATAN AJO GHATE"

This IS DELHI

The India Gate — A landmark of New Delhi.

By

Dr. KRISHNALAL SHRIDHARANI

THE man who originally selected the site of Delhi must have either been mad, or he must have realised that he was functioning in the Horse Age. Otherwise he could not have tried to frame the national jewel in an arid plain. It is quite possible that in those days this Yamuna-Gangetic plain might have been greener and lusher.

But the most powerful consideration must have been that of national defence. Delhi was founded before the ship or the aeroplane period of invasion. It was during the horse period of invasions that Delhi was conceived. For the horse period, India had extremely favourable frontiers. A long sea coast impregnable because there were no navies and the tall and long ranges of the Himalayas broken only at the Khyber and the Bolan passes simplified India's defence problem. Whatever invading armies rushed through the Khyber and Bolan passes came out into the open for the first time on the plains north of Delhi. It was around Delhi that the first formidable national resistance could be staged. The national capital was therefore founded at a spot where the national energy to defend its freedom could be mobilized against invading armies.

All around Delhi, therefore, is the dust of history. As I write this essay on Delhi, the plain white sheet of paper in front of me is powdered with the heavy dust of history. One cannot live in Delhi without being poignantly aware of the centuries that have gone by.

GRAVEYARD OF EMPIRES

The battles that settled the fate of India took place around Delhi. There is Kurukshetra, only 97 miles from the present capital, which witnessed the greatest battle in Indian mythology, Mahabharata. Kurukshetra is also called Dharmakshetra, a symbol of man's heart wherein evil battles with good. It was there that Gita was sung to Arjuna by Krishna. And, only 55 miles from Delhi is Panipat. Most of the decisive battles of India recorded in history took place there before the Portuguese, French and the British came to India from the sea. Even the British invaders fought some battles at Panipat. The Moghuls fought there, the Rajputs fought there. Delhi was supposed to be a supply post for these battlefields. Delhi with the Emperor seated there was supposed to be the morale-builder for the armies fighting on those battlefields. The result is that the greatest racial admixture of peoples in the whole of India is to be found around this part.

All around the stately structure of India Gate are ruins. Looking at the Viceregal Lodge and the

(Continued On Page 86)

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BENGAL CHEMICAL

CALCUTTA BOMBAY KANPUR

THE CHHARA IN BENGALI FOLK LITERATURE

By LILA RAY

"Why are you crying? What do you want?
I shall pluck you a flower from the sky,
A flower with a thousand roots!
I'll twine them into a garland for you
And find a princess for you to wed!"

TO QUIETEN a crying child a distracted mother makes desperate promises. "I'll set a trap in the clouds," she says, "to catch the moon for you."

This type of rhyme is intimately related to ancient magic spells. There is ample proof in the older literature of Bengal that both black and white magic rhymes were current in the countryside. A belief is still common that when a thief intends to rob a house he can put the inmates to sleep by casting a spell. An incident of this kind is described in the *Dharma Mangal*. When the infant prince, Lausen, is kidnapped, the townsfolk are thrown into a deep slumber. As the kidnapper recites the spell-binding verses he scatters rat dung.

Elephant trappers, snake-charmers, fishermen and hunters all have similar verses, verses at once descriptive of their calling and associated with the various processes involved. The following is a kind of charm:

"Bind the elephant! Bind the elephant!
The goddess is calling you."
"For what reason, goddess mother,
Are you asking for me?"

And a snake-charmer says:

"Churn, churn the poison
In the water of the seven seas!
The Blue-throated One
Was almost overcome!
Puncturing hell, it flows,
Turning water into blood!
Weak is the poison
For the opium-eater!
Let it go into the mouth
Of the one who made you!"

Weather wisdom and shrewd observations about nature and crops are also safely stored in rhymes of this kind, the traditional lore of an agricultural people.

ASSOCIATED WITH THE CHILD

The *chhara* is the oldest form of composition in Bengali literature and the oldest *chharas* are associated with the child. These differ from folk song in that they are recited, not sung though the mode of their recital is often highly stylised. No instrumental accompaniment is used and the metre is not varied. Characteristic is the ease with which lines can be broken off and added. This makes for the expression of a wide range of moods within a single verse. The accent falls on the first syllable of each metric foot, making a rocking rhythm. It does not have, however, a cradle rhythm, for cradles are not used in Bengal. Babies are put to sleep in the laps of women who rock them on their knees. Sleep is brought by an imaginary aunt to whom the mother promises handsome presents. She is to have a finely woven sari, ripe breadfruit, bananas ripened on the tree, puffed rice and molasses to eat on her way and a pot of curd. A cool reed mat is promised her, a masonry ghat at which to bathe and a mango orchard to provide shade. Four bearers will carry her palanquin and two slave girls massage her feet. The child is promised golden bracelets.

SLEEPING TIME AND BIRD

But when the aunt arrives it is found there is nowhere in the house for her to sit no chair, no stool. She is told to make room for herself on the baby's eyelids. Sleep is often thought of as a bird and the aunt herself sometimes becomes a bird. In one verse a parrot is asked to carry the babe up to a tree top and rock it to sleep among the branches. And when the child at last falls asleep its parents can think of other things:

"The babe is asleep; the neighbourhood hushed.
The Borgis have come to the country
With what can I pay my dues?
The bulbuls have eaten the rice!"

The Borgis were Mahratta raiders who exacted tribute from the people. Here history has left its trace.

While the good aunt puts the child to sleep,

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THIS IS DELHI

(Continued From Page 83)

Secretariat Building, Marshal Foch remarked that these stately buildings would make magnificent ruins in future. On the one side of the India Gate is what is known as Purana Qila. Legend has it that the Pandavas built it at what was then known as Indraprastha. The archaeologists do not support this view. All around are evidence that Delhi has been the graveyard of seven empires. The fort at Lalkot was built by Anangpal in 1052. Prithviraj Chauhan's influence is still to be seen near Qutab Minar. It dates back from 1180. Some people say even Qutab Minar was built by Prithviraj Chauhan. He was the romantic hero of bards who kidnapped Sanyukta on a horse while keeping a dagger between his body and hers until they were legally married. There are two Ashoka pillars indicating that Delhi was the psychological centre if not the physical centre of India from very olden times.

Allah-ud-Din Khilji was amongst the first Muslim builders of Delhi around 1304. He is remembered more for his encounter with Sati Padmini, the Rajput Queen, to save whose honour a whole clan committed a virtual harakiri. She is the Monna Vanna of Indian legend, but with a moralistically upside-down lesson.

Ferozeabad, the abandoned city whose ruins still stare you in the eye near Qutab Minar, was built by Emperor Feroze Shah Tughlak, while Purana Qila was founded by Humayun and completed by Sher Shah. It is a city of skeletons and decaying stones.

CITY OF DEAD

Delhi is the city of dead more than of the living. You might encounter a mound right in the middle of a road on one of Delhi's broad highways. You cannot remove it to save the lives of some contemporary drivers, because it is protected under the PROTECTION OF ANCIENT MONUMENT ACTS. There are graves in many places. There are supposed to be graves everywhere. It can be stated that as much ground is occupied in Delhi by the dead as by the living.

Akbar did not favour Delhi. He concentrated on Fatehpur Sikri. His was as great a folly as of Feroze, because after the city was completed it was discovered that there was no water. His son Jehangir favoured Agra. Shah Jehan, son of Jehangir, built the Taj Mahal. He also built the walled city of Delhi which dates back from 1639. It was during his time that the Red Fort was constructed. It was during his time that Chandni Chowk, the canaled boulevard, became the heart of commercial India. Delhi was sacked by Timoor, by Nadir Shah and Ahmed Shah Durrani. In 1771, Madho Rao Scindia captured Delhi. The so-called Mutiny started in nearby Meerut in 1857 finally gave control of Delhi to the British. The last Moghul Emperor, Bahadur Shah was captured by the British. He died in Rangoon in 1862.

Some of Delhi's crafts still bear the mark of the Moghul Courts. Industries and trades flourished mainly because of the Moghul Courts. That is the reason why jewellers of Delhi are famous all over India; their forefathers spent their lives in pleasing empresses. Silversmiths, embroiders and a colony of eunuchs still remind one of the ancient splendour of the Moghul Court.

A mound right in the middle of a road in Delhi which cannot be removed as it is protected by the Ancient Monument Preservation Act.

After shifting the capital from Calcutta to Delhi, the British Viceroys held their court in the buildings that now comprise the Delhi University. New Delhi was planned in 1911. The event identified in the Indian mind with the greatest pomp and circumstance, the Delhi Durbar to honour George V, took place in 1911. What is known as the Rashtrapati Bhavan is perhaps the second largest palace in the world. In a way we must be thankful to the British who built these palaces, and to the Americans who built the barracks during the Second World War. We have not yet proved to be a building race. The housing shortage in Delhi would have been extremely difficult without these contributions from the Mughal and the British periods.

REVOLUTIONISED STATUS

Formerly Delhi was the city of the rulers who kept the masses at a safe distance. Formerly India's heart throbbed in Bombay, Allahabad and Calcutta. Now it throbs in Delhi. This indicates the changed status of Delhi, the revolutionised status of Delhi. Now the chosen representatives of the people live here. Their hero lives here. That is the reason why Delhi has become the latter day Kashi of the whole of India.

But it is a capital city and not a metropolis. It is not the London of England; it is merely the Washington of U.S.A. The Viceregal Lodge used to

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CHHARA IN BENGALI LITERATURE

(Continued From Page 85)

another, a bad aunt, is always on the watch for an opportunity to annoy the child and make it cry. She goes prying and pinching about. Another figure of terror is the *Ekanore* who lives in the top of palm trees and carries off children who cry. The *Katkate* does the same and there is an old woman who cuts off the ears and noses of naughty children.

The mother, the mother's sister and the mother's brother are the relatives of the child most frequently referred to. Its father is seldom mentioned. Of birds the parrot, the pigeon and the *shalik* are the most common and of animals the jackal. Though a child seldom sees a jackal, its howl as the night falls is eerie and fearful. It is associated with the child's earliest fears. It is always depicted as cunning, tricky, evil. It gets stupid animals like tigers and crocodiles into continual trouble. The jackal's escapades are many and a jackal's wedding is a favourite subject for stories.

MOTHER'S GREAT DELIGHT

The mother expresses her delight in her child in simple rhymes of this kind. The child is often identified with the moon. Here she says:

"Rocking, rocking, came the flood!
Up I caught my golden moon!
To whom does this moon belong?
To her whose luck is good!"

In her eagerness to have her babe to herself she says, "I shall carry my treasure into the forest and live there alone in its midst!" She describes the plight of a childless woman and the blessings of motherhood: "Before my Puntu came," she says, "beggars refused my alms. Puntu has brought me luck. Now beggars accept my alms."

THE GAME RHYMES

Rhymes made up by children themselves are generally associated with games and, more especially, boys' games. They are often a string of meaningless syllables or lines with only a rudimentary meaning like the ha-du-du-du game of tag. At the annual *Charak* festival boys go around in pairs singing:

"We are brothers two
Who sing of Siv for you.
With one or two pice
We'll be off in a trice!"

Here is a game rhyme in the familiar form of question and answer:

"The old woman came out of the house.
A tiger ate her up.
What happened to the tiger?
It ran away into the jungle.
What happened to the jungle?
The cowherds burnt it down.
What happened to the ashes?
The washerman laundered clothes with them.
What happened to the clothes?
The oxen ate them up.
What happened to the oxen?
They swam the river.
What happened to the fish in the river?
Crows gobbled them up.
What happened to the crows?
They sat on the branch of a tree.
What happened to the branch?
It broke....."

THE GIRL & THE BRATAS

Differentiation between the activities of boys and girls takes place very early. Girls are absorbed into a household routine where ceremonies and fasts take the place of games. There is a *brata* for every month in the year. As girl, maiden, wife and mother, a woman has special functions assigned to her. In the *Sejuti brata* she recites:

"In a litter I come and go
And look at myself in a golden glass.
Between my father's house
And the house of my father-in-law
My litter comes and goes,
Eating honey and butter on the way.
Honey I pour on the seedling's head.
May I be a king's wife!
Sugar I pour on the seedling's head,
May I be a king's queen!"

In the *Hari Charan brata* we are given a description of what every girl considers desirable:

"A husband like Ram she shall have,
A brother-in-law like Lakshman,
A mother-in-law like Kaushalyc.
What else does she want? What else?
Sons to fill the meeting hall,
The best of sons-in-law.
Clothes upon the clothes-stand,
Vermilion in the parting of her hair,
Red laquer on her feet, shining pots and pans,
Cows in the cowshed, grain in the bins,
And honour which grows with the years .....
To die in the lap of husband and sons....."

MARRIAGE CEREMONIES

Many verses are associated with marriage and its subsidiary ceremonies. The *adhibas* is described as follows:

"Today is Durga's adhibas, tomorrow is her wedding.
She shall go to her father-in-law's, setting all a-crying.
Her mother cries, her mother cries, on the ground a-lying,
The mother who with milk gave her throat its wetting.
Her father cries, her father cries, sitting in the company,
The father who is giving her a safe-full of money.
Her mashi cries, her mashi cries, in the kitchen sitting,
The mashi who her plate with rice used to fill.
Her pishi cries, her pishi cries, in the cowshed sitting,
The pishi who her bowl with milk used to fill.
Her brother cries, her brother cries, hiding his eyes with his hand,
The brother who is giving her new clothes on a stand.
Her sister cries, her sister cries, clinging to the bed,
The sister who, "You're a husband-eater!" said.

(*Mashi* is mother's sister. *Pishi* is father's sister.)

LOVE ALSO PLAYS ITS PART

Love also plays its part. The following is clearly an attempt at enticement:

"Jadu! What fun! Jadu! What fun!
Show me four white things and I shall go with you."
"A heron is white, clothes are white,
White is the swan. But whiter than all, girl,
— Is the shell bracelet on your arm."

The lover must show her four white, red, black, bitter and cool things, before she finally consents to accompany him. In another verse the lover cries in his passion:

"Where shall I find a pot?
Where shall I find a rope?
Be my river, darling,
Let me drown myself in you!"

THIS IS DELHI

(Continued From Page 86)

be perhaps the pinnacle of pomp and circumstance in the whole world. Now it is democratised. Half of it is given over to the National Museum. Half of the other half is given over to visiting guests; the rest is occupied by a very simple man who perhaps does not feel comfortable amidst so much splendour. One now sees all sorts of people in all sorts of clothes, including dhotis, at receptions at Rashtrapati Bhavan. A part of the older pomp and circumstance has been kept alive deliberately to make India's people proud. But the heart is gone, only the forms survive. Now you see milling crowds eating *pakoras* and drinking *lassi* on priceless Persian rugs in the huge halls of the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated in Delhi. His ashes still lie at Rajghat. This single event has turned Delhi into a new pilgrimage point for the rest of India. The first thing that the visiting celebrities do is to go and lay a wreath on Gandhiji's samadhi. Newspapermen who have to cover these daily events have coined a phrase: "Is so and so, who is visiting Delhi tomorrow, Rajghatting or not?"

THE HUB OF INDIA

In other words, Delhi is the hub of India. The chosen representatives of the people live here. The national hero, who has become the Prime Minister, lives here. The ministers from all the States make periodical pilgrimages to this place. The mighties of industry and finance and politics and the arts have to come to Delhi sooner or later. One can have the whole picture of India without moving from Delhi. Nowadays more people come to Delhi than those who go out from Delhi. The interesting people from all over the country can be encountered in a Delhi Hotel lobby or in the corridors of Parliament. Thus, it can be said that if Delhi is the hub of India, the lobby of the Parliament House is the hub of Delhi.

Delhi is also the hub of Asia. Many Asian statesmen have given to Delhi the informal title of the capital of Asia. Here, at the Hyderabad House, which is turned into a State Guest House, here in such hotels as the Imperial and Ashoka, one would meet statesmen from all over Asia at one time or another.

Since independence heads of States of the world and their Prime Ministers have been frequenting Delhi. Our Prime Minister is a great traveller. The result has been that Delhi has been placed on the travelling itinerary of other statesmen of the world. Barring the President of the United States of America, practically every important ruler of contemporary world has visited Delhi already. The slogan should be: "Stay in Delhi and see the world".

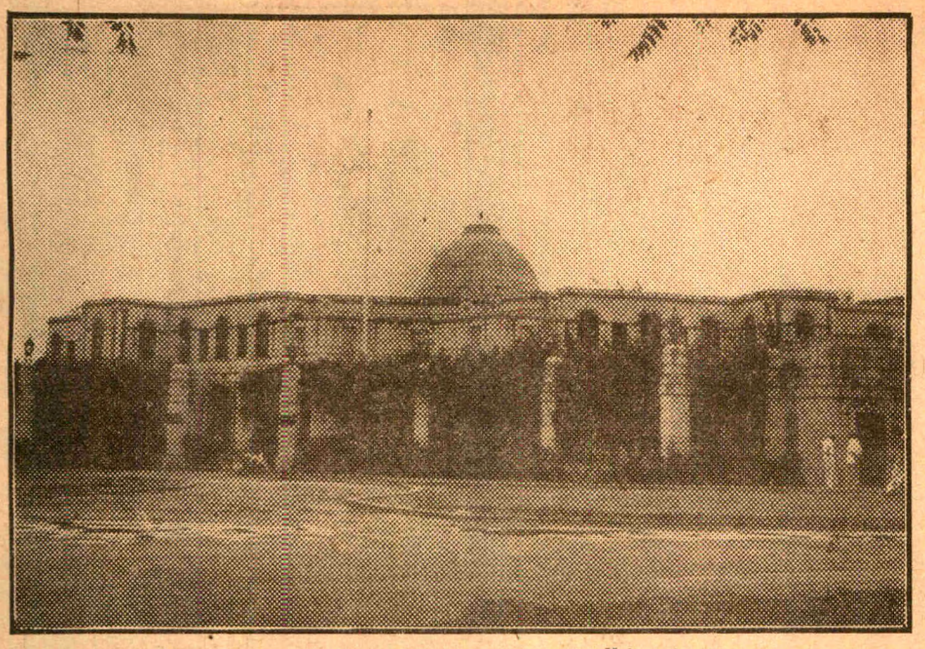
There are around 60 foreign embassies, legations and consulates. Per capita New Delhi has the largest foreign population in the whole of India. These foreigners have enriched the life of the average

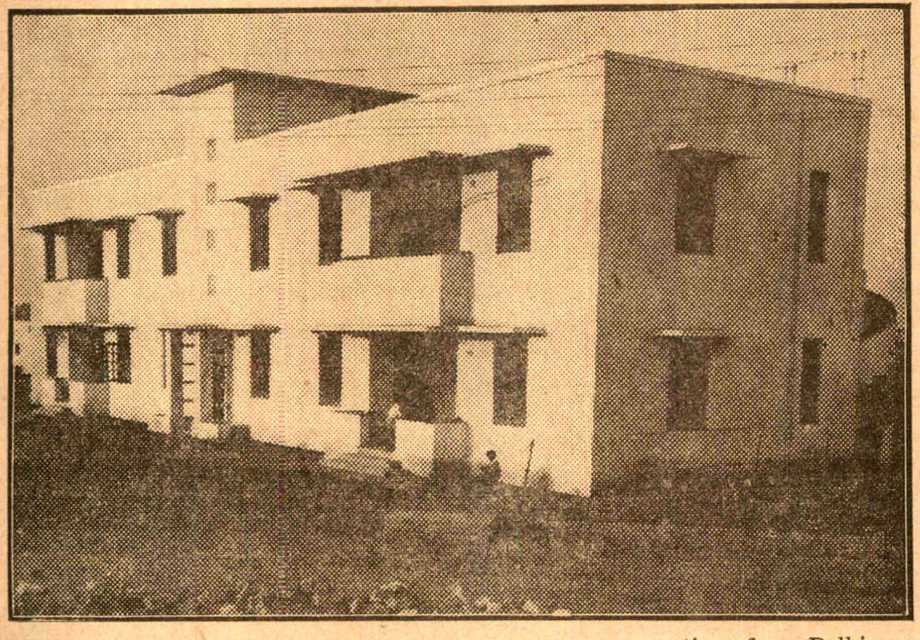
A junk shop around Jama Masjid which carries on brisk business with foreigners.

Delhiwala. They have brought their costumes to India. They have brought their holidays and celebrations. They have brought their languages. They have brought their love of life to a people generally given over to asceticism. What is more, the rediscovery of Indian decorative arts for Indians themselves can be put down to the credit of some of the womenfolk of these foreign embassies. The discovery of the old Indian brass, bronze, lanterns, cotton and silk prints is largely due to these ladies. They have invaded the junk shops around the Jama Masjid and feretted out metal articles of exquisite beauty which were being sold as junk by their weight and turned them into priceless examples of interior decoration. The junk shops around Jama Masjid now do a roaring business. Some of the poorly posted restaurants located in unclean neighbourhoods have become famous because foreigners liked the food there and they began to frequent them. We Delhiwalas have not yet realised what a debt we owe to our foreign guests by way of rediscovering our artistic heritage. In any painting exhibition, it is the foreigner who buys more Indian paintings than any rich Indian. At any recital of Indian music or dance, it is the foreigner in Delhi who has turned out to be a greater patron. This realisation should give us a sense of admiration for our foreign guests, and a sense of shame for our own cupidity.

LOBBYING PLACE

Delhi is India's lobbying place par excellence. Lobbyists representing all walks of life gravitate to Delhi. The gravy is here; the contracts are here;





Chiefs of Indian States built palaces in New Delhi which have now been taken over by the Government. The picture above shows the Baroda House near Delhi Gate which has become the H.Q. of Northern Railway. The picture below shows an M.P. flat where the Maharaja of Baroda who has become an M.P. lives, Baroda House being no longer available for him.

the licences are here; the spoils are here; appointments of governors and ambassadors are here. It is natural, therefore, for promoters to pitch their tents in Delhi from time to time. Largely these promoters represent labour interests or the capital interests. There is no stigma attached to a lobbyist in Delhi as there is in Washington; here the M.P.s and Ministers mix with him openly. There is no harm in it because after all democracy is a rule by pressure groups.

Delhi is now the headquarters of most of the political parties in the country. Time was when Allahabad was the headquarters of the Congress Party: now it is Delhi. The Praja Socialist Party have opened their headquarters on the Ferozshah Road. The Communists have created a Red Square in what is known as the Windsor Circle, squaring a circle. The intra-party life of the country is also directed from Delhi. The Federation of the Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry has a huge building on the Ferozeshah Road and it is erecting a huger building still near the Sapru House. Delhi is its headquarters. Some big private firms, such as Tatas and Birlas have permanent offices in Delhi. One never knows when one's representatives will have to contact the officials of the Government of India. Contacts bring contracts. Moreover, the art of making contacts consists of the befriending process spread over a long period of time and not just an appointment when there is a specific object.

By the same token, Delhi is the venue of the prestige editions of all the important papers in the country. *Hindustan Times* is the most firmly entrenched paper in this area, and it can be described as the only "native" of the soil; I am talking about English dailies. *Statesman* has an edition here; so has Bombay's *Times of India* and Madras's *Indian Express* and Calcutta's *Hindusthan Standard*. Fortunately, *Patrika* chose Allahabad as the venue of its second edition and thus spared itself the cut-throat competition of Delhi. It is largely New Delhi that buys English dailies, and New Delhi is not a very large place. Papers publishing second editions from Delhi are doing so even when it means financial sacrifice on their part. Yet the publishers and editors think their adventure is worth while because Delhi gives them prestige. Those who make public opinion read Delhi newspapers, because they are the first to reach to their breakfast tables. Outside editions come in the evening and by that time the bigwigs have exhausted their newspaper reading time. A newspaper should have many readers in order to maintain itself. At the same time it should have a few opinion-making readers in order to wield influence at the headquarters of the Government of India.

There are some ready-made panels in Delhi for committees of all the ministries, for all the arts and

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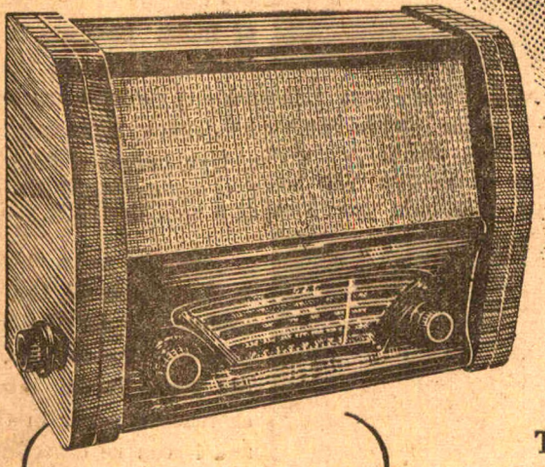

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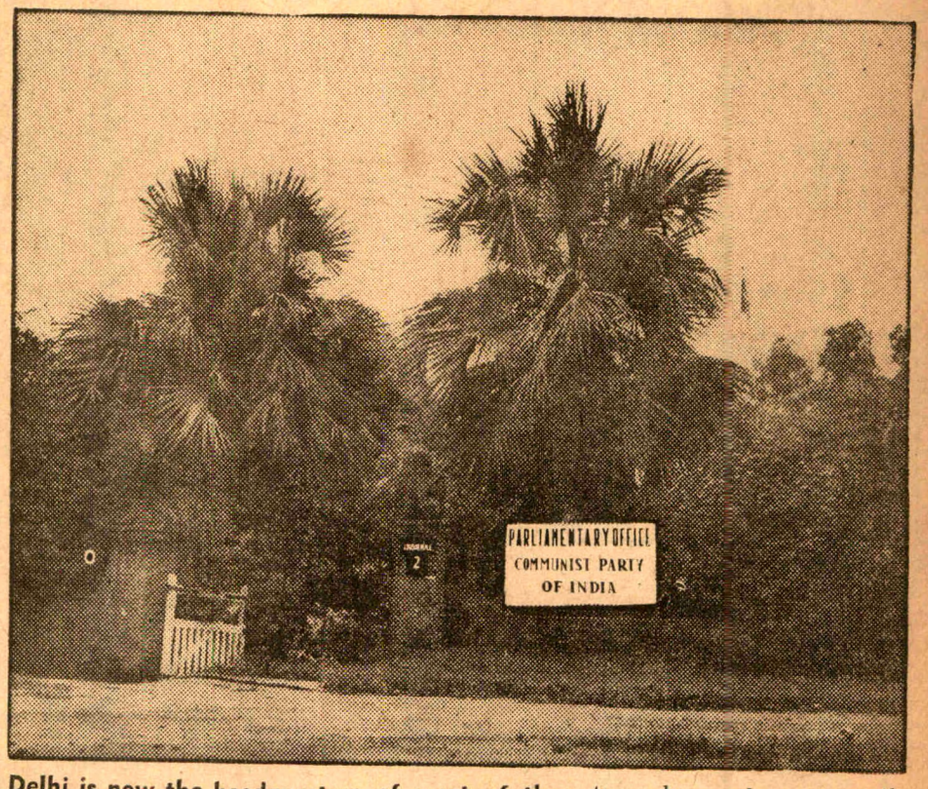
for practically everything. No matter what the committee, you will find on it a member from the Sri Ram group, from the Birla Group, from the Jamia Millia group, from the Delhi School of Economics group. There are persons who are on no less than 40 committees, and one wonders how they are able to do justice to even four.

There are four Delhis. There is the Old Delhi with its old-Delhi families still governed by the Moghul culture even when the families are Hindu. Their finances are steadily sapped and they are no more the leaders of the community. Still they continue to patronise Indian arts and crafts to the best of their ability, and it is a treat to meet them because of their courtesy. It is in the Old Delhi that you still find the Indian allure of the winding streets and sumptuous shops in dark corners.

The second Delhi is the city of bureaucrats. It is permanent, it is to be seen at the Gymkhana Club. Ministers come and go, but some of the secretaries continue. To their force should be added the extremely wealthy group of Sikh contractors. They own half of New Delhi and a sizeable part of the Old. They are very generous in entertainment. Then there are the politicians and the Members of Parliament. This whole group is composed of the people on the make. Their conversation is generally shop talk. It generally revolves around transfers and promotions and appointments and contracts.



Delhi is now the headquarters of most of the political parties in the country. The picture shows the C.P.I.'s Parliamentary Office where-from intra-party life of the country is directed.

Thirdly, Delhi is the happy hunting ground of the vultures from far and wide. Peoples and industries on the make flourishing in faraway Bombay, Calcutta and Madras send their representatives on regular pilgrimages to Delhi. People in search of high government posts come here. That is the reason why New Delhi has the touch of a vast inn. There is the Imperial Hotel, still most popular of the Hotels. There is the new Ashoka Hotel, perhaps the largest in Asia. There are several other hotels in a very small town. Apart from these are the Birla House and the Sri Ram House, which continuously provide accommodation to the representatives of the business community that visit India.

Fourthly it is the city of refugees. They have done a lot to defeat New Delhi's established reputation as the cleanest and the best planned city in India. Their stalls, dirty and dingy and irregular, still serve as reminders of the nation's failures. But they have done something good also. They have brought to Delhi the northerner's zest for life, his hankering for good food and good clothes. Some of Delhi's most famous restaurants are run by the refugees who have come from the North-West Frontier and from the Punjab.

THE OLD & THE NEW

Old Delhi is typical of Indiar cities; it is an anthill. New Delhi is something new. Its architecture has taken over the Indian overtones in the dome motif, but it still looks like a foreign city. It is a glorified village. There is no secrecy in New Delhi. The gossip of one house or one ministry reaches the entire town in no time. There are enough plains around Delhi to provide one with solitude, but Delhi houses do not provide privacy because of the frequent visitors. You have enough solitude to contemplate your navel in Delhi, but not privacy enough to wash it. Delhi cannot provide the anonymity that New York or Paris can. And the guest problem is a continuous worry of the Delhiwala.

Those who have not been to Washington think that New Delhi looks like Washington, because it has a series of circles to manage its traffic. To some extent it does look like Washington. It is perhaps the cleanest and the best planned city in the country in spite of what the partition has done to it. It is the floweringest capital of the world. More Indians per capita take interest in gardening and flowers in Delhi than anywhere else in the country. Delhi's flowers come out in the winter and they are a sight for the eye. The splendid and sprawling gardens of Rashtrapati Bhavan provide perhaps the central inspira-

(Continued On Page 94)

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SOUTH EASTERN RAILWAY

art and Life

By ASIT KUMAR HALDAR

THE ARTIST, according to *Shilpa-Shastra,* should have all the elements of goodness (*Shilabana*) and contentment (*Prasada-gunasampanna*). The Biblical 'Original Sin' or psychological sex-complex has hardly any place in creation of beauty through Art. In all human creative efforts, rhythmic balance and equilibrium of mind is essential. Moreover, art is above all realistic phases of biology or original instinct and should therefore be conceded or suppressed to infuse idealism required for artistic creation of a man. Kalidas in his *Shakuntala* illustrated this fact and showed how love and lust of a newly wedded couple (Shakuntala and Dushyanta) who indefinitely separated from each other, can sometimes invoke an urge for painting a portrait from memory. An ideal creative mind is purified through the development of imaginative faculties on a higher level and not by any definite plan to gain material success.

According to Hindu Philosophy, man's desire can be classified in three *gunas* (aspects) depending, of course, on the character of the individual and his way of living. Such *gunas* viz., *Satva, Raja* and *Tama* can be attributed and their expressions ascertained in all creative processes and ideologies. In the present-day type of Western industrialised pattern of societies, we find that *Raja* and *Tama gunas* (aspects) have predominant influence on all stages of artistic creation. It has indeed some unifying element and also does go deep into the depth of the community. Self-realisation through artistic creation required for the play of *satva-guna* is almost totally lacking in the modern art of Europe. Art has now become an object for drawing-room embellishment and consequently a matter of casual scrutiny. It is quite in keeping with the surroundings, and has no dynamic emotional appeal. A good tapestry and a painting have no distinctive value of their own. Present-day scientific and heterodoxical approach to art is responsible for all this. Whereas in ancient times in Europe, up to the thirteenth century, non-secular Gothic and Byzantine Christian art flourished and contemplation and imagination were cultivated throughout.

ART AND EMOTION

If we study the History of European art, we can see that with the advent of science the trend for producing painting through imagination disappeared after the end of the Byzantine School and subsequently Italian Renaissance developed some scientific methods to catch natural objects in a more realistic manner on the canvas. Only in the last century, with the invention of photography all formulas of imaginative conceptions in art gradually vanished. Art, therefore, was relegated to the back-bench of life and only the learned psychologist-critics can discover some inner meaning in the childish scribbling of the sur-realistic type of work, which is devoid of all proportions and sense of art formulas. It is obvious that art should always have an emotional appeal. But alas! a pattern without any emotional appeal has become a fashion of the day. On the other hand, imagination and action are co-related in art. These are also to be well disciplined and trained. Thoughtless wickedness with which so-called modern art of Europe is invading the world will have ill-effect on life and morals. On the question of morals, art like soul should be progressive and embody *satva-guna.* Art as a work, therefore, has

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THIS IS DELHI

(Continued From Page 91)

tion. Delhi is like a green carpet spread in the desert. The lush lawns and looming trees make Delhi look like an oasis in a Sahara. Over the last 35 years they have changed Delhi's climate. The rainfall has increased. Humidity has also increased, undermining Delhi's old reputation of being a dry blast furnace during the summer. It is assailed every summer by the invading loo from the Rajasthan desert. The Rajasthan desert is spreading at the rate of half a mile a year, and it is said that unless it is checked, it will turn Delhi into a desert in 50 years.

Delhi has good brushes around it. Game abounds in them. You can get a panther and even a tiger within 15 or 20 miles of Delhi. There are herds of deer and bucks. Not only the surroundings of Delhi but the city itself is full of all sorts of birds.

New Delhi is composed of just one group — bureaucrats, diplomats, M.P.s, journalists, with a sprinkling of artists and contractors. This group moves from party to party in an endless chain. You meet the same people everywhere. It is not like Calcutta, or Bombay, where there are several circles. It is hard to get into Delhi's social whirl but once you are fortunate enough to get into it you are taken from party to party by self-propulsion. Once you get it, it is hard to get out. It is an expensive business because you have to return the courtesy. One of the reasons why there is only one group in Delhi is that being a small city there are not enough interesting people in it.

CITY OF DISTANCES

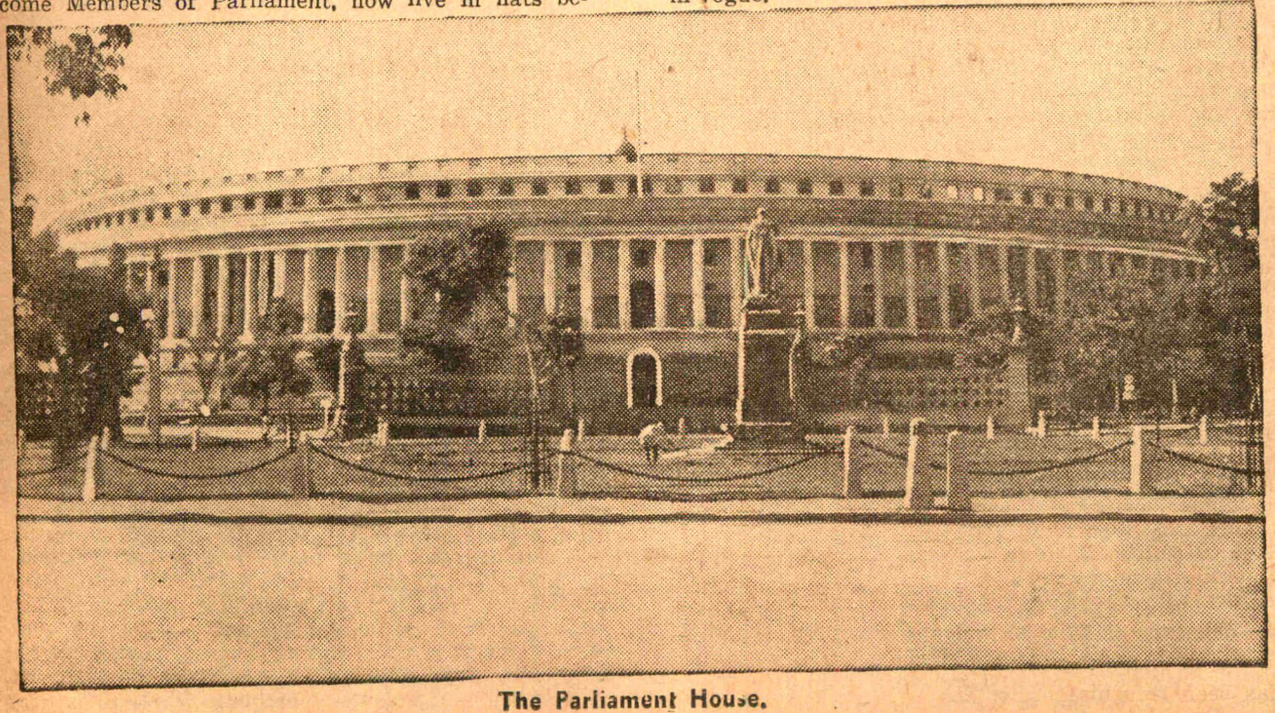
New Delhi is a city of distances. It was built for the Maharajas who could build palaces, for the car-owning secretaries and for the Viceroy who owned a fleet of cars. Squat one-storey spacious bungalows surrounded by more spacious gardens were the motif of New Delhi. The socialist pattern of society, nonetheless, has arrived in this city. The buildings are now growing upwards, the sizes of gardens are shrinking and small flats are replacing spacious bungalows. Some of the ex-Maharajas, who have become Members of Parliament, now live in flats because their palaces, which still stand in Delhi, have been taken over by the Government.

Delhi deals in culture on a wholesale basis. It does not appreciate an individual artist; it organises mammoth artists' missions to go abroad. It does not applaud a single masterpiece of painting. It buys paintings in the bulk to be hung in government buildings in India and in embassies abroad. It does not give out a contract for a single panel; it gives out contracts in bulks that make individual artists as rich as contractors. The three art akadamies are here. The Education Ministry is here. They have convinced the artists of India that they should have something more than mere talent—push, contacts, relationships, the nature of promoters rather than of artists.

If there is any place in the country which epitomises the tragedy of the Indian youth in one place, it is the Union Public Service Commission at Bahawalpur House. It does a fine job, impartial job, and it has valiantly resisted the encroachments of government officials and of politicians. But, for one job advertised at least 2,000 apply, out of which hardly a hundred are selected for interviews. From this 100 that appear for interviews, hardly ten are selected. If this does not show the tragedy of the Indian youth, what else would? The Government seems to be the largest industry in the country, the largest employer. There are very few other avenues of expression for India's youth.

My advice to bright-eyed boys and girls from all over the country is, "Don't come to Delhi driven by mere talent". They must come armed with introduction letters; or they must be forwarded by ministers' or secretaries'. sons-in-law back in their own home town. Ours is a scarcity economy. Jobs are few and people too many. Moreover, nobody really cares whether a job is done or not so long as a job has been created for a candidate. Talent is at a discount. Relationships and connections are at high premium unless the gateway to success is the Union Public Service Commission. If the young people of India want to avoid heart-breaks, they had better keep away from Delhi unless they have a pull.

There is one unsolved mystery about Delhi. I have still to meet a historian who could tell me what the word "Delhi" means, and how and when it came in vogue.



The Parliament House.

ART AND LIFE

(Continued From Page 93)

a peculiar charm of expressing the inexpressible in nature. Just as a mother conceives a child, so is an artist inspired in his work and produces out of his imagination a unique theme. In such creations he does not require any living model or a sitter. In this respect, unfortunately, European art remained very poor after the Byzantine Christian art.

PAINTER'S CHARACTER

According to a *sloka* in the *Shilpa-Shastra*, an artist should sit comfortably and quietly and contemplate, with undivided attention, the theme to be painted by him. Similarly, in *Shrimahavajrabhairava-Tantra* it is said:

"The painter must be a good man, no sluggard, not given to anger, holy, learned, self-controlled, devout and charitable, free from avarice—such should be the character....He should draw his design in secrecy....He may begin to paint if beside him a *sadhaka* (a saint) be present, but not if a man of the world be looking on."

Such was actually the spirit of the artists of India including Ajanta and also in the Moghul period. It is known that sixtyfour *kalas* (arts) were advocated to educate a person. The value of art in life can thus be judged in India.

Just as we paint on the canvas the portrait of a man we love so do we create in our mind's eye the spiritual image of God whom we love. Christ is the god-head of the Christians, but according to us, the thirty-three million gods and goddesses are the symbolical images of the unlimited and unknowable spirit of the cosmos. Just as the heavenly stars cannot be counted on the tips of the fingers, so can we not measure the omnipotent and unlimited Spirit pervading the Universe. The unaccountable infinity has to be symbolised in thirty-three million forms for the comprehension of limited minds. These imaginative figures create emotions in all Hindu minds. The Christian Byzantine art in Europe was also the outcome of the same religious impulse. Such art always unified men in one thought and noble action. The sculpture and painting of the medieval period conveyed non-secular religious emotions of the nation which we now unwittingly praise without knowing the background on which it stood.

LIFE-CHANGING PICTURES

What should a picture be? It should have some human emotion expressed in colours and lines. As religious emotion is not outside the sphere of human activities, how could that be discarded in art? Imagination indeed plays a good part in both artistic and religious conceptions. The Buddha, while preaching, always vividly illustrated his thoughts and sentiments with *Jataka* stories. In this manner, his words could easily enter the core of the heart of the people. These stories were actually pictures Buddha drew out of his mind's eyes to vivify the essence of his teaching. Moreover, an observer of a picture illustrating a saintly act of a person might sometimes change his cruel nature. Dr. Coomaraswamy illustrated it by quoting a story from *Katha-Kosa* in which the episode related to a prince named Amaradutta of a most cruel nature, who by falling in love with the beautiful statue of Ratnamanjari, the daughter of King Mittrasena of Ujjayini, changed his nature altogether In modern education, it has been recognised fully and so the children's living rooms are now being decorated with paintings. The soothing colour-effects of the walls of a study-room may be an enduring tonic for a hardworking scholar. Other such psychological experiments have been made already in this direction

There is another type of picture which can be called 'satirical.' The art of caricature is very effective in removing both social and political evils. Cartoons of course have a timely bearing and are not lasting like a painting. The poster as an art of advertisement is a modern invention of Europe with the development of their commerce and industries. In India also it will go a long way to prove a success.

HOUSE DECORATION

Art confers supreme good on life, and that is why it is called (in *Shastras*) *'shreya'* i.e., metaphysical and spiritual good. All types of other work, which are meant for mundane good, are called *'preya.'* God dwells in all artistic surroundings and cleanliness. Art and cleanliness cannot be separated and they are far from expensive. Just as the setting up of a house with moderate means can be made aesthetically sober and clean, similarly a working knowledge of some handicrafts and decorative design can also add beauty to a household. House decoration is a great art and cannot be called an expensive hobby. Such examples are not lacking in India. One can see how a home which could afford hardly one meal a day in a Santhal colony is generally artistically decorated with coloured mud and kept scrupulously clean. As regards art of living they can vie with that of the princely palaces of France. Life of the Santhals is full of joy as they have not banished art and its environment from their home. Any spot on earth we admire is bound to be clean and refreshing. How clean the ocean looks When we go near it we simply get enchanted and tempted to draw it on the canvas. The waves of the ocean, and the flying ducks or swans when harmonised with the fleeting clouds create a dynamic rhythmic formation.

POETRY & PAINTING

What is a rhythm or meter in a poetry? It is also the same spontaneous formation of words in rhythm. While we talk we generally talk loosely and if they are set up in a clear-cut form we can then compose a poem. It is indeed a great discipline to paint a picture with the knowledge of proper rhythm, balance and proportion and also to write a poetry in an approved rhyme and meter. Such technical discipline comes of itself in all noble work of art. The emotional effect produced through such rhythmic serenity is the real goal in art. An artist therefore can ill-afford to discard emotional effect and rhythm for the sake of brandishing his brush like a swordsman. Life of an artist must remain well disciplined as his meter, rhythm, rhyme and proportion are the factors which cannot be brushed aside. "A noble poet", *Dhannyaloka* mentions, "in all matters

of *rasa*—emotional appeal, should be attended to with care, so that there may not be any mistake, because a verse or an essay which lacks creative emotion will not enhance the prestige of him." Same is applicable to an artist's work also. The emotional appeal is required in all the three principal muses viz. Music, Dancing and Painting.

AESTHETICS & MORALS

Most of us in India have remained hopelessly ignorant regarding the emotional appeal that exists in the beauty of nature and art. Love for art in our daily life has vanished with the advent of the Victorian era. We do not see any more use of artistic *pandan, itardan,* brass lamps and utensils of artistic merits used by our ancestors. They have now become museum pieces. The influence of art on the other hand had always been conducive to good morals. Indiscipline in thought and action creates disorderliness and vagueness and an artist is apt to produce an art of degenerated type in such an atmosphere. Aesthetics and morals have a common bearing. If you take away a man from the slum quarters and put him into artistic surroundings, you will find he is bound to change his dirty habits. An experiment has already been made in India by introducing audio-visual education, improved dormitories, pink-coloured walls in jails and they brought about a great change among the criminals. Huen-Tsang in olden days described artistic environment of the buildings of the Nalanda University. By that he indirectly implied the discipline created thereby in the University and added that 'no case of deliberate rebellion against the rulers had been known in the seven hundred years since the foundation of the University.'

ART & DAILY LIFE

Now from this we can conclude that an artistic surrounding is bound to mitigate the evil in a man. The art which aims at creating beauty is a necessity of daily life. A man is not complete without it. Civilization is an achievement of goodwill, an evolution from non-artistic atmosphere to an artistic environment. No industrial enterprise can do away with art. You will be going unwittingly to those grocers to buy your daily needs, who have kept things in an artistic order and clean. A clever salesman will make his shop window a work of art to attract customers. A motor car manufacturer will have a novel form of bodies of his cars and will engage an artist to design them. The door-knobs of a house must be in keeping with the architecture. God-made nature is beautiful, but man-made beauty has to be achieved through perfection of harmony. Nature will always inspire a man with her beauty to recreate for himself with wisdom and power of perception. A national school of fine art can help to develop the industrial products of the country as its inspiration and influence will prove beneficial to the manufacturers and attractive to the people.

HAVELL'S ADVICE

As a practical solution of the problem to disseminate art in life thereby making our modern civilization glorious, I may be allowed to quote E. B. Havell's *"Artistic and Industrial Revival of India"* published in 1912 which even today needs study. The summary of his practical proposals for the revival of Indian arts is given below:—

I. Let every Indian, who builds a house or palace, do honour to Indian art by employing Indian master-builders who have the knowledge of Indian architectural traditions contained in the Shilpa-Shastras. Let him in consultation with these master-builders, adapt these traditions to present-day habits and requirements as they have always been adapted in former times; bearing in mind that the fundamental principle of good art is that perfect fitness makes perfect beauty. Let good ornament be used, as far as means will allow, only to add to the beauty of suitable design and good construction; never for the purpose of concealing ugliness, or defects, nor for the sake of vulgar display. Good design and construction make all work artistic, even if no ornament be added.

II. Let all furniture and decoration made for Indian houses, even chairs and similar furniture of European origin, be made distinctively Indian in design, not merely imitative of European forms; and let Indian dress be worn by Indians in Indian houses. So will you and your craftsmen develop your creative powers of thought.

III. To promote national reverence for beauty in nature and in art, let it be considered a public duty to make the surroundings of schools and public buildings beautiful with flowers and trees and water.

IV. Let days be apart, as in Japan, for the national enjoyment and worship of beauty—days to celebrate the flowering of the lotus, or asoka tree and for visiting places conspicuous for natural beauty.

V. Let religious festivals and political meetings be marked as much by the planting of fruit and flowering trees for the public benefits as by prayers and vows and speech making. If for every speech now made a tree were planted and made it grow how much happier would India become! Will not the industrial section of the National Congress inaugurate an Arbor-day for all India, on the basis of one, two or three trees planted and made to grow, for every political speech delivered—the ratio to be determined by the length of the speeches?

VI. Let the great events of national history, and the moral teaching of the national epics, be impressed strongly on the minds of your children by concrete images painted on the walls of school and municipal buildings, instead of only by word impressions derived from books and oral teaching. But such pictures must always be painted by Indian artists, with Indian colours and in the Indian way of artistic expression.

VII. Let the rich men of India show an intelligent interest in art, not by collecting European pictures, but by taking care of the masterpieces of Indian art, and by reviving the old 'chitrashalas', in which Indian subjects are painted on the walls by Indian artists in an Indian way.

The best way to honour Indian architects, sculptors, and painters is by giving them honourable employment; so it is very necessary to find out and bring to public notice all the traditional master-builders and sculptors who are now practising the rules of their art in the traditional Indian way, and all descendants of the painters who formerly held honoured positions at Indian Courts.

By SOOKAMAL KANTI GHOSE

AFTER my return from Japan I often told my friends if any of them got a chance to go abroad to only one place he should unhesitatingly choose Japan and no other country. This is a big statement no doubt and in the course of this article I would like to substantiate it.

When in the early part of this century Japan challenged the might of the giant Russia and won a resounding victory, its repercussion was felt throughout Asia. Truly it ushered in a new era. Japan demonstrated, provided the national will be not lacking, that it is not difficult to quickly master Western technology and beat the West in her own game. Japan has loomed large in the world stage ever since.

Rabindranath Tagore by his visits to Japan and writing brought India and Japan closer. Still India being in bondage looked to the West for inspiration.

The march of time has seen the rise and fall of Hitler. Hitler, no doubt, fell, but he also brought down crashing with him the old world as we knew it. Japan, Hitler's ally in the war, suffered a shattering blow. But she set about in right earnest to repair the ravages of misfortune brought on by the defeat in the war. The story of Japan's wonderful recovery gripped us We all want our country to make quick progress, but the impediments we see all round us sometimes depress us. I had been longing to see at first hand how war-torn Japan was surmounting her difficulties, which could be a lesson for us.

So when the opportunity came for me to visit Japan I seized it with alacrity. But the great hurdle that presented itself before me was that it was December—when the temperature over there in Japan might often rule below zero. Nothing daunted I made the preparation for immediate departure.

It was on December 8, 1956, that I flew on a P.A.A. plane—since A.I.I. had no schedule that evening, with the blessings and generous good wishes of superiors and friends who had assembled at the Dum Dum Airport to see me off.

SPARKLING HONGKONG

On the first lap of my journey came the very famous free port of Hongkong. Who would not stop at the charming place like that! More so, when I knew that I would meet my friend Mr. Norman Soong. My Sindhi friend, Mr. Mangalamdas guided me to a hotel but never allowed me to go back there except to sleep for the three days I was there. He said when he came to Hongkong 25 years ago he was only a shop assistant, now he owns not only two very well appointed shops, but also runs a big business of export and import. I would take perhaps the whole of my life to forget his affection and hospitality. Yes, I heard of shopkeepers and Sindhis—but saw for the first time, how smart and efficient they are in their line. They perhaps are foremost amongst Indians who have kept the flag of India flying in the four corners of the globe.

My Sindhi friend made me see a little bit of the sparkling island in the day as well at night. It is mainly Chinese, but very much an international settlement. The Chinatown with their variegated colour of paper lanterns and signs is nothing but enchanting and colourful. The famous hill which once would only house Europeans is now resided by local people. A perfect modern town with the soap box buildings, from the air it looked almost like pins on the porcupine's back. This is a free port—that means no export or import duty—which makes the place a veritable Mecca for shopping. In France you are sure to get the best of perfumes or chiffon, in England you get the best of tweeds, the best of cameras you have in Germany and so on and so forth; but in Hongkong you not only get all these but at rock-bottom prices. Naturally I was tempted to buy a few things excluding Japanese products — since I was going there. But my friend insisted that I should also buy Japanese products at Hongkong as these were cheaper there and also goods of special quality only made for exports. I saw the points and verified this ultimately on reaching Japan.

I wonder, if one particular place could afford to run itself and prosper without the adventitious aid of export or import duties, then why could not the whole world do the same. I was told that the rate of income-tax also was far below the rate prevailing elsewhere. In fact, I got hold of an important banker and asked him to explain the economics of that colony and tell me how that differed from that of the other places. He could only say that perhaps due to no expenditure on defence they could manage the

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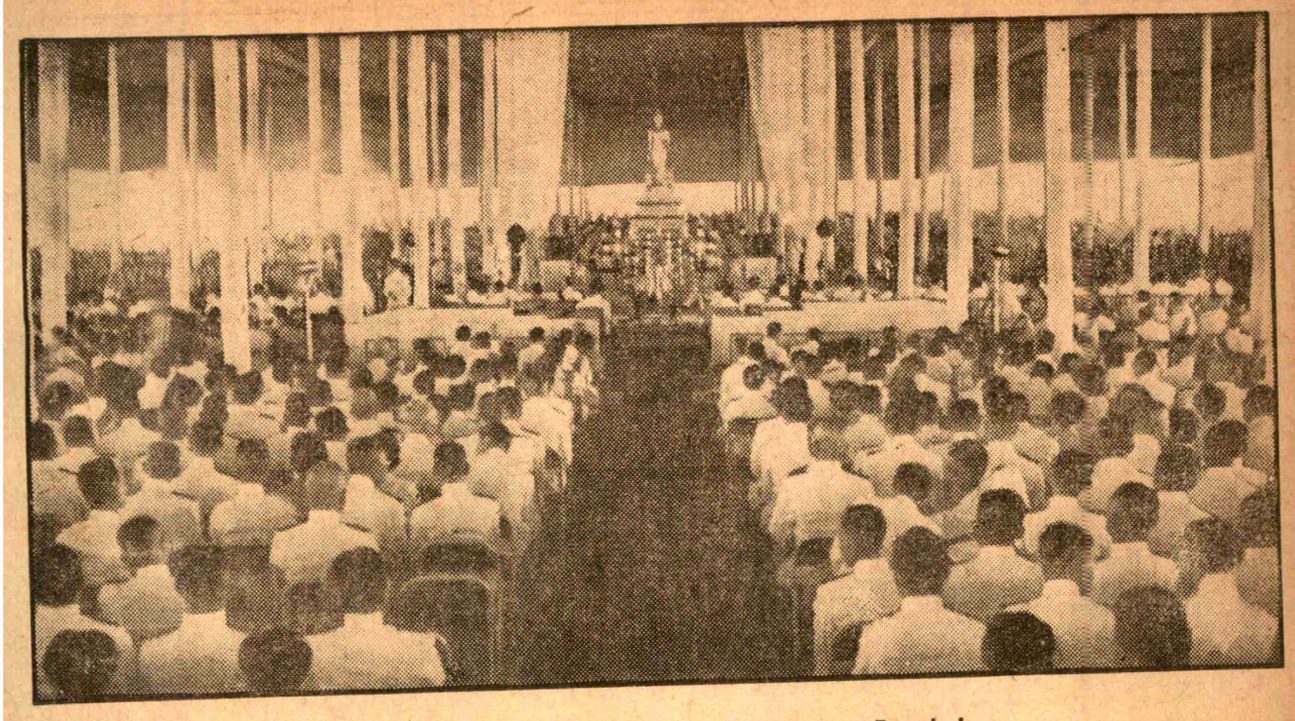

A view of Buddha Jayanti Celebrations in Bangkok.

BUDDHA JAYANTI CELEBRATIONS IN THAILAND

By Sri D. VALISINHA

General Secretary, Maha Bodhi Society of India

WITH a land area of 198,247 square miles and a population of over 20,000,000 of which 98 per cent are Buddhists, Thailand is the most important Theravada Buddhist country. Buddhism is the State Religion there just as Christianity is the State Religion in England, and every Thai King has to be a Buddhist in order to be able to ascend the throne. The Buddhist Order (Bhikkhu Sangha) in Thailand is controlled by a Sangharaja, who maintains strict discipline among them unlike in Ceylon and other countries where there is no such supreme head. I was, therefore, naturally anxious and eager to visit this land of living Buddhism and the opportunity came my way last May when the Maha Bodhi Society of India selected me as one of its delegates to attend the celebration of the anniversary of the 2500th year of the Buddhist Era. My fellow delegate was Sri J. M. Majumdar, Treasurer of the Society, and as we were made State guests, we had all the facilities afforded to such persons. We visited many places of interest and met men and women of all walks of life.

Buddha Jayanti celebrations commenced on the 12th May and closed on the 18th. As I had also an invitation from Cambodia to attend the celebrations there, the dates of which, unluckily for me, synchronised with those in Thailand, I had to leave Bangkok on the 17th, thus missing the ceremonies held on the last two days.

The celebrations in Thailand were on a truly magnificent scale and the entire nation participated in the events of the six crowded days. As the whole of this period was declared a public holiday throughout the Kingdom, both the officials and the public were able to take part in the festivities.

MAGNIFICENT SHOW

The main celebrations naturally took place in Bangkok, the capital city, where in the extensive park in front of the famous Emerald Buddha Temple, a huge pandal had been erected. Built in typical Thai style of architecture, it appeared from outside more like a permanent building than a temporary structure. Inside decorations were in white, gold and green which were done with admirable simplicity and real artistic taste. In the centre of the structure stood a gold-coloured standing statue of Lord Buddha which dominated the entire scene. On three sides of the statue were arranged in the form of galleries seats for 2500 Bhikkhus and the vast lay audience sat in front in rows of chairs—the Ministers, Diplomatic Corps and representatives of different countries occupying separate blocks of seats in front. There was an audience of about 10,000 and the ceremonies were some of the most impressive and heart-lifting that it had been my good fortune to witness.

The programme consisted of the taking of the five precepts, Buddha Vandana (worship), reading of messages received from heads of States and Buddhist organisations, short speeches by chief delegates and the chanting of Suttas by the Bhikkhus. His Excellency Field Marshal P. Pibul Songgram, Prime Minister of Thailand, himself led the worship and other items of the programme. The absence of His Majesty the King, due to indisposition, was keenly felt by the audience. His Royal Highness Prince Dhani Nivat, who represented his country at

the Jayanti celebrations in New Delhi, represented the King.

One of the most impressive items in the programmes was the recitation of Suttas by the Bhikkhus. Imagine 2500 of them reciting in unison the Mangala Sutta. It was like the sound of the breaking of waves of the ocean against the shore—first slow, then rising and smashing with full force and then decreasing gradually to be followed again by another break. One could not but be inspired by the recitation. It was somewhat different from what we are accustomed to hear in Ceylon where it is no doubt more musical but monotonous as the recitation is continuous without a break. The admirable orderliness of the audience, the perfectness of the arrangements and the solemn devotion displayed by the gathering left in me an abiding memory. All the Ministers and officials wore their uniforms but this did not mar the religious atmosphere of the celebration, although we from India, who attend such gatherings in civil dress, felt that it would have been more in keeping with the occasion if they had donned the unofficial dress; but then it was a State function and in State functions court dress is compulsory in every country.

A feature which should be an object lesson to us in India was the manner in which the 2500 monks participating in the celebrations were fed. If such a thing were done in India, what a tremendous commotion it would have caused! As soon as the time for meals came, we saw orderly lines of scouts coming from an adjacent pandal with trays full of food for the monks. These trays were placed in front of each monk with great respect. None of the monks appeared so much as to turn towards those who were bringing in the food. They sat immobile and supremely indifferent to the expected repast. Each monk had been provided with a jug full of water, a glass and a spittoon beforehand, so that he could wash his hands and mouth, if wanted, without the necessity of the scouts first coming to perform this service. The scouts served the food in absolute silence and the monks accepted and ate without uttering a word or making a sound. There was no second help offered or asked, as probably the food in the tray was more than ample. After the Bhikkhus had taken the food, the scouts removed the trays and handed over to them bags containing presents in the same orderly fashion. The chief delegates were invited to join in serving the food, so my friend, Sri Majumdar and myself took a hand in the meritorious deed. While all this was going on, the lay audience sat motionless—only a few conversing in subdued tones. What exemplary discipline! Is it, therefore, surprising that even revolutions in this land of Buddhism are generally non-violent and peaceful?

PROCESSION OF BARGES

Of the other items of celebration in Bangkok, I may mention two. The first is the procession of the King's barges on the broad Chao Phya river. It was a most picturesque sight which is perhaps unique in Thailand. These barges, which number about 30, belong to the King and are beautifully decorated with figures of animals, laquer and gold work. The biggest and the most elaborate one in which the King used to travel is a thing of beauty. The two ends of the boat which curve upwards are worked into the shape of *garudas*, the national symbol of Thailand. These barges are rowed by retainers in red uniforms with golden oars and the rowing is most rhythmical and graceful to watch. As the bright rays of the sun fell on the gold and red of the boats, red uniforms of the oarsmen and the gold coloured blades of the oars, the scene was very colourful and fascinating.

The other was the procession of floats on the streets of Bangkok. It was only second in impressiveness to the procession of barges. There were about forty scenes depicting the main incidents of Lord Buddha's life such as His renunciation, meditation under the Bodhi Tree, enlightenment, the first sermon, stories of Angulimala and Devadatta, Mahaparinibbana etc. These floats paraded the streets which were gaily decorated and lined with thousands of citizens.

The delegates were taken to three Provincial towns to participate in the local celebrations as well as to give them an opportunity to see some of the ancient monuments.

NOKORN PATHOM STUPA

The first place to which we were taken was Nokorn Pathom (Nagara Prathama) at a distance of about 30 miles from Bangkok. Here stands the first Stupa built in Thailand. It is said to have been erected in the 2nd Century B.C. but the one which is to be seen today is not the original one. This has been subsequently erected enclosing the original. Built on a hillock and faced with glazed tiles, this is an impressive stupa much more similar to those in Ceylon than others built in later times. All round the stupa runs a covered passage with paintings on the walls and intermittent shrines containing Buddha images. In one of these we were shown the footprint of Lord Buddha engraved on a rock which reflects on the ceiling as it is faced with mirrors.

The second place which was in our programme was the ancient city of Ayuthia (Ajodhya) situated at a distance of 71 miles from Bangkok. This city which was founded in 1350 C.E. by King Rama Tibodi was the capital of Thailand for a period of over 400 years and was reputed to be one of the greatest cities of the East. Chinese travellers have described it as the "Golden Eye of the East". That it was a very extensive and populous city can be realised from the hundreds of ruins scattered over a wide area. There are remains of temples, stupas, palaces, ramparts etc. which are a proof of not only the magnificence of the city but also of the truth of the doctrine of *Anicca* (impermanence).

TRAGIC STORY RECALLED

What tragic results can ensue from absurd causes become evident when we think of the reason for the destruction of this wealthy city. If tradition can be relied upon, it is said the then King of Burma sent a request to the King of Thailand for two white elephants. White elephants are rare and they were prized by Kings of both the countries. They are symbols of royalty and were considered auspicious. This modest request was refused and the King of Burma invaded Thailand with a large army. Failing to take the city by assault, the King laid siege to it which dragged on for three long years. At last the citizens could hold no longer and they surrendered. When the attacking army arrived within the walls of the city, they found that all the wealth had gone and it was only a shell without any substance. In his rage the King ordered the complete destruction of the city. It was after this tragic event that the city of Bangkok was founded and the capital shifted there.

As I was being taken round, I wanted to see the famous Phra Chao Panan Choeng Temple which contains a colossal image of the Buddha. I had seen pictures of the same without a roof and surrounded by dilapidated walls. What a surprise I, therefore, had when I was shown a huge temple under construction! It was explained to me that at the suggestion of the Hon. U Nu, Prime Minister of Burma, the Government of Thailand had undertaken its complete renovation. The Thai Government has an ambitious scheme of rehabilitating the old city A fine

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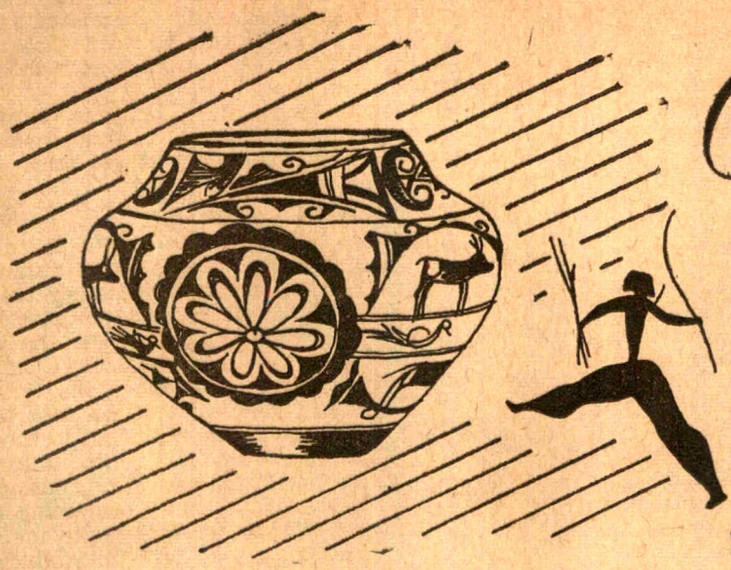

On Art and Artists

By Prof. O. C. GANGOLY

ART is a record of the experiences and feelings of the artist truly so-called. But the purpose and aim of Art and the ideals and aspirations of Artists have differed from time to time — under different conditions of life and in different countries and regions. In the primitive society in pre-historic times, every man had to function as an artist himself using his primitive skill to cater to the essential demands of his life, to fashion a natural cave into a habitable home giving him protection from sun and rain, to paint the walls of his own cave with portraits of animals for magical uses,—for success in his hunting expeditions and in his chase for his daily food. In moments of idleness the primitive man amused himself in carving a piece of bone or wood into beautiful shapes and patterns, generally imitating the forms of animals that he hunted for his daily food. In a more serious occupation, the primitive man fashioned and designed totems (symbols for his tribal clan) or cult-objects in crude symbolistic forms to pay his tribute of worship to the mysterious power which, he felt, dominated all the so-called blind forces of Nature with which he had to battle all his life with his primitive instruments, with his stone flints crudely fashioned as lethal weapons. At this stage of the early art of man, there were no patrons, no employers, no critics, no connoisseurs. Living in close contact with Nature and observing, with his keen penetrating eyes, the beautiful forms of animal and vegetable life, in the majestic lines of hills and rocks and the moving rhythms of dancing waves of rivers and rivulets, and watching the sun-rise and the sun-set and the rainbows in the sky and the patches of clouds perpetually chasing each other against the blue firmaments, the primitive man slowly developed his god-given natural aesthetic powers and the technical ability to play with colours and forms as a rich vocabulary for his primitive art and to produce marvellous works of beauty—which have won admiration of the most exacting modern critics.

PRIMITIVE ARCHITECTURE

The principles of Architecture that the Early Man learnt in putting into shape the cave-dwellings for himself and his family, he soon put to structural uses — in the next stage of culture — in assembling huge blocks of stones to set up memorial mounds for the dead or to build imposing temples of his cult-worship. At this stage, the developed skill of the Artist is no longer used for his own needs—but is given for the service of his group, clan, or tribe—living in small social units knit together with common needs, beliefs and aspirations, rituals and ceremonies. The typical architectural monuments of this class are the Pyramids and Obelisks of Egypt, the Megalithic remains of Shetland Isles, the Dolmens of Normandy, the Ziggarrauts and the Assyrio-Chaldean temples of Mesopotamia and the Cyclopean Walls of Mycenae. In India, the corresponding building monuments are the remains of brick-built buildings of Mohenjo-Daro, the pre-historic burial stones of South India, the Jaina stone beds in archaic caves and the Vedic Fire-Altars at Tellicherry and Cannanore (Malabar).

PRIMITIVE PAINTINGS

In the domain of painting, the animal frescoes of Altamira (Spain) and the caves of Haute Garonne (France) have extorted the nighest praise from trained critics. In India, the rock-paintings of the Nerbadda Valley have revealed similar qualities of monumental grandeur and a spiritual vitality absent in the historical paintings--and which the Modernists of Europe are attempting vainly to recover. Other distinguished examples of painting of pre-historic times are covered by the beautiful painted potteries with remarkable designs, discovered at the Indus Valley sites (Mohenjo-Daro), in the ruins of ancient cities of Mesopotamia (Lagash, Elam), in the pre-Hellenic painted vases of Cyprus (Knososs, Minos) anticipating the Greek Athenian vases of the historic periods—the only remnants of Greek painting and

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INSIDE JAPAN

(Continued From Page 97)

affairs so cheaply. In Europe they are trying presently for a common market. I wonder, why the world would waste so much on defence expenditure and fleece the ordinary people. When would we have the One-World—then perhaps we could do away with useless defence expenditures—which are nothing but a fathomless pit?

ARTISTIC & CLEAN

Hongkong, just outside the Republic of China, is quite vulnerable and a strategic place. But you would not notice anything unusual unless you go deeper.

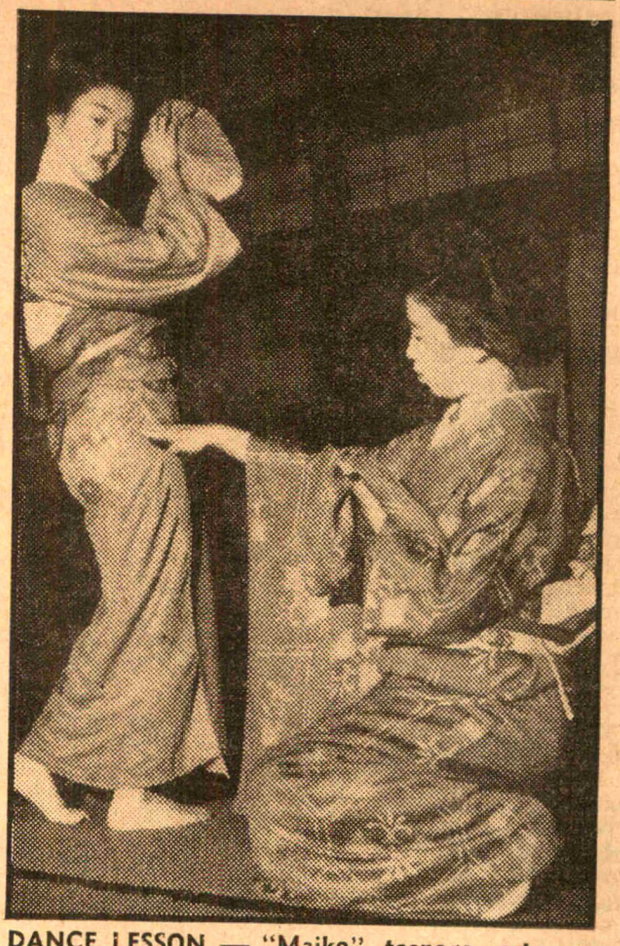
I was rather surprised at the quiet and calm of the place—not only the days were uneventful, but so also the nights. My friend took me to a number of night clubs—they were nothing but docile and unexciting places compared to those of any modern cities of the world. I had a completely different impression of an international settlement. I thought it would be a place for rowdyism—after dusk nobody would dare come out in the open—places must be full of drunkards and the most easily available things should be wine and women. But no—it was completely different. A suave, artistic, clean and sober place. I saw a few exquisitely beautiful Chinese girls and was told that all the beautiful Chinese girls lived in Hongkong. My friend said hardly one would find such charming creatures on the Chinese mainland as the middle-classes had been completely eliminated there. An obvious remark of a Chinese capitalist emigre. I heard him politely but never told him that I hardly could believe him.

Hongkong perhaps would matter little to me, but for Norman—a charming personality—if you look at his face closely, you notice the glow of an aristocrat, his eyes radiate intelligence; outside his office, he is dressed in typical finely American-cut suit, inside his chamber, he has his comfortable Chinese jacket. Hardly did I know how he worked hard and his knowledge of men and matters till I closeted with him for full two days. He is Mr. Norman Soong the boss and founder of Pan-Asia Newspaper Alliance the only modern picture service organisation in the East. Hongkong is his headquarters from where he guides his numerous bureaus in Japan, Manila, Singapore, India and other places.

We discussed threadbare what and how the different articles on the various facets of Japanese life would be treated in my proposed supplement on Japan. We discussed also the probable writers. In those two brief days we had a number of intermittent sittings and I can vouch each sitting brought new light to my editorial plan, only due to Norman's constant attempt to improve the overall plan. How good was the plan, could I only know, when I discussed it with the politicians, the social thinkers, the industrialists, economists and others in Japan.

Many of the readers of this article must have also perused Amrita Bazar Patrika's Japan Supplement, published on March 29 this year. If I am pardoned, I might say, that people in all walks of life praised the Supplement for its contents and balanced picture of modern-day Japan. Our Embassy in Japan definitely felt that at last one paper in India had done justice to a leading country in Asia.

Norman gave me another clue which really sustained me in Japan. That is, he introduced me to his Bureau Chief at Tokyo Mr. John Taji. The story of my successful mission in Japan is the story of the wonderful co-operation of Mr. Taji.



DANCE LESSON — "Maiko", teenage party entertainers of Kyoto sway gracefully to the tune of Japanese music as they learn delicate technique in Japanese classical dances at the "school" for them. Note they are not wearing long-trailing sash in order to make their movement easier. When night comes, it is time for "Maiko" to show the result of their hard study.

ARRIVAL AT TOKYO

On the evening of December 9 my plane touched down at the rain-washed Haneda Airport at Tokyo. On alighting from the plane, I was given a very warm welcome by my old friend Mr. Bob Simon of Time-Life International and Mr. Taji.

From that time right upto January 15, 1957, when I left Tokyo, it was a cavalcade of events, knowledge of things, experience of success and failure —the ups and downs, the cares and the anxieties, the hours of elation and depression, crowding upon me in quick succession. Hardly did I know, how the time flew—I passed through a period which to be candid was chalked out by Almighty God—an easy flow of days—when He gave me all that I wanted. He gave me men, exactly the type I sought after and above all He kept me in good trim—so that I could do the tremendous amount of work He had ordained

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BUDDHA JAYANTI CELEBRATIONS

(Continued From Page 100)

avenue has been constructed from the river to this temple in addition to several other good metalled roads. Many stupas have also been repaired and the old and the new co-mingle in strange contrast. I noticed that one of the stupas repaired was not symmetrical and the top portion was leaning towards one side. Perhaps, the cost of dismantling the whole stupa and rebuilding it was too heavy even for the Government.

BEAUTIFUL COUNTRYSIDE

The third place to which we motored in order to join local celebrations was Saraburi, 80 miles from Bangkok. The drive was extremely pleasant and interesting as we were able to see much of the countryside. The road was well maintained and all along it on both sides were gold mohur trees which were then in full bloom. Saraburi is a place of pilgrimage as it has a temple of the footprint of Lord Buddha. It is situated on a picturesque hillock and we thoroughly enjoyed our visit. Nearby is a colonisation scheme of the Government where jungle land is being opened up for cultivation. We motored through many farms and small cottages constructed recently.

This visit brought out participation in the celebrations to a close and all the delegates felt highly grateful to the Government and the people for their extreme kindness and generous hospitality.

Bangkok is a splendid city with wide roads, beautiful buildings, commodious hotels and attractive restaurants. With a total population of one and half million, it is the biggest city in South-East Asia. Nowhere have I seen such wide roads as in Bangkok, Raja Damnern Avenue in which the hotel where I was lodged is situated, is almost double the width of Chowringhee in Calcutta. Roads are lined with well pruned and shapely trees. Some roads had tiny trees without any protecting barbed wires or fences but nobody seems to even think of causing any damage to them—not even children. Pride in being good citizens mindful of the safety of national property, is innate in the character of the Thais. After reading travel reports of tourists, I went to Bangkok with the idea of being taken about through canals as it was always described as a city of canals. It is true there are still a number of them bisecting the city but they are being rapidly filled up and converted into roads for vehicular traffic. One good result of having had canals is the fact that when they are filled up, you get wider roads than it is possible in a town improvement scheme.

The description of visitors to Bangkok that it is a city of temples is very true indeed. No other city can boast of so many magnificent and imposing temples as this city founded in 1750 C.E. One has only to climb the "Golden Mountain" which is itself a stupa, situated in the centre of the city, and look round to see the innumerable pinnacles of Wats and stupas piercing the sky-line. If they are imposing from a distance, more so are they when one has a closer view. The chief distinguishing features of these temples and stupas are their slender shafts, elaborately designed thin pillars and high ceilings decorated with frescoes. *Garudas* and *nagas* are the predominant animal motiffs in the decorative schemes, while mosaic work with bits of China, sometimes containing full plates and saucers as in Wat Arun Temple, is a common feature of the decorations. There are no fewer than 400 temples in Bangkok City alone and among them the most magnificent are the Emerald Buddha Temple (Wat Pra Keo), Marble Temple (Wat Ben Jarnbo Pit), Temple of the Reclining Buddha Image (Wat Poh) and Temple of the Dawn (Wat Arun). They are truly superb and, at the same time, kept scrupulously clean.

As Buddhist I was gratified to find that Buddhism is prospering now as it has prospered throughout the centuries since its introduction in the second Century B.C. Figures are impressive and if they are an idex to the popularity and success of a religion, Thailand can indeed be proud of her achievements. In 1955 there were 20,619 monasteries with 154,910 bhikkhus! Wherever one travels, one sees beautiful temples, their size and wealth being a contrast to the modest dwellings of the inhabitants. The Government contributes a fair proportion of the cost of maintenance of bhikkhus and the temples and, as discipline is strict, the bhikkhus are respected here more than in other countries. Another factor which goes to enhance their influence is the fact that every Thai, from the King down to the poorest villager, has to be in the monk's robes for at least a short period of their lives. This wholesome practice has helped in creating understanding and mutual regard between the two sections of the community.

BUDDHIST UNIVERSITY

There is a welcome awakening among the Bhikkhus and a keen desire on their part to keep abreast with the trend of thoughts in other countries and to obtain an uptodate knowledge of Religion, Philosophy and History. In order to meet this desire Maha Chulalankorn Vidyalaya has recently been converted into a full-fledged Buddhist University. In Venerable Phra Bimaladhamma, the Rector of the University, the Bhikkhu students have found a most enthusiastic and encouraging guide. I had the honour of discussing matters of interest to the Buddhists with him and I came away with the impression that he is a far-sighted leader. While study of Buddhism, its literature, history and art is the main function of the University, the practice of the *Dhamma* is not neglected. Unlike studies in the West where theory is often divorced from practice, Buddhistic Studies have meaning only if they become part and parcel of one's being. Hence *Vipassana* or meditation which helps the developments of a complete personality has not been neglected in the midst of scholastic endeavours. The Ven. Phra Bimaladhamma has set up a *Vipassana* centre in the University premises where I was shown round some of the cells used by those undergoing training. Practitioners are drawn from all classes of society and they are of different ages. I saw a boy of about fourteen years and the wife of an Army General aged about 50 years meditating intensely. One of the cells bore No. 94 from which I surmised that there must be nearly a hundred of these secluded rooms for quiet meditation in this modern bustling city. The Venerable Rector of the University is so enthusiastic about the benefits of *Vipassana* that he advised the writer to start a similar centre in India. There is no doubt that such intensive contemplation for at least a short period of one's life is very beneficial as testified to by several intellectuals who had undergone the training.

Altogether I spent over a month in this beautiful, prosperous and happy country among its courteous, kindly and hospitable people and it was with regret that I parted from so many old and new friends. Thais are a care-free, sensible and progressive people. Buddhism is part and parcel of their lives and they have a rallying point in their popular King and are blessed with such selfless leaders like His Excellency P. Pibul Songgram, the present Prime Minister. If they remain faithful to their religion which has given them their culture, art, law and every other thing which makes for progress and happiness, they have a bright future.

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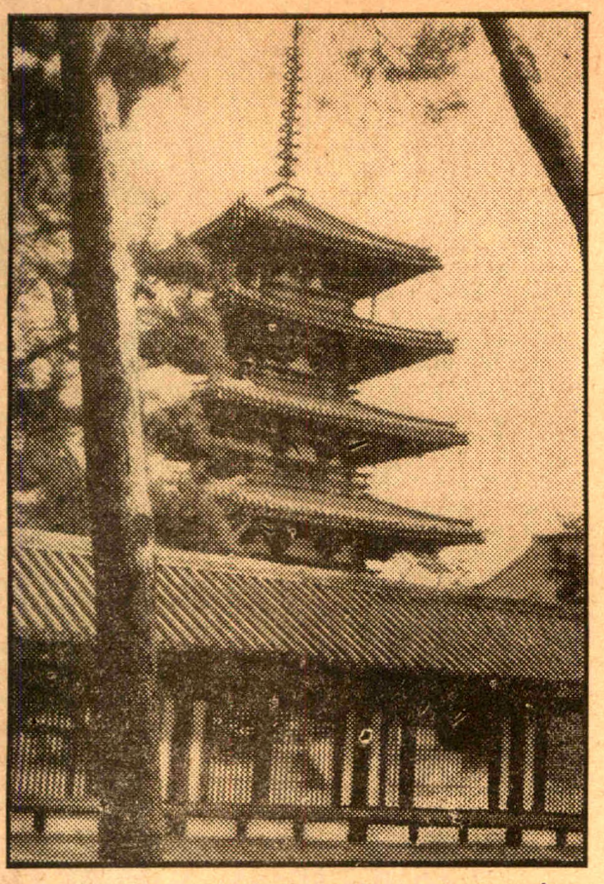
me to do. The Supplement was His production — I was only His chosen agent. This I state in all humility and with the utmost sincerity.

I got my abode in one of most ultra-modern amongst the finest series of hotels — called 'Nikkatsu'; after some time I was told this hotel was started for the rich Americans and may be for Indian Princes of the bygone days. Obviously, it was good and quite comfortable. More than anything, it had one little Japanese garden on the terrace eighth storey, which really pleased me immensely. It was situated just one storey down the big glass pane window of my spacious room. The Japanese garden, which is delightful and unique in concept and composition was the first typical Japanese thing that came to me as my first neighbour. A stone lantern in the garden, a few trees, the ground filled up with stonechips, a beautiful bamboo-made gateway, and a well with a thatched roof complete with rope and bucket were all that you could see there. It was simple, austere but a dignified sight. To my mind, it opened the whole panorama of Japanese art. All my free times in between running about the city were absorbed in the contemplation of the beauty of the simple but almost spiritualised garden down below.

GINZA IN DAYTIME — Taken from a corner of the Sukiyabashi crossing, this photo shows waves of people and automobiles coming and going. This is Ginza in the daytime — in the world's second most populated city of Tokyo.

MODERN AMENITIES

It is popularly known that Japan followed the Western pattern and it is only eastern in name. I object. True, when Japan found that the material advancement should come through the Western process they accepted the Western formula and it is only since the Meiji Restoration i.e. through 1860, that they started building up their country in that fashion. What one sees in Japan today from the angle of modernism either in her big cities or in modern factories is nothing but the prototype of any Western country. You find there all the modern amenities and gadgets like the elevators, escalators, air-conditioning, T.V., street cars, cable cars, highly developed telephone and telegram systems. The buildings are as modern as one could expect with big glasspanes, built-in furniture, and basements. The numerous restaurants, night clubs, theatres, cinemas, sport fields—aquatic, ground or indoor, bowling-places and other centres of entertainments are what you find in any modern Western country. The city of Tokyo is today the second most populated city in the world—next to New York. I am told the fleet of automobiles that ply in the streets of Tokyo are easily one of the largest in the world. I calculated and found they are many times bigger than the total number of automobiles in India. The European dishes, with the cutlery and crockery that I found in Japan easily compare with the best in the West. The stores are not only many but extraordinarily big in size. There is one, which is so big, that one takes at least six hours just to go round. Mind you, they are full of wares; you could get in each store almost anything you could think of. There are tea rooms, restaurants, roof gardens, a small zoo, children's park, exhibition halls etc. etc. It is a sight for the gods to see. There in the stores, I first realised how artistic the Japanese are not only in the way they display the counters, but the way they pack the goods sold. It is said that in the olden days



A typical Japanese temple to be seen everywhere.

each packing paper was painted by a notable Japanese painter. The famous Japanese prints were also used as packing papers. I do not know how far that is true—but I can say, the colourful and highly designed papers they use today and the meticulous care they pack each thing with, would provoke astonishment to any foreigner.

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR

During the Christmas Week they would put two different decorations—one for Christmas present and the other for the New Year gift.

Japan is the land of Buddhists and Shinto worshippers, but, why I do not know, they celebrate the Christmas, much more jubilantly, than perhaps in many Christian lands elsewhere. The shops get an extremely gay look, the Ginza—the main shopping centre of all the towns of Japan—and particularly in Tokyo gets decorations beyond description. The theme of the decoration is nothing but Western. Many newspapers write articles on this aspect of Japanese life and they advance, amongst others, one reason for being so—the businessmen find the Christmas Week as the peak selling season of the wares they produce and handle since there is hardly any other festival in Japan when they could sell more. This is also the time when people's pockets are bulging with cash from year-end bonuses. With the help of the screaming newspaper advertisements and window dressing they find it possible to create the buying spree amongst the people of the nation. Many of the Japanese would humorously tell you that they turn Christians for the Week. The crowd that I witnessed on the Christmas Eve would evoke astonishment in anybody's mind. There again they have adopted January 1 as their New Year and the ushering in of the New Year they celebrate with the utmost gaiety and in a carefree lackadaisical and sometimes riotous fashion. This is the time of the year they make presents to one another and the nation gets the longest spell of holidays. Almost all the business houses and even factories remain closed for at least four long days, and the cities look deserted. Nearly everyone goes to holiday resorts—either on the seaside or the hills. Internal tourism is, I am told, one of the most fascinating pastimes with the Japanese. And there are quite a number of spa, hill stations and winter sport grounds, to go to. The arrangement for comfortable travel is there—you get conveyance and hotels suitable for all income-brackets in any part of the country. It is said a Japanese sees his country first and then goes abroad.

Running almost on parallel lines to these Western traits, you find the unique Eastern culture and traditions abounding in them. In spite of their adopting the European costume and the Western secretarial technique with the complete paraphernalia of tables and chairs and other accessories they yet love to remain typical Japanese whenever it is possible. When they go back home after the day's work they would take off their shoes, and squat on the floor in the Eastern fashion. Hardly would you notice any Western type furniture in their own home. They would not even dine on tables, they would not sleep on bedsteads, they would not wear anything but the comfortable Kimono. They would not even drink whisky but *sake*. They manufacture best of the beers in the whole world. It is said that Tokyo water is best suited for the manufacture of beer. They may look Westernized externally, but when a man would lead his lady, he would get into the waiting car first and the girl would be expected to light the cigarette for her man. The woman would stay back home when her darling goes on his evening outings. There are clubs which are called family clubs—meaning a place where you could take your wife in. Normally the men go alone either to a Geisha or a Western type night club and get a hostess to keep company.

RELIGIOUS FERVOUR

Their religious fervour is again typically eastern just as their loyalty to the Mikado is unique. On the New Year's Day I visited the Meiji Shrine, which was thronged with numberless people in their colourful national costume. There I found people, as we do here, with folded hands and touching them on their forehead throwing copper pieces, with the utmost reverence, to the Shrine. I felt quite at home during the time I was there. One has to go to Japan on their New Year's Day, to know if they are Eastern or Western. On this memorable day they all shun the European costume, men and women, and become one hundred per cent Japanese. On enquiry, I came to learn that during the current year there had been greatly increased sale of kimonos.

It was on the second of January that I visited the Imperial Palace, that being one of the two days when the gates of the Imperial Palace are thrown open to the public and the day the Emperor and Empress appear before the worshipping people. Oh what a scene! There having been a case of stamped in the past the police very rigorously regulated the crowd—and, thank God, I could get in. There was a big lawn and a beautiful but simple rostrum. On the rostrum appeared the Heir of the Gods as the Japanese believe the Emperor to be and the entire crow

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ON ART AND ARTISTS

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the wall decorations of the tombs of Beni Hassan (Egypt). At this stage artists are no longer painting for themselves to satisfy their natural aesthetic urge—but have grouped themselves as a special class of skilful workers, offering their skill as painters and designers for the benefit of society, to cater to the needs of religious beliefs, to decorate the temples of the gods or to provide utensils for religious worship.

SCULPTURAL ART

In the branch of Sculptural Art—the most remarkable masterpieces of pre-historic times are Images of Mother-Goddesses—and of Fertility-cults (Venus of Ludendroff, Austria), the Mother-Cult figures of Mohenjo-Daro (2500 B.C.), the Cretan Snake-goddess of ivory and gold (1500 B.C.), the prototypes of the later cult-images of Greece (Hero of Samos, "Apollo" of Tanae). To the superbly monumental rank belong the rows of colossal portraits of Kings of Egypt (Middle Kingdom, 2260—1190 B.C.), the Great Sphinx of Gizeh and the Ossiris columns at Thebes—which inspired the great hunting Reliefs of the Assyrians (3000—600 B.C.) and the gigantic human-headed Bulls carved in marble by the Persian sculptors of Darius at Persepolis.

SCULPTURE IN CHRISTIAN ERAS

During the Christian centuries, when these schools of sculpture were flourishing, the artists were working under the direction of priests and kings, with whom they had identical religious beliefs and similar social and political ideals. They could not have produced such great masterpieces pulsating with higher thoughts and emotions, if the artists considered them as merely mercenary jobs--"pot-boilers" executed at the dictates of religious and political leaders. Yet many of the gigantic architectural monuments of Egypt, Assyria and Persia were very probably executed by forced labour—sometimes ill-paid by dictators who commissioned the erection of these beautiful edifices. It is said that the Taj was built by ill-paid or slave-labour. On the other hand, the King Nrisimha Deva of Orissa emptied his treasury of sixteen years' revenues—to pay for the wages of about 1200 Sthapatis who worked incessantly for several years to build the Sun-Temple at Konarak (Orissa).

GREEK SCULPTURE

Let us now turn to the culture-areas of the Hellas in Greece. In this fertile art-centre, the Greeks produced for a period of at least six hundred years (600 B.C. to 100 B.C.) a large volume of masterpieces in marble, bronze and terracotta which have excited the wonder of the world and which have inspired and stimulated all the later forms of Art in Europe. Never has the human form been invested with such sweet and serene forms of beauty in visualizing the gods and goddesses of the Greek Olympus. The great schools of Greek sculpture arose from the necessity of the Temple worship of the Greek people and the practice of offering votive images of the Greek gods—on the part of the common people—which kept the Greek sculptors busy through six hundred years.

The chief centres of religious worship was in the Doric temple of Zeus at Olympiya (460 B.C.) of which the images of Athena and Zeus were made by Phaedias, the greatest master sculptor of Greece. Another form of sculpture which became very popular was the portraits of the athletes and winners at the Olympic games which were preserved and commemorated at the national shrines of worship. The finest productions of the classical period are represented by the broken fragments of the great architectural sculptures of the Parthenon (Temple of Aegina) familiarly known as the Elgin Marbles (now in the British Museum). Unfortunately, the finest masterpieces of Greek Art and Architecture have perished—but Greece lives in her ruins and lives gracefully in her animated Marbles. Greek painting is only represented in the decoration of the painted Greek vases which depict all phases of Greek life and provide valuable records of her rich history. The aesthetic talents of Greece have also left brilliant records in the masterpieces of Terracottas and Greek coins of many centuries. After the fifth century the story of Greek Art is one of decadence—temporarily held in check by the genius of Praxiteles (typically represented by "Hermes" and "Apollo Belvedere") — but in the Colonial Art in Asia Minor of the Hellenistic Age (330 to 146 B.C.) the Greek genius comes to a tragic termination with the Roman conquest of Greece (146 B.C.). The Graeco-Roman period vainly trying to imitate and recover the Greek ideal of Beauty is one of the darkest spots of European Art.

EARLY CHRISTIAN ART

From this slough of despond the Art of Europe was rescued by the inspiration and demands of a New Faith in the preaching of Jesus Christ and his disciples. Under the stimulus of the New Faith a brilliant chapter was opened by the pages of Early Christian era (100 to 300 A.D.) and the Byzantine Period (300 to 1453 A.D.) producing brilliant creative work in church-building and Icon-Painting in a new style of Art saturated with the sincerity of deep religious devotion. In the reign of Justinian (527-565 A.D.) Christian Art reached a climax which found expression in all branches of Fine and Applied Art, building and decorations of Churches, Frescoes and Mosaic-paintings, Illustrated Mss, Reliqueries and Church furniture and in a superb school of Icon-Painting which penetrated to Russia. According to Clive Bell "Byzantine Art was superior to anything that was to come—but also to the very finest achievement of the greatest ages of Egypt, Crete and Greece".

CHURCH-INSPIRED BUILDING ART

After the close of the Byzantine Period about the 8th century, Europe was over-run by the invasion of the Goths and Vandals, who swept away the Art of Christian Europe and plunged all forms of culture in the obscurity and negation of the Dark Ages. From this period of inactivity, Gothic Christian Art raised culture to the level of a new life and renewed activity organised by the leaders of the church—who inspired a new system of Temple-building associated with all forms of Art—required by the worshippers in the church. In the age (1150—1550 A.D.) the Gothic

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was thrown into paroxysms of emotional outbursts. Many amongst them knelt down and quite a number lay prostrate on the ground. It seemed to me in course of the next few years MacArthur's attempt to make the Emperor only a titular figurehead would be completely frustrated. You go on occasions like this, and know how loyal and reverential the Japanese are towards their Emperor.

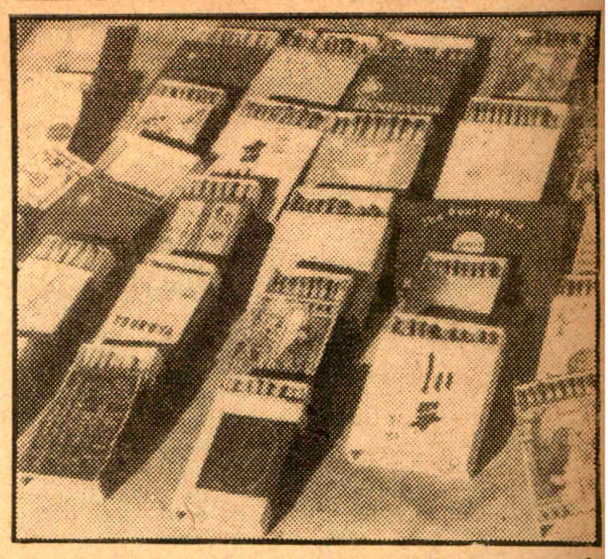
During my short stay, I was invited by a number of leading industrialists either to lunch or dinner, but, would you believe, none of them would take me either to their home or to a westernised restaurant or club.

ZAIBATSU SYSTEM

No description of Resurrected Japan would be complete unless I acquaint my readers with the past and present of that wonderful system known as the Zaibatsu. The Zaibatsu of Japan is, in the main, the possession of the industry of the country—the word stands for the family like Mitsubishi, Mitsui, Sumitomo and others. These few houses, through a traditional and intricate process, had monopolised the whole trade and industry of the country upto the fall of Japan. Each of these houses would own an almost unending chain of industrial and trading interests from heavy engineering, electrical, chemical, mining to even running of petrol stations. During the American occupation although General MacArthur broke this chain of monopoly, it seems now that the genius of Japanese industry can only flourish under this type of combines and there is presently a tendency of realignment almost on the lines of business in the order prevailing in pre-war times. The success of Zaibatsu system perhaps is mainly due to the extremely submissive and loyal nature of the Japanese in general and due to the benevolent attitude, of the head of the houses. The ordinary Japanese prefer to be led and when they get a good leader, they give of their best and that too with the utmost loyalty. True, the ubiquitous unemployment problem is there and also the workers are not paid highly and still there is the process of rationalisation at work in industry which runs efficiently and in a streamlined fashion without the super-imposition of the cadre of supervisors in almost any factory.

The workers of Japan fully realise that the stability of their country would depend only on exports. "Export or Languish" is the slogan. So they know without rationalisation Japan would not be able to hold her own in world's markets and for the same reason, they almost without a murmur accept lower wages. They know nobody would pay them a higher wage as that would again reflect on the production cost of the goods they turn out. During the post-war years, many of the leading industrialists have taken to manufacturing different and highly complicated and technically perfected goods under licence from the leading firms in America. But it may be noted here that although they get the know-how and other technological information and even supply of raw materials from America, by their innate ingenuity they have been able to reduce the time of production and definitely the cost of production too. The representatives of American industry in Japan believe that when Japan has caught up with the progress of the West as she is sure to do in the foreseeable future she would again go for fundamental research and produce original things. That process seems to have already started.

Before I conclude my remarks on the industrial front I once more reiterate that Japan has the will and potentiality to help India to industrialise herself and if Prime Minister Kishi's proposal materialises, India will definitely get capital goods on deferred payment terms.



Japanese match boxes have highly decorated labels on them. They are meant for publicitv and nobody buys them, being distributed free.

After nearly three weeks' stay, I had to reprint my visiting cards. The first thing a Japanese would do, after being introduced, is to offer you one of his name cards and expect you to do the same. At each conference I remember I had to part with 3, 4 and sometimes 6 cards. So although I had a generous supply of cards, I exhausted all of them. For the sake of novelty and to please them, I printed my card in Japanese and this was highly appreciated.

The next thing a Japanese would do is to offer you a hot towel to wipe your face and hands and a cup of Japanese tea, light and without milk and sugar.

Cigarettes are invariably there in a beautiful container and a few boxes of match-sticks with highly decorative labels on the boxes. The match boxes in Japan are meant for publicity and nobody buys them. I can say each box is an expression of the artistic mind of Japan—they are so beautiful and dainty.

MAN-MADE BEAUTY

Being in Japan in winter I missed greatly the bewitching, kaleidoscopic charms of nature. The trees were more or less barren and hardly there was any foliage or flower. So I could perceive and feast my eyes only on man-made beauty. Hardly you would find a place in Japan, be it a factory, a receptionist's desk, a president's office, not to speak of private residence, restaurant or place of entertainment, where you would not find some flowers arranged in the most famous Japanese fashion called Ikebana, in which a dry branch of a tree, a twig and a flower all combine to give the desired effect. The philosophy of Japanese flower arrangement is to point one stalk to God, one to Living Being and one to Mother Earth. There are schools in Japan, where diploma on flower arrangement is regularly awarded. Besides flowers, you are sure to see one or two paint-

ings, old cloisonne and other object d'art. They do not believe in an austere atmosphere and must have a touch of finery in every thing.

Take their handicrafts. They are not only numerous but highly artistic and functional. The cottage industry flourishes in Japan perhaps only next to Switzerland and they are superb. Of late, they are combining the modern technique and things like plastics with their age-old pattern and raw materials. The functional importance of cottage industry as the feeder industry is also all too important.

As any of the modern cities, Tokyo offers amenities suitable for all tastes particularly of foreigners. But when the Japanese themselves want to entertain in a big way they take you to their own typical Japanese restaurant. When I say a typical restaurant, I mean that it contains nothing that you may find as having an occidental touch. The furniture, the sitting arrangement and the food are nothing but cent per cent Japanese. The decoration is unique and so the service too. It is popularly believed that the Japanese food is not what might be called tempting, but I can only say from the fuss they make in any restaurant how conscious the Japanese are regarding their food. Most of the Japanese restaurants are of specialised type. You are not expected to get all kinds of food in any particular restaurant—for fish, if you want them to be served raw, you have to get to a particular restaurant—if you want the same fish fried, you go to another. The chef will appear right before your table and start to fry those small fishes and serve you hot on your table. These are real delicacies. The Soya Bean sauce is one inseparable thing in any Japanese restaurant. The Japanese chop-sticks usually used in restaurants are light, short and made of wood. So you throw away your chop-stick each time you have used them. Although there is no purdah, ladies do not come and join in these parties. So your host may take you to places where the Geisha girl will not only serve you but will entertain you and keep company.

The idea of telling all these is to impress on my readers that in Japan you not only get what any modern Western city would offer, but something in addition which again you would not get in Western cities. And these additional Japanese traits are nothing but Asian and many of them smell almost Indian. I said at the beginning that if any of us wants to go overseas and if unfortunately he does not have more than one opportunity his choice should be Japan and Japan alone.

GEISHA GIRL

No story of Japan should be complete if the inevitable Geisha is not mentioned. They say the Geisha is an institution. There are very rigid schools where the Geishas are trained. Before MacArthur a Geisha girl was expected to get her coach at a very early age of five or six years. But now I am told restrictions on age have been imposed. But still the training of a Geisha is quite methodical and difficult too. The whole concept of the Geisha is to offer that touch of feminity which a man needs in his work-a-day life. Japan is a land of men—the family women rarely get an opportunity to move in society. Or in other words, it is very seldom that they have an opportunity to come out and entertain their masculine counterparts. That is the social custom. So men created the institution of Geisha of highly gifted girls. There are cases when a Geisha would advise a Minister on the statecraft or even talk economics to a financial magnate.

In modern days, the Geisha often accompanies her patron to the Golf Course. They are good singers and dancers and are very gifted in conversation. I need not say they are invariably pretty girls. It will be wrong on anybody's part to place them in the category of ordinary prostitutes that we know of. I can give here a warning to my readers who might be going to Japan that to be entertained by a Geisha is quite a costly thing.

Perhaps after I have said a few words on Geisha I should come to the serious side of the Japanese life. Since the object of my visit to Japan was to report on Renascent Japan to my countrymen through a supplement of *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, I had to meet journalists, industrialists, members of Japanese Government and social and cultural workers. Being a complete stranger to the country I first contacted, as I have said, Mr. John Taji of Pan-Asia and along with him paid a visit to our Indian Embassy. Mr. B. R. Sen being away the then Charge d'Affairs Mr. G. J. Malik received me. I was eventually introduced to Mr. P. Dass, the Press Attache, Mr. D. Hejmadi, the Commercial Secretary and Mr. V. Narsiah, Commercial Attache. There I first unfolded my object and sought their co-operation. I knew there was no short-cut to success of my mission and I was prepared to go the hard way. Needless to reiterate how I received an open-arm welcome from them and promise of active support. Since that time it was my pleasure to receive in advance a schedule of my appointments for the next few days for contacting the high and the mighty. Besides fixing up appointments the Indian Embassy went so far as to arrange a cocktail to introduce me to the leading members of industry and Government. I had thus the proud privilege of coming in close contact with all the leading people of Japan. It would be a travesty of truth if I did not mention the wonderful service and co-operation I received at the hands of 'Dentsu', the Number One advertising agency firm of Japan. There was hardly any call made by me which did not require interpretation. Although English is compulsory in the Secondary Schools of Japan by the time the Japanese grow in age they manage to forget to speak English. So the question of interpreting my talk was a necessity in almost every case.

NEAT & CLEAN

Like any progressive country Japan is clean. The more have I been seeing the progressive countries of the West and the East the more am I getting converted to the concept underlying the age-old saying "Cleanliness is next to Godliness." If we do not go to the temples and pray to God, let us at least keep our places clean, neat and natty to evoke the blessings of God. One could hardly believe looking at Tokyo proper, that the Japanese do not like apartment houses, but beyond the border of any metropolitan city you would hardly find an apartment home in Japan. The Japanese love their frail little cottages and the tiny gardens. The buildings are made primarily of wood and bamboo and the walls of paper obviously to reduce the weight and the cost. Japan is highly susceptible to earthquake, that is why, perhaps they have evolved this type of building construction. The rooms are mostly bare, with the exception of a flower vase and a scroll or a picture, which gets rotated as the season changes.

The Japanese hotels or inns never look like an hotel, you have all the amenities and the atmos-

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Private Enterprise IN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

By A. N. KERR, Engineer

THE construction of housing in India has traditionally been and still is the responsibility of private enterprise, which undertakes to construct housing in response to need. The Government does not regulate or control the production of housing for the purpose of offsetting fluctuations of economy. Housing construction to meet the current needs in our country is at present more than 75 per cent of our total product. Therefore a substantial increase in housing construction either by Government or by private enterprise is necessary at present to meet the acute shortage of housing problem. Our emphasis should entirely be on raising the standard of living by providing better housing for all.

In a free world, the house is the heart of freedom. It should be the main objective of Indian families to own their own house. To every human, home ownership signifies security, stability and social status. The Government is required to respect the rights of the people in their homes and private lives. However, within its clearly defined sphere of authority and responsibility, the Government should endeavour to strengthen and support the opportunities of all people to improve their standard of living, of which housing today is perhaps one of the most important. In the matter of housing, our Welfare State is now paying special attention to providing houses for low-income groups. There are 54 million houses in our rural areas, of which a considerable number requires reconditioning. In urban areas 5,000 units have so far been completed by our Government, though it is a small beginning indeed. According to the statistics our Government is trying to build about 9,800,000 urban houses during five years from 1956 to 1961. This was estimated to cost Rs. 1,250 crores, on a conservative reckoning. But in regard to rural housing the Government could not touch the fringe of the problem. If they confined their efforts only to improving 541 lakh units of houses in rural areas on the basis of, say, Rs. 100|- per every unit and Rs. 250|- per house building materials alone, the labour required being given free by the villagers, the cost would be Rs. 512 crores. The Government is trying to meet this responsibility by helping to maintain healthy economic conditions within the framework of free communities and free enterprise. This is the philosophy of housing community and economic growth that we are going to establish in our country.

NATIONAL HOUSING ACT NEEDED

Private enterprise is the system that everybody believes in because it serves best and is consistent with the people's belief that Government must be the servant of the people—not their master, not even the benefactor to whom they must look for the blessings of life. The course we followed for many years is not what we should do now. The Government should pass a National Housing Act, the aim and object being "the realization as soon as feasible of the goal of a decent house and a suitable living environment for every Indian family, thus contributing to the development and re-development of communities and to the advancement of the growth, wealth and security of the Nation."

To achieve this goal, certain aids should be provided by the Government to stimulate and facilitate housing construction by private initiative. They should not be direct undertakings of the Government. These aids should be designed in such a way as to help private enterprise operate most efficiently or to supplement the resources of local communities in undertakings which would otherwise prove too big for them. As a background for understanding the Indian housing economy today, I should like to mention some of the principal aids of the Government that are not available for housing and their relationship to the people and to private enterprise.

As in many countries today house financing was one of the difficult financial problems. The credit needs for house mortgages were met adequately. Private buildings societies had operated in India for half a century. They were mutual groups organised to pool savings or financed by insurance companies and banks which were used to finance the purchase of house, development of lands etc. However, their resources were insufficient to withstand fluctuations in the economy.

The house loan bank and insurance companies were set up to provide flexibility in mortgage credit by making advance to the private building enterpriser and also giving guarantee to shareholder depositors against loss. Today, this loan banking system has gone and funds are now not available for house financing in our communities. As a result the private house building has been greatly handicapped to enlarge its operations.

GOVERNMENT'S ROLE & SECOND PLAN

Though our Government first entered the housing field in a significant way by taking action to make capital funds and subsidies more readily available it is still in the principal channel through which it undertakes to assist and maintain the housing market. I would like to mention here that during the First Five-Year Plan 103 million urban houses are estimated to have been constructed i.e., 600,000 units in the private sector and the remaining through various Government and public authorities. The corresponding estimate for the Second Five-Year Plan is 1.0 million units of which 800,000 units may be constructed by the private sector. But it is a pity that even 50 per cent of the Government estimat-

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INSIDE JAPAN

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phere of your own home. They are invariably run by women and so you have the touch of feminity everywhere. I never had the inclination to remain in my western dress during my short stay in a hotel; the hostess would invariably offer you an attractive and comfortable kimono including the foot gear made of cotton.

There I had the opportunity to study the concept of a Japanese garden, which is completely different from ours. They try over there to have a garden on a pattern akin to nature. They must have an undulating land, a few big trees, some bushes and shrubbery. There must be a few stones, and whenever possible, at least a tiny cascade or some amount of water flowing in a brook, a pond or at least water in a low-lying area. It is never planned in our way, it is kept in a manner as one finds it in nature. They love flowers, no doubt, but they do not think flowers have any dominating claim in the layout of a garden. If the elements of nature i.e. the hill, the forest, and the water cascade are there, they are happy.

DWARF TREES

This brings me to Bonsai—the dwarf trees. I have seen big trees like pine, oak etc. nurtured in pots and kept alive for 50 years and more easily. It is a painstaking and arduous job for the grower to attend to the captivated trees at every turn as also to keep them in their shape, health and beauty. Scientifically speaking, it is an art of trimming the main roots of the tree, which is done generally once in every two years and training of the branches with the help of thick copper wire, which is wound to any branch to give the desired shape. To expose the tree in dew and sun and to feed with plant food of the required dose, calls for an experienced man's constant care.

I had the opportunity of visiting an exclusive exhibition of Bonsai, where I talked to the top-man at great length. I found there is no secret, only the will to train up the tree as you want. What is wanted is constant care and monumental patience.

In between my important work of visiting the people and contacting the industrialists, I could just have a glimpse of the countryside and what little I could see charmed me beyond measure.

The Japanese say "Please do not say beautiful until you have seen Nikko." The place is situated amidst a sprawling national park where Nature in all her glory reigns supreme and the man-made temple adds dignity and aesthetics. I passed a lively day in that place when it was all covered with snow and I went wild with excitement at the downpour of fleecy snow all round. I can only say the claim of the Japanese is not far from wrong.

Oh Japan! The diadem of glory of Asia, the land of ceaseless activity, the hospitable and sympathetic land—let your gesture of goodwill flood the rest of Asia. Let us come nearer to each other. I salute you Japan. May God bring peace and prosperity to Asia through the combined efforts of Japan and India.

LAKE CHUZENJI in Nikko in the morning. A group of sightseers are seen on the pier at right, waiting for boats. Nikko is a beauty spot of Japan, a must for every visitor.

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

(Continued From Page 109)

ed housing programme had not yet been completed either in tenements or in urban houses.

In this respect I think the Government's attention should be drawn to the question of agreement between the Government and the party praying for loan and the mortgage deeds. It is very doubtful that the employers, private enterprise and local bodies will avail themselves of this opportunity during the next Five-Year Plan. The reason why much had not been achieved during the plan period in this direction is that the rules regarding the agreement form and the mortgage financial deeds etc. etc., were too rigid for securing loan and subsidy.

I may suggest that the Government should undertake a mortgage credit insurance programme whereby, the Government insures a mortgage lender against loss. This should apply both to rental and sale housing. This plan features long-term low-interest mortgages to be based on sound economy with a relatively small down payment. The purchaser through moderate monthly payments of periods of as long as 35 years can repay both interest and principal. The interest rate plus insurance premium should not be more than 3 per cent to 5 per cent. I think this form of amortized mortgage should now be introduced in India for all house loans in order to solve this acute housing problem of India. If the security and assurance of the availability of mortgage credit were provided by this type of amortized financing private house-building would have been able to greatly enlarge its operation.

If this programme was self-supported through insurance premium paid by the borrowers and the costs and losses were met through reserves generated from the premium, the programme would involve no cost to the Government. Therefore liberalisation of the rules framed under the provision of the agreement with regard to interest, payment of subsidy, repayment of loan, mode of payment and other inequitable things is necessary in order to make the scheme successful in the National housing scheme. As we are not concerned with the individual house and house owner, we also have some problems involving the community of house in our towns and the metropolitan cities which are the nerve centres of our modern economy and which create the environment in which most of our people must live.

REASONS FOR LIMITATION

The scope of public housing programme has been rather limited since under our system of private building large aggregates of capital are available from private financial concern or financial institution for the erection of single or mass housing. Previously insurance companies had invested substantial amounts in building projects and building owners, also in developing the lands to prevent neighbourhood deterioration which eventually causes slum areas, as well as taking action to eliminate existing slums. This is the way in which our private enterprise system worked. But as soon as the insurance companies were taken over by our Government there was no scope for private enterprise to launch on any gigantic and complex housing industry. It has been enough, I hope, to indicate the nature of that role. It is one of assisting and facilitating, not directing, of providing an environment in which private enterprise can play the largest part possible in meeting our housing needs. The housing shortage became even more serious when millions of refugees migrated to our country. As a result, the nation was faced with the biggest housing task in its history. Despite the dislocation caused by partition our private enterprise quickly switched on from a war economy to a peace economy. It was extremely successful in the way of helping solve our housing problem. But today private enterprise is being shattered and it suffers due to non-availability of capital from insurance companies and other investors, shortage of steel and non-availability of cement, sharp rise in prices of coal. In spite of the huge development programme in our country, transport is still the bottleneck in this industry.

CEMENT AND STEEL CONTROL

In India there are thousands of projects started without a complete survey of material resources of this country and even the most priority projects are also hindered in execution due to want of these vital materials. It is obvious that in order to lay good concrete for a particular project a cu. ft. of cement consumes 2 cu. ft. of sand and 4 cu. ft. of aggregates are required. It also very often happens that permits for cement and steel are issued to the consumers, almost five to six times in quantities greater than actual availability of these materials in our country. The authorities issuing these permits are not aware of the actual stock position or production capacity in our country with the result that a wild goose chase takes place for the acquisition of these materials leading to a very undesirable practice. This practice is being continued throughout our country.

The present system of controlling cement and steel by the Government is one of the greatest setbacks for private enterprise in the housing industry.

I can boldly say this control means that the Government is indirectly helping the black market which is so harmful to the national well-being. Today the Government have become the biggest purchaser in the construction industry and as such are using more cement and steel. Cement and steel are thus not being properly utilised in the National reconstruction. This, then, is the way in which specially cement is being sold to the open market. And the black market still prevails in our country not only in regard to cement but also in other spheres. I may mention here that a few months back any person could get cement at Rs. 6|- per bag from the open market though it was controlled. But today after the Government's further restriction in this regard cement is being sold to the open market at Rs. 15/- per bag. The question naturally arises how this cement comes into this open market where it is controlled. Here I have only given the outline of the Government's role in the matter of restriction of cement and steel in our construction industry. I think the Government should liberalise their policy and help the private enterprisers in house building industry and thereby help in making good citizens. Better living and better housing make a good citizen.

HOW U.S SOLVED PROBLEM

Therefore I earnestly plead with the Government that further liberalisation towards the control of cement and steel is necessary in order to stop this black marketing, and that they should help the private enterprise by giving them loan capital on suitable terms and controlled materials—private enterprise which carried the major burden of our National housing shortage in the past. It is a fact that Government alone cannot solve this housing problem in India. If they try to do it, it will take years to come. I may mention here that housing shortage became very acute in U.S.A., when millions of war veteran

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ON ART AND ARTISTS

(Continued From Page 106)

Cathedral became the highest expression of the Age —the centre of activity of the whole people—where all the inhabitants of a city gathered to take part in the periodical Christian celebrations — Christmas or the Easter, or to witness the Mystery Plays arranged by the Church Fathers.

The best representatives of Gothic Art survive in the Cathedral cities of Paris, Amiens, Chartres, Rouen, Rheims and other northern cities of France and of Germany. Not only architecture but all kinds of religious and secular sculpture, stained glass, tapestry, illumination of the Sacred Manuscripts and Miniatures were inspired by the Monk-Artists of the Gothic Cathedrals, from which sprang the guilds of Artists, specializing in each department of Art, guided by regulations, which kept the standard of productions on the highest level of perfection in which there was no room for slovenly or careless work. The impulse of these productions of Gothic Art was the fundamental religious faith of the artists, dedicated to serve the devotion of the Christian Faith. To the guilds of Gothic Artist,—"Work was worship" in the truest sense. They worked not under the dictates of Kings or private patrons, but under the dictates of their own spiritual faith.

RENAISSANCE MOVEMENT

But by the 14th century the tide of real Gothic Art began to ebb away and its place was taken by the movement of the Renaissance (Rebirth) in Italy (1300—1600 A.D.). Two aspects of this movement stand out prominently—the delight in life and the enthusiasm for classical antiquities. From the service of God, Art was diverted to the service of man. And in spite of the fact that some of the Popes engaged talented Artists to decorate the walls of the churches and ostentatious mortuary monuments of the Popes, the artists and the common people had very little faith in religion or spiritual life. The people of the Renaissance turned away from the religious thoughts of the Gothic Age — oriented toward life of the future,—and turned to a realization of the value of the present for its own sake and to a vision of the joy and the beauty of this life. It introduced an age of scientific research and invention discounting all expressions of emotion—the life-blood of Art.

In the realm of Art—the improvement was not in a sincere and impassioned expression of the human soul—but in scientific and intellectual discovery of the techniques of painting, of the Laws of Perspective and of Optics—and the invention of the performance of the chemistry of colours leading to the birth of oil painting. A critical re-appraisal of the values of Renaissance Art by the best critics and historians of modern times has led to a complete repudiation of the so-called aesthetic significance of Renaissance Art. And our Modern Movements in Art have begun by ignoring the Art of the Renaissance and by going back to the Art of the Middle Ages, picking up the great traditions of Gothic Art in all its phases. According to the highest authorities on Art-History, the whole art of the Renaissance is of no aesthetic significance being empty of any manner of spiritual belief.

ARTIST A CREATOR

The position of Artist apart from his productions of Art stands on an independent footing. An Artist is an individual, burdened with the urge to create. The creative impulse is a mysterious element in human personality. The Artist is a man with something very urgent to say. His nature leads him to explore constantly new aspects of truth. Having understood some aspects of truth—he longs to give complete expression to the excitement of feelings or thoughts that the discovery arouses in him. His desire for expression, therefore, contains two elements — first the wish to express what is true, secondly, the wish to give this truth full and perfect expression through his skill, craft or technique. The true Artist is his own keenest critic, his own judge and as such he must wrestle with his own doubts, fears and inadequacies. In the word of Katherine Mansfield, the ambition of all artists is "to create something, to write something — that will be worthy of that rising moon—that pale light". A conceivable perfection of expression is at the very root of all artistic effort. Walter Sickert argued that if this perfection could be achieved Art would come to an end, and he defined "Art" as the individual quality of failure, or the individual co-efficient of error—each highly skilled and cultivated craftsman. Fortunately, perfection in his craft remains beyond the reach of every artist.

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

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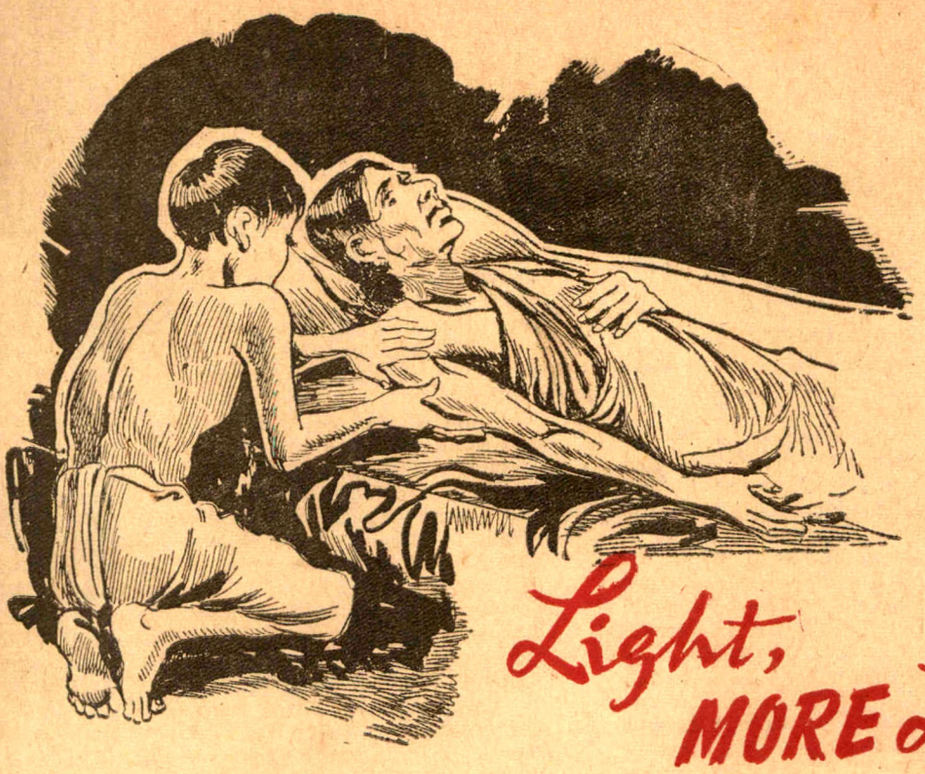
returned and established new families. That nation was faced with the biggest housing problem in their history. Only 142,000 dwelling units were provided in 1944, but in 1950 nearly 10 times that number were built. In fact, more than one million new dwelling units have been built each year since 1949. In 1955, a total of 1,400,000 homes were built. Nine out of every ten of these were single-family structures sold to individual families.

In all, they have produced about 11 million homes in the United States in the decade since the end of World War II, with virtually every brick put in place, every nail driven home by private workers engaged in private enterprise. Thus, their private enterprise system has shown itself capable of not only a tremendous volume of production, but also of providing a vital factor in maintaining stability in their economy. Only friendly and sympathetic co-operation between their Government, the workers and employers in the construction industry is perhaps the greatest single reason for this sustained productivity. And 97 out of every hundred of these units were built for sales or rent under private ownership. All in all, of the 48 million American households today, there are some 29 millions who own the homes in which they live.

Therefore the basic function of the private enterprise of house building is spreading house ownership to an over-growing number and proportion of Indian families. By leaving the direction of this vital activity to the private entrepreneur who is sensitive to the desires and tastes of families in his area, the housing is tailored to what the people want and what gives them their greatest satisfaction for their investment.



Light, MORE Light

By SUDHANSU MOHON BANERJEE

THERE was not a ray of light anywhere. It was a black and bleak night, dark and dismal. A deep penetrating gloom seemed to pervade the very atmosphere of that rural surrounding. It was slightly drizzling also.

Alaka could but faintly whisper — Naru, Naren. The boy was sleeping soundly and did not rise immediately. She had to call him several times before he was half awake and asked—Hallo, Mummy, what's it?

I am not feeling well — Could you get up and light the lamp?

Mother—he cried and got up wide awake by now.

He was not even a teen-aged boy but even at that age he had seen life's storm-tossed tussles, its trials and tribulations. He tried to light the lamp. It was useless. There was no oil nor a matchbox.

Alaka understood everything. Tears rolled down her eyes. She heaved a sigh. What was going to happen to Naru after she was gone. Her heart already quickened, beat more fast.

In a choked voice she said—Naru, my son, come near.

Then she remembered everybody's injunction that she should not mix too much with her son because she was suffering from a fell disease. She should not really risk the life of her boy. She shuddered at the very thought.

Even in that pitch darkness Naru came near her and could feel that his mother was silently weeping. He put his hands on her forehead. She was startled. She sobbed—Go away, don't touch me. Then after sometime she added—Do one thing dear, could you go out and get Mukhi auntie—Oh Naru is such a big brave boy — He could go like a shot and come back in a minute. He won't be afraid to go alone in the night, would he——

Why, mother, I can go even now — didn't you teach me that all evil melts at the name of Him who is called 'Rama.' I mutter that name and go.

He was reminded at once that if that were so, why didn't his mother get well? He was praying to Him every night and morn with all the yearning and faith of a tender heart for the recovery of his mother. The old Missirji, the local Zamindar's Durwan would read Tulsidas in sing-song tone and his young admirer would stop, while going that way, to hear his sonorous voice. The old man was rather attracted by this young urchin's devotion and became his friend, philosopher and guide. He even condescended one day to leave his charge at the risk of being taken to task by his Master and came to their house to see his ailing mother. He called her 'daughter' and prayed to Ramji for her swift recovery.

Naru was more interested in his stories—tales of Ramayana, particularly in Hanuman, Jambuban, Bibhisan, Kumbhakarna rather than in Ram, Lakshmana or Janki.

Hanuman and his mile-long tail, Kumbhakarna the dragon who would sleep for months would interest him more than any pseudo-philosophic spiritual or poetic outbursts of Missirji, or his faith in submission to the Divine or Ramji's will. Naru would however not forget to ask—Supposing I pray to Him and ask Him to cure my mother, would he do it?

Missirji was a true devotee and had a burning faith, he would reply—Sure—Only you have to be

earnest, sincere and faithful in your prayer. Do you know what Saint Tulsi says—Light the lamp of Rama's name and all will be right with the world. Your Krittibasa also says the same thing. I know something of Bengali too.

Yes, he remembered his Ramayana and how mother would read those stories to him in the evenings. But Missirji's description of the dragons was more realistic He was reminded of those charming quiet evenings when his father was alive and they were so happy, hale and hearty and her mother looked just like a queen, why a queen, a goddess. Then something snapped somewhere. Something happened Everything became distorted, dishevelled and disorganised.

He was roused from his reverie by his mother's voice—If you are afraid to go out, don't go.

What, what does his mother think? He would be afraid? Never. Has he not grown older? And what harm can overtake him if he mutters the name of Rama and Lakshmana? They are enshrined in his heart. He remembers the story which the poet wrote of the brave boy who was escorting his mother in a palanquin through a deserted village prairie and fought the dacoits. Were they imaginary robbers in the child's brain? Well, if he could grow up and be as old as his father in a minute, if he could go out into the world, riding that magic horse which could not only gallop but fly through air—Oh, he would have certainly gone to the Heaven's physician—that God Aswini—to have his mother cured. Yes, he had been this morning to the village Vaid. He was not only rude and rough to him but abused him as well —Get out, have you brought my fees? Your mother owes me six rupees, she would of course die. Nothing can cure her but she should not leave this world without paying her debts. Why, she has her god mother—that auntie Mokshada—why doesn't she borrow a few rupees from her and pay me? No, no, I can't give any more medicine—It's useless—She'll die. And let me tell the truth for once, have I any good medicine? No, I can't get enough to eat. From where can I get those costly ingredients? It's all bunkum. What a world is this? Here I'm seventyfive years old, hale and hearty, fretting and fuming and still sticking to the world and your mother, a mere girl of twenty-nine trying to leave it at this young age. My God! Is this justice?—Well, who's there—Biswanath?—I can't do anything. Your grandson's fever won't abate till another week.—Well, you won't leave till you get some medicine for your mother. Take it and begone. But don't forget my dues. I'm a poor man too and forgive me if I have said hard words. After all I have to live also. Get out.

Naru opened the door and came out. He must get Mokshada. The village lane was not only dark but deserted. It was dead of night. Yes, there was that famous Bael tree where lived the great spirit. He was the prince among them. Brahmin like, fair, and tall he would go about in wooden sandals. In such a night as this he would come to pay his homage to Siva, the Lord of all the ghosts, devils and dragons. Well, it was Dhiradi who told him the story. Poor Dhiradi—she was the niece of Mr. Mitra. She used to say—Don't you know that—Have you seen Goddess Durga, that ten-handed lady whom we worship—Siva is her husband! What? You didn't even know that? You are a rustic fool of the first water; whoever doesn't know that? She looked askance at Muktishda. Muktish was of course much older than him, the son of the local Headmaster who also occasionally joined them in their play ground, and told him with a peculiar smile—Naru is not a hardboiled boy like you. Dhiradi's father belonged to Calcutta and she was attending school there. But her father suddenly lost his job and he had to come back to the village of his wife where his father-in-law gave some property to them. Muktish was then a student of class X and sixteen years old and Dhira was fourteen. Muktish was a good football player too. Whenever there would be a match where Muktish would play, Dhira would send for him and say—Well Naru, aren't you going to see the match?

He would of course be tempted to go but his mother was ill and there was nobody to attend to her. Dhira would intervene and say—I'm going to auntie, you should have some relaxation and then added—When you come back, tell me how Muktishda plays, how many goals are scored and so on. Do you know I've seen Mohun Bagan's play in Calcutta? Of course Dhiradi also used to tell stories. He never liked that story of Apu and said to Dhiradi that why should Durgadi die. He did not want the sister to die. She dragged him near her and said—Oh, what a good boy our Naru is—I won't not die—I want to live long and Muktishda—She became red in the face. She could not tell more. Yet she had to. She had an accidental fall while going to the pond to clean the utensils. No doctor was called, neither any arrangement could immediately be made to send her to the hospital. When after the lapse of a few days the case became critical and she had to be sent to the district hospital, twelve miles away, then she had developed secondary pneumonia too. The doctor who was a young man newly turned out from the Medical College had remarked: "It was criminal to send her without light to the pond. Those responsible should be whipped." Yes it was want of light that caused the accident. If there were light, Dhiradi would not have died—and she did not want to die. Muktishda who had promised a torch to him and who has now gone to Calcutta to study has stopped coming home after that unfortunate incident. If he had given him the torch he could at least have seen his mother's face. Will his mother live?

He hurried and stopped at the door steps of Mokshada. She must have been deep asleep.

Grandma, grannie—His voice was feeble. There was also an uncanny fear lest some unseen denizen of the other world should fancy to show itself to him. Of course he was bold enough and was entrenched in the talisman but he was particularly afraid of those whining female spirits.

At last Mokshada got up. She was angry that at this hour of the night her sleep should be disturbed. She thought that there was a call for her. She was a professional midwife and these women would not have any time sense to get their labour pain. Such interferences with her rest, however, were not unusual.

So she got up with the flood of choicest billingsgate at her beck and call. After all, she had passed fiftyfive, though she still maintained her active life and was physically fit.

She opened the door and stood aghast at seeing Naru—Well, what's the matter?

Mother's not well.

She understood. Last year, when the flood came Alaka was down and had contacted a hacking cough and a low fever. That was the signal. Well, her husband too had followed the same path. He was a minor school teacher—What could he do: The poor man's privilege of spitting blood was not denied to him. He died a poor man's death, unfed, unhonoured, unsung. The wife was following the same course. What would this stripling of a boy do? There was none to look after him either on the father's or the mother's side. Poor boy, Well, Alaka's husband used to struggle hard. He had quarrelled

with his family over Alaka and had come here. Now all has ended.

She hurried—Come along, Naru.

Naru said—Grannie, take lantern, we have no light.

She thought—Yes, light, more light. Everywhere, in every nook and corner light is needed. Naru walked by her side and clasped her hand when passing below that tree where that big spirit lived.

Mokshada said—Don't be afraid, there's nothing to fear. Darkness—Oh, that is our precious inheritance. No light, no water, only deserted villages, ruined hamlets, no shelter, no medicine, no dispensary—this is our fate. Can you bring some light and fire, burn these all. Let there be a clean sweep, Do you know I had been to the big city of Calcutta. What a light! But what is the value of light outside if we don't have it inside. You must bring light, Naru.

Naru interjected—Do you know grannie, my mother told me that my real grandma, her mother, died of snake bite because there was no light and my grandpa i.e. my mother's father—

Mokshada suddenly stopped him short—Your mother seems to be a queer girl—Why does she talk of all these uncanny things; come along quick.

* * * *

Chatterjees were a respectable and well-to-do family of the locality They had farming lands, good cattle and those were the days of plenty. The two brothers Bamacharan and Shyamacharan were attached to each other. The elder brother arranged a nice wedding for the younger one. The young couple were deeply attracted to each other, but as years rolled on there was no child to bless the union. All means were tried, even divine intervention was sought but to no effect. When everyone had given up hopes Alaka came. When she was about two years old the tragedy happened. The husband and wife were retiring for the night. She had said—Well, let me get a light and put the mosquito curtalin. He had replied—Well, come along, no curtain is necessary. The night is warm. As she was getting into the cot in the darkness, she felt a bite. She cried — Something has bitten me. He at once got a light and found—Yes—it was the King Cobra himself. Nothing could be done.

The tragedy was too much with Shyamacharan who instinctively retired to his shell and became almost a recluse. Even the little daughter, so dear to him, could not hold him. He got initiated by a Tantrik Sadhu, took to saffron clothes, began spiritual exercises. He selected a sheltered nook on the roof of the house where the stairs ended and used to sit there for hours. meditate and drink. This was a new habit which he acquired. He would say that his spiritual endeavour was to bring down Light. On certain days as on Tuesdays or Saturdays he would go to the village crematorium and spend the night there in spiritual exercises.

Mother, Mother, Tara, Tara, Light, Light—these were the slogans he would shout in season and out of season whether at home or outside.

Bamacharan and his wife looked after the household and Alaka grew up along with their children. Months and years passed. Shyamacharan did not change or budge an inch His daily routine followed the same chalked out course. Presently a rumour began to take shape that Shyamacharan had taken a Bhairabi as his spiritual companion and she was no other than Mokshada, a low caste widow, young and good-looking. Bamacharan at first did not attach any importance to these rumours but it grew in intensity and when people began to be inquisitive, he called his brother one day and remonstrated with him—I can understand your so-called spiritual exercises but too much mixing with a low caste wo-

Naru said 'Grannie take lantern we have no light" Naru walked by her side clasping her hand.....

man and for those matters a young attractive woman, is no good. You're not old. You must take care. Better marry again and settle down. You can't fight against fate.

What!—Shyamacharan shouted and he left the house in a rage and never returned.

Bamacharan and his wife were mortified People now openly linked Mokshada's name with him. One day he went over to her place to find out the truth. Not only Shyamacharan had not eloped with Mokshada she knew nothing about him and wept when the news was broken to her Her mother Sukhada was a village midwife by profession. She was an expert in delivery cases. She was also a good nurse. Many new-borns and their mothers had reasons to be grateful to her. The daughter also was proficient in these arts and served as her mother's assistant She was married at the age of five and at seven she was widowed. Though convention allowed her a substitute husband, if she chose to take one, she never did.

Sukhada reported with tears in her eyes that about a year ago Shyamacharan had one day been to their place in the early morning and told her that he had dreamt that in his Tantrik exercise the particular dust from a low caste maiden's house was of much efficacy It's merit would be trebled if a young girl of certain description who was married, yet unmarried, would hand it over to him for seven days every month from the seventh day of the new moon, for seven months. He would sanctify it by *mantra* and *yantra* and sit over it in meditation. On

the last day the girl herself was required to assist him in the final worship. He said Mokshada was the right girl. Yes, we could not refuse him. He was so insistent and after all it was a matter which conferred religious benefit.

Bamacharan came back with tears in his eyes. His wife was a little angry with Mokshada. Years passed and every one forgot the incident and even Shyamacharan himself was forgotten. But Mokshada's name and fame grew. She was a woman of parts and she was considerate, willing and helpful. Nobody dared slander her or say anything against her; she was frank, free and outspoken.

Alaka was almost panting when they reached the house. With great effort she could say—Everything is dissolving, auntie, I can't see. I can't talk, I can't hear. Do you know he was here, Naru's father—he told me why I had no vermilion mark on me. He asked me to come with him. Auntie, what will happen to Naru.

Tears were rolling down her cheeks.

Don't cry, my girl—Naru will be upset.

Auntie, what about Naru—I can't die in peace.

Mokshada had some rudimentary knowledge of how to feel the pulse. She examined her and became graver still. She had brought with her a dose of musk and makaradhwaja and pounding it with honey she gave it to Alaka and then she told Naru to look after his mother till she came back.

Everything was over before dawn. Once again before passing into the great silence she entreated Mokshada to look after Naru. I'm giving him over to you. I know you're more than a mother to me.

Mother — Mokshada shivered — Motherhood — a stamp of eternal values. She was more than recompensed.

Alaka's last words to Naru were—Don't cry, my boy. Auntie will look after you. Be brave, don't forget to light a lamp—Light and more light.

Nobody knows what these last words of the dying woman conveyed. Was it a physical hunger when senses were failing or——

* * * *

Eighteen years after when the curtain rose again it was noticed that youngster Naru was now a man of twentyfive with liberal education and an young electrical engineer of repute.

Mokshada had kept her word. All that she earned by her profession was utilised for his education. She could do it through the active help and co-operation of a few of her liberal-minded clients.

The majority was against her and thought that she was wasting her hard-earned money on a parasite who being a Brahmin's son would not, when he grew up, even condescend to look at a member of the most degraded community, much less to help her. She was adamant. She was warned that in her old age she would have to repent for having spent so much money on his upbringing which could have been saved for her own use then. She laughed and said—Naru was not a boy of that type. He would surely look after me. Others shrugged their shoulders and said—Wait and see. The poison dart—

Poison also becomes nectar if you know to churn it, well——

Naru was an intelligent and clever student. He passed the examinations brilliantly, was selected for an Overseas scholarship. His one ambition in life was to become an Electrical Engineer—his mother's death bed injunction was his greatest asset and urge. He would bring light, more light, into the regions of darkness, disaster and disease. These pests would vanish, would be a thing of the past—Light, More Light. External as well as internal. He would bring light not only over the poles and cables in dark hills and dales but he would focus light into the dark caverns of man's mind also.

Mokshada was still alive when he got a good post in one of the big national power projects. She was as relentless as ever in reminding him of his mother's last words. She also insisted that now he should marry and setttle down.

Let me die in peace after seeing you happily wed.

— Wait, Grandma, wait.

— Wait, I've hardly any time left to wait, my dear.

— Well, let us see, you are coming with me in my new station.

— I see, so long as your future bride does not come and turn me out—an untouchable.

— You, untouchable, well —

Now that Naru was a man of means in a responsible position there was warm welcome awaiting him from the members of the village and his so-called relations. Some came and said—Well, Naru, I always knew that you'd be great. You must do something for that Intermediate failed son of mine. But why do you allow that Mukhi midwife to meddle with you? We are your nearest relations—Your own mother's second cousin. Come and stay with us. And there's one thing—That Mukhi was not in her young days a very straight and moral woman.—You know all the story about her relation with our uncle Shyamacharan—your mother's father.

But he was going to retort when another well-wisher of his came almost running and frowned at the cousin who had already got hold of him——

Naru dear, Oh, how glad we are to see you after such an age. It seems the other day. Your mother was like a daughter to me. You must dine with us tonight. My brother-in-law's daughter is here — Saili —and oh, she's a nice girl, reads Intermediate in a Calcutta College. She wanted me particularly to invite you. Please don't say No, I won't take it.

These were the men and women who would not even look at him when his mother died and used to say—That fellow—he is being brought up by that Mukhi midwife—Is he a Brahmin?—No——

That day sitting at the Bokaro bungalow he was going over his past life in retrospect and thought what was the use of all these lakhs of kilowatt of power generated if the people did not profit by it by becoming real men above want, above meanness in a true blending of inner and outer development, if the villages were not rationally and scientifically built up from within as well as without, if rural electrification did not merely light the exterior of our benighted land, but also gave food for thought for further reconstruction by means of cheap power, if life did not flower as a full blown lotus free from want, rancour, disease and defeat, in the service of all.

A line was to be taken over a very difficult terrain crossing a stiff mountain. The chief was at the charts and the plans and sent for Naren—Chatterjee, have a good look at the dotted lines. Can you suggest a way out, any new type of engineering which could avoid taking the cables over this hilly tract and avoid the building of an additional sub-station?

Naru was at once enthused. He looked at the charts, made some calculations and drawings, consulted some books and then confidently said—

Sir, I'm prepared to take charge of this. I'll do like this. He explained what he meant and said—I'll guarantee that at least 25 per cent of the estimate would be saved and I'll not exceed the time schedule. I have also a plan to have a new circuit system.

Well, my boy, this is your life's chance. Take it.

From that day onwards Naru walked like a man possessed. His energy, his patience, his perseve-

(Continued on Page 128)

Midday Dream

By GAURI SHANKAR BHATTACHARJEE

THE wide blue of the sky overwhelmed Dipak. The first day he came from Calcutta he was thrilled by the freedom of the sky, the mysterious blue of the distant forests, the silver sand of the river bed flashing with every ripple of the tepid translucent water. It seems to Dipak that the flowing water with its wrapper of light reaches the heart of the soil and that touch of the radiant water transforms the soil into glittering sand. The cane bushes on the opposite bank were once the domain of wild beasts — the refugees have cleared them to build small abode huts. Standing close together, picturesque as an intimate scene they can afford to ignore the unfriendly surroundings. They know nobody on this side of the river loves them. To these people they are aliens. To Dipak everything is new. He has never been here before—a medieval city built when refugee problems were unknown and bridging of rivers unthought of. New houses have grown up beside crumbling feudal mansions. modern blocks have replaced the rich villas of the indigo planters— to give the present shape of the town. Dipak has seen but had not given any thought to that. He notices so little naturally.

Dipak does not bother about the city. To him the only reality is the river. The water is familiar — the lazy barges, the fishing skiff, the boats on tow, the women coming to bathe and taking home water all day long. So well known yet how few does he know really?

Dipak was bathing — it is a relaxation to float with only the head above water. This morning he has vowed he won't leave till that girl comes out of water.

So many come, bathe and go away. The elderly mendicant with beard and matted hair and string of beads round the neck came. He lives just beyond the street. After bath and prayers he carefully rubs his brass bowl with sand till it shines. It is quite sometime before filling it up with good water he goes back chanting hymns. The faint echo trembles for a long time on the deserted riverside. Tired of watching the big boats ferry across to the market place on the opposite bank Dipak turned round to watch that girl. She was still playing with water.

It was getting warmer and Dipak was losing patience. What a girl! It is nineteen days since he has come. Always when he arrives he finds her with a gay lot of girls swimming and splashing water and enjoying every moment of it. Then, one by one her friends get up and leave. All her naughtiness then collects in the eyes. How expressive those eyes are! Hearts leap at them.

There is a thrill in this flowing stream. Two souls facing each other across a quiet deserted expanse. The snorting engine scarcely leaves a faint trail of grey smoke on the northern sky. He looked beyond her long black hair towards it. How selfish is civilization. It is tragic to spoil the charm with the monstrous hissing of an engine but the river never objects, it scarcely minds. His eyes strayed back to the girl. It is a mere passing glance for Dipak is by nature very timid. The next moment it passed on to a bird perched on the mast of a boat standing high above water. What a nice little bird. Then his eyes return to the girl — this time consciously. She notices and lowers her eyes to silently watch her own reflection in the flowing river.

What a strange girl, wonders Dipak. He is not

sure what is it due to, but he is upset. He has been upset for the last few days. Why does this girl stay so long in water? One day he even came very early but the girl was already there. He can find no reason for it.

A pair of light-winged kingfishers landed on the midstream island. They will soon start diving to catch fish. How lovely the fish look! Through the clear water one can see their round eyes as they lightly play about. He wondered why must the birds try to eat them up. He felt an affinity to the fish. It is funny how they try to nibble one's feet and palms.

Still the girl stays there silent. So long as her companions are there she floods the river with words and laughter. On such an occasion she had sent a mighty splash in his direction once. Perhaps that spray had reached his body, it certainly had touched his mind. All the water that flowed through the river since then had not wiped off that touch. How could he forget?

The sun was overhead. Gone were the shadows that had hugged the banks so long. It was quiet on the river. Even the birds had stopped chirping. The stray boats have stopped, the hot sands have halted the travellers. Even the locomotive of the Indian Railways had disappeared.

Oh it was really getting late. Dipak looked for a moment at the fingers of his hand. They were sodden. Imagine then the girl's plight. She has been in water longer. Dipak would get out. But no. How dare that girl stay on?

Is it modesty? Perhaps she does not want to expose to his lusty eyes her youthful grace wrapped only in the translucent folds of wet cloth. But why then had she come splashing by so near to him so often? Was that modesty? Moreover, what makes her think that he is greedy? Will his mere look make her path slippery? Had he been bad like that there were no opportunities lacking. The girl is a mystery. So Dipak prepared to solve it once for all.

The factory siren announced noon. Ooh! What a girl! Her tenacity far outstripped her age. Dipak turned from watching the kingfisher towards the girl. It startled her gaze, placid like the river, fixed so long on Dipak. He felt uneasy. What was the game? In his mind he debated a point as he watched the roaming fish. Did she wait every day expecting to be spoken to? The mystery of the girl seemed almost unfathomable. What should he ask her? It seems he has known her a long time yet even the name was unknown. He wondered what her name could be. What name would fit her? Without looking he felt she was staring at him. Shouldn't he speak? One could hardly hide the heart under water indefinitely and stare vacantly at the horizon.

Dipak hardened his heart. He would wait till the girl breaks down. He would love to see those limpid eyes surrender.

The sound of splashing water brought Dipak back to reality. He fixed his gaze on the girl with the intentness of the midday sun which leaves no shadows on the backwaters. The splashing came near—it was a boat going towards Azimgunj. There was a

Any woman would have thought him a coward.

pained look on her face. There was no invitation to romance, only a sad helpless expression that passed his comprehension.

Dipak was not sure it was not love. Has it at last floated down to his life? He found it hard to keep passion within the rigid bounds of decorum.

A lonely dove chirped from the banyan tree near Shyam Roy's ghat. A calf bleated at the edge of lapping waters. Her lips quivered for a moment. Was it a delusion? Or was she really going to speak?

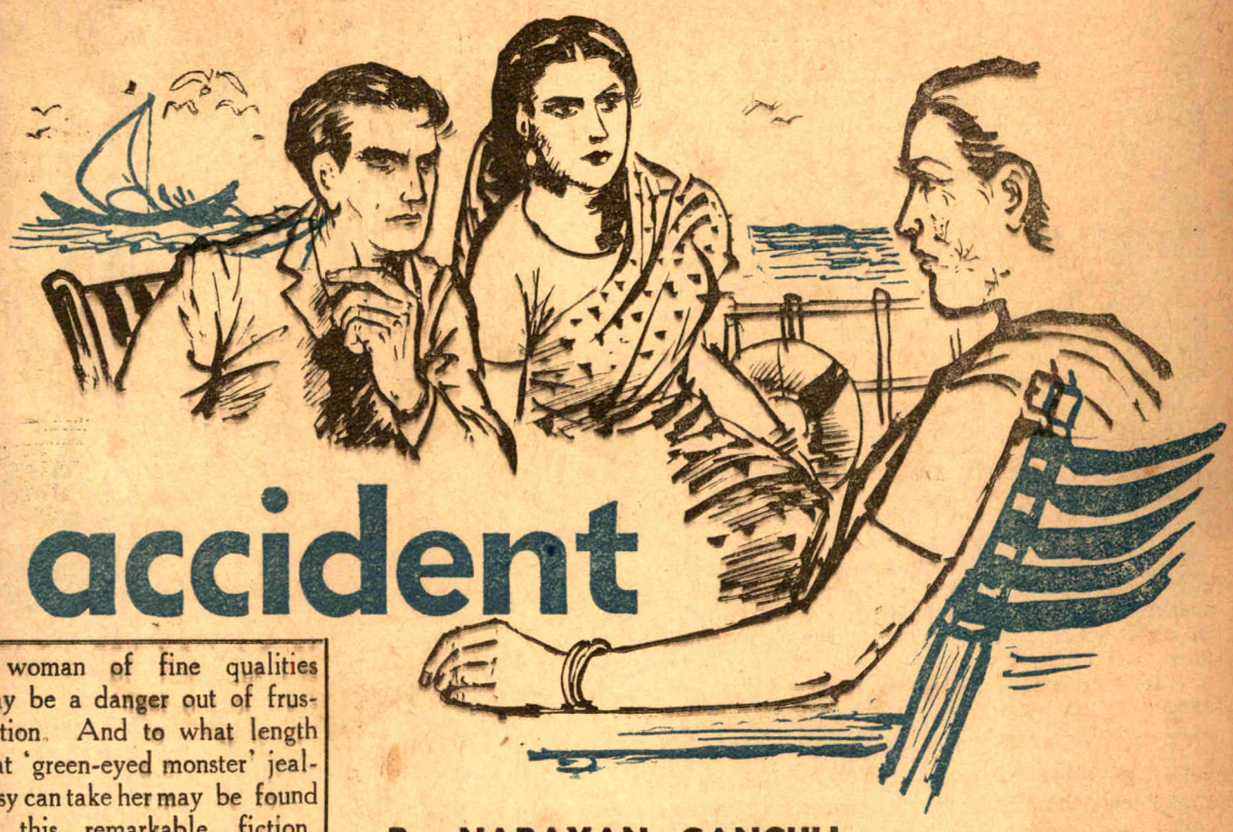
Sadness deepened in the girl's eyes. She was moving towards the bank, turning back frequently to look at Dipak. It was getting late and her look was of withering scorn. It was to be expected for had he not made futile her long wait. Any woman would have thought him a coward. Really, why couldn't he just go up and speak to her. There was still a chance. The place was deserted. He could shout even if just to ask her name.

The water now scarcely reached her thighs. She wrung a towel and gathered it round her. Dipak gazed with mute admiration, at the rhythmic grace of every movement. All these days he had watched only the eyes on a floating face but the beauty of the figure was far surpassing. The dark hair shone in silken masses. The wide horizon was a fitting backdrop for that embodied loveliness to move.

But Dipak was startled by the pleading intensity of her eyes. It pathetically begged him not to look. He had never seen a pair of eyes more expressive of misery. But he was already in a trance. It was no longer in his power to look or not to look. The girl did not turn back any more. She perhaps did not have the courage to. She stood for a moment where the water fringed the slightly wet sand, then started limping. Dipak's fixed gaze slided down to her legs. God had poured intense sweetness in her every limb but the feet were deformed. The sand was burning hot under the feet, but the girl waddled slowly on — to move faster on stumps was not possible.

Dipak heaved a deep sigh.

(Rendered into English by Dr. Amritamoy Mukherjee)



accident

A woman of fine qualities may be a danger out of frustration. And to what length that 'green-eyed monster' jealousy can take her may be found in this remarkable fiction

By NARAYAN GANGULI

RECLINING on a deck-chair in front of her cabin, she was reading a book, but her attention was repeatedly turning away from it. The steamer had been set in motion: the wooden paddle-wheel stirred up furious tumultuous roars of lacerated waters. Rending apart swarms of hyacinth, the steamer glided along raising sea-waves in the river-water which, bathed in the morning sun, glittered like glass powder. Fleets of fishing boats danced afloat spreading long nets in quest of *hilsha* fish.

The story of the thriller she was reading had then got into a frightful eddy of events. The bandit leader King Chu had decamped after committing three murders and seizing the dragon of precious emeralds. Close on his heels the Bengali detective Samudra Roy was speeding up his launch along the Irawati. At such a crucial moment something exploded under waters with a terrific sound. Magnetic mine? Nothing could be made out. But the next moment the detective Samudra Roy jumped from the launch and.....

Just when hairs were to stand on ends from excitement, Indira Choudhuri turned absent-minded. Covering her face with the book, she alerted her ears and tried to catch the words. Those chirpings reached her ears quite distinctly even through ceaseless roars of the steamer.

They were standing holding the front-deck rail, keeping Indira at their back. A handsome young man and a more handsome young lady. Their hairs fluttered in the wild wind, so did her sari and the edge of his garment. A mellow-sweet fragrance floated in the air. They were wholly occupied with themselves.

'I'm so hungry, really,'—it was the man's voice. 'You're frightfully greedy, Bibhas,' the woman scolded him. 'Didn't you eat your fill at the restaurant just before boarding the steamer? Won't you fall ill if you now eat again?' 'No, by no means,' the young man protested vehemently. 'I'm a doctor, you know. We never fall ill. Really, Ilu, those lobsters in your tiffin-carrier.....'

'Again?' This time Ilu or Ila rebuked him rather sharply. 'Again you mention them and the lobsters and the tiffin-carrier all go into the river. Not a piece you'll have before ten o'clock, Doctor! A worthless doctor, that's what you are! You've got your M.B. only to kill people.'

So reproached, Bibhas went mum. Evidently he was disappointed and aggrieved in respect of lobsters. 'Pray, dear, don't be annoyed,' said Ila in a tender tone. 'They're for you, those things, you'll eat them. What I was telling.....'

The steamer was now negotiating a bend. In order to warn careless boats, the hooter whistled twice making a deep bass sound. A few words got lost in that noise, the rest Indira continued to overhear with same rapt attention. Even at this ripe age, a pure grace of youth sighted against the void and frustrated life of her own sometimes made her avaricious.

'Well,' Ila said, 'isn't there a whit of romance in you? You're on your honeymoon after wedding, I

suppose; now you're expected to recite choicest poems, instead you're talking of lobsters and lobsters only!'

'You don't understand, dissections of corpses have made me awfully realistic. But I do remember some poems even now, but they are.....'

'Liar!' Ila snapped up. Then arose a short-lived conjugal quarrel, followed by a flash of charming smiles. The morning sun, the river water, the azure sky, the roarings of waves under paddle-wheels —all these joined hands to make a superb piece of lyric poem.

Miss Indira Choudhuri, the ugly-looking school mistress, felt within her heart a burning sensation for no particular reason. A suppressed sense of grudge flowing in the blood stream—thrusts and counter-thrusts, restless as the paddle-wheel. Millions of blood corpuscles had, as it were, rushed into her whole countenance and made her feel dizzy. When the thrill-packed detective fiction had dropped down from her hand she could not know.

To them, the couple, the entire world now appeared to have put on a new colour. The sky, the wind, the river water, the steamer's whistle—all these seemed to be playing a tune of *sanai*. The horizon, inundated with the autumn sun, looked like a veiled newly-wed bride who had appeared before them wrapped up in a saffron-coloured sari. That was why the waves of water played round paddle-wheels. And not the world alone, everybody near-about seeemed to have joined them in this festival of their union. Those passengers who had lain down flat upon the desk right in this midday or those who, allured by the appetising smell of chicken juice, were loitering about the butler's room or those black-varnished crew who, entering into the engine's hole, were pushing coal into the boiler's rosy fire—all of them were but members of this happy wedding party. And so Ila took no time to make acquaintance with Indira Choudhuri, the scorched-faced ugly.

* * * *

All the three were now on the deck. Conversation soon became lively. Where were they going, who they were, what was their occupation, who else were in the family, when were they married. I am sure your married life has already grown sweet. I'm so delighted to see you two—just what you may call an ideal combination.

Evening had set in. A deep-red light had crimsoned the river's bosom. It spread a net of superb illusion over Ila's graceful face. Snatching a glance at her, Indira began with her story:

'You wanted to know how my face got so burnt. That was merely an accident. Let's leave it. Instead I'll tell you a story of a girl. But mind, it's only a story and nothing else. There's not a bit of truth in it.'

Bibhas and Ila exchanged glances. They understood Indira was going to tell them her own life story. The convention was that before relating one's own life or a real incident, one must deny its genuineness.

'Yes a story and nothing else,' Indira continued. It begins here and also ends here—in this steamer. Of nothing of it should any credence be put to. And, it has no other purpose than killing time.'

Ila's eyes glistened in eagerness. Bibhas stared with a curious look. 'Alright, tell your story please.' both replied together

The steamer was running at full speed. Light in the sky was growing dimmer. The villages on both banks looked like pieces of pictures seen in a dream; gulls were flying in flocks; king-fishers with light emerald-like bodies were swooping into water with a plunge; *hilsha* fishes were flashing like silver in fishermen's nets; and from the downdeck was coming the smell of steam mixed with aroma of the crew's cooking.

"You look so marvellous', Bibhas remarked. "exactly like a real picture."

Indira started:

'It's a story of a girl. Not of an extraordinary

type—just a common girl. One of the many you come across here and there, one of those you meet with in everyday life. On seeing her nobody's eyes got riveted on her face, neither did one feel like casting away his glance. She belonged to that class of girls who, even after taking adequate education, light a lamp under the *Tulsi* tree while in a village and can't move about alone while in a town. In most cases these dark-complexioned girls own in their faces a brilliant glow of loveliness, at least in the prime of youth. This glow is overshadowed by a lustrously fair colour, but glares out through a soft dark complexion even as the light of life. You can't see it unless you intimately mix with them; and once you see it you can never forget it. One thing you must bear in mind. One who has fallen in love with a blonde may have some possibility of self-preservation, but the poor fellow who has loved a brunette hasn't the least hope of deliverance.

'The girl I am talking of—her name was, say, Lakshmi—was also blessed with this loveliness. She hadn't had a mean education, had read upto the third year class. Then one day she got married just as such girls do. Not after falling in love, neither under the Civil Marriage Act. She was solemnly wedded to a Bengali young man of common stock selected by her parents. His name was, say, Satyen. He worked in the Writers' Buildings, owned a house in Calcutta and had his parents, brothers and sisters. He possessed no quality of playing the hero of a story—not a Romeo nor a Don Juan. A dark-coloured youngman, he had got into service after taking his B.A. with a none-too-meritorious record.

'But Lakshmi was happy, and so was Satyen. Taking French leave from his office, he often came home at mid-day and took his wife to the matinee show of a foreign picture. Squatting on the lake's edge in the evening, they ate happy-boy ice-cream; together sitting on a shady iron-bench beside the Outram Ghat, they saw the Rangoon-bound ships and glares of the setting light sparkling on waters of the Ganga. The sun disappeared, the moon rose in the sky over Howrah, and Lakshmi hummed a song.

'Days passed on nicely, but not long. Satyen was attacked with pleurisy—which in no time turned into T.B.'

Indira stopped a minute to clean her lenses. Evening had descended upon the river's eastern bank, obscuring the villages. The purple hue of a burning copper disc still brightened the western skyline. The lights of the steamer had been put on. The search-light flash had illuminated the distant river bend, dense with a range of cocoanut trees. And here Ila and Bibhas remained gazing at Indira's repulsive face.

'T.B.?' Ila's voice betrayed pain.

Indira fixed her spectacles. The electric light having reflected upon the glasses, her eyes seemed ablaze: 'Yes, T.B. Such lyrics sometimes end in such tragedies. But there's nothing to be done, it can't be helped.

'Treatment went on—with what little savings there were in the bank, with mortgage proceeds of Lakshmi's jewelleries. But all this was of no avail—everyone realised the inevitable was fast approaching. You can very well realise Lakshmi's mental condition, I needn't tell you anything about it. Yet man hopes against hope. Perhaps this was the case with Lakshmi as well.

'But strange, when everybody had abandoned all hopes, Satyen himself gained more and more confidence. They say this generally happens with this disease. He got a notion he had been completely cured and there was no cause of alarm. And actually his outer appearance looked much better than before. He now began to nag: there's no more any need to segregate me in this manner; I'll mix with everybody, dine with you all. And why should Lakshmi keep from me as she's doing now? She can now come to me freely.....

'This was what he aimed at. But the new family physician, let's say his name was Bibhas.....'

'Bibhas.....' the couple startled together.

'Take it as an imaginary name.' Indira gave a laugh. 'Isn't it rather convenient to tell a story if the person near at hand be used as a model? Besides,

what's the harm if there's another doctor Bibhas by name?'

Ila was about to protest, but Bibhas felt amused. 'No, no harm,' he encouraged her. 'You go on please.'

'What I was telling?' With a merry sweet smile Indira threw a flying glance upon Ila and then continued: 'With the passing of days Satyen became almost crazy to have his wife close to himself. This is also said to be a peculiar symptom of this disease. The more the interior wears out the more the insatiate hunger grows severe. But the young doctor Bibhas.....' Indira stopped a moment, 'Bibhas had given a strict order: any kind of excitement was dangerous for the patient. And so Lakshmi had no right to any contact with her consort.

'Besides, there was another thing which, though not realised by others, did not escape Lakshmi's notice. In the young doctor's heart had developed a selfless sympathy for this family which was being reduced to penury day by day in trying to meet the cost of treatment. Ultimately he began to pay visits twice a day. Far from claiming his fee, he would on a slight reference to it step back, greatly embarrassed. 'No, no, why money! It's rather my duty. . . . .' he would plead.

'At this the needy family did not feel humiliated, rather felt much relieved.

'But the sense of duty of a new doctor, especially a young doctor sometimes becomes dangerously embarrassing in particular cases. No, no Bibhas Babu, don't mind, I'm not attacking you. I say this in a general sense and you can straightaway ignore it as nothing but an irresponsible remark.

'However, urged by his high sense of duty, the new doctor one day came with a basketful of fruits. Lakshmi was then standing by the verandah, her anguid pensive eyes gazing at the sun setting behind the big house opposite, smearing it with blood. Perhaps on the screen of her mind flashed back that evening scene at the Outram Ghat, those glittering waves, those grave melancholy hooting notes of the distant-going black ships leaving the wharf.

'You look so marvellous,' Bibhas remarked, 'exactly like a real picture.'

'Lakshmi looked back, startled. The blazing flame she saw in his two eyes in the twilight was much too familiar to a woman, even as a bird can recognise the barrel of a gun.'

Bibhas face was darkening. Suddenly he burst out. 'Stop here, please, Miss Choudhuri. Excuse me, I don't like your story any more.'

But Ila's facial expression set against the electric light seemed to have changed rather strangely. 'No, no,' she protested with as much vehemence, 'I like it very much, I do. You go on please.'

Indira went on as if the words of neither had gone into her ears. 'Lakshmi was about to run away with a lightning speed, but Bibhas stood firm on her way and said, 'These are for your husband, these fruits.....'

'Give them to mother,' replied she sharply and left.

'It's not known what Bibhas had told mother, but she rebuked her aside. 'Daughter,' she said, 'he's much a son of the family as Satu is. What a service he's giving us in these hard days! Why have you insulted him?'

'Lakshmi made no reply, for there was none to make. How this distressed family was day by day getting entangled into the snare of his beneficence, how they were surrendering themselves so helplessly she could see with her own eyes. She understood quite clearly that any remark against Bibhas would make both her parents highly displeased with her.

'On the other hand, Satyen's behaviour was becoming odder every day. His passion for Lakshmi burnt in his heart like a consuming fire. He hurled eating pots and dashed the medicine glass against the floor. Sitting on the window through vigil-weary nights, Lakshmi could hear footsteps of Satyen walking up and down his room like a wild beast held in a cage.'

* * * *

'That night was swept down by a flood of moonlight. Sometimes at dead of night a strange moon appears above the still city. All the din and bustle and all the ugliness of the daytime sink to the bottom; upon the calm quiet soft sleep moonlight falls in drops like flower-petals. But people inside are then fast asleep; they are unable to pick up those moonlight flowers. And in the eyes of those who like Lakshmi keep watches through such nights this moonlight appears as the guffaw of a skeleton, even as the cruel heartless whiteness of the impending widowhood.

'Lakshmi was leaning forward grasping the railing. Tears trickled down her cheeks. Suddenly her neck was touched by burning flickers of a sharp breath. Startled, she turned round and immediately someone caught and pressed her against his breast with all the force he could command. His two eyes glowed like a wild beast's .....it was Satyen.

'What's this, you?' she exclaimed.

'Satyen made no reply. He continued to grasp her with both his steel-hard hands and dragged her inside his room. The long hungry beast within him had at last woke up.

'Lakshmi tried as best she could to release herself: 'What are you doing, what are you doing like a mad? Disaster, that's what you'll bring! I beg of you, let me go today, you get well, then.....'

'Satyen did not answer yet. He seemed to have gathered the strength of five elephants. Lakshmi's weeping, her entreaties, nothing entered his ears—he was off his head. Raising her with both hands, he carried his wife in.

'The consequence was out that very night. For the last time Satyen vomited a gush of blood. He departed after he had realised from Lakshmi his last due of this life. Lakshmi became a widow.'

Indira stopped.

The river's broad bosom had been swallowed up by the deep-dark new-moon night. The wind was blowing gustfully. The searchlight was as before throwing flashes upon the wavy swift current blackened by the night and upon the rows of betelnut and cocoanut trees rustling on both banks. Bibhas' wrinkled face wore a look of annoyance, Ila's bore dismal streaks of compassion.

'Have you finished your story?' asked Ila, heaving a long sigh 'Have I? No, not yet. Common stories these are, tales of everyday life. They have neither

a beginning nor an end. They drag along heavily through the daily drudgeries exactly as the hackneyed human life does. Yet, a little more and I've finished. I shan't tax your patience any more.'

'Lakshmi became a widow,' Indira continued. 'Satyen's mother bewailed and abused her ill-omened daughter-in-law in the same manner as mothers-in-law in Bengali families generally do on their sons' death. She for one could by no means forgive the demoness who could so cruelly masticate and devour the husband so fresh and alive, within a year of her marriage and thus set her well-ordered family on fire and burn it down to ashes. And in this attitude there was nothing unreasonable or unnatural.

'Lakshmi held fast to her husband's homestead even though she had to put up with vituperatives. She didn't feel like going back to her father's place carrying on her head a load of misfortune. A few days—why a few days—a few months passed through the cataclysm of a tremendous outburst of grief. But no loss remains irreparable for ever—this one too did not.

'But the family was fast approaching bankruptcy. What trifle there was in the bank had been exhausted in Satyen's treatment. The burden of debt had grown not inconsiderably heavy. The pension father-in-law drew was nominal and didn't make much difference. If instalments of debts weren't paid, the house—their last resource—would be lost; and if the house was to be saved, the whole family must forego meals ten days a month.

'Now at last Lakshmi's I.A. standard education turned useful. She managed to secure a minor employment in a local school. The family-wheel which had stuck up to mud moved a little and thereafter got going at a slow pace. The shower of abuses upon the evil-omened widow abated. she attained some importance, even a few crumbs of affection fell to her lot. Returning from school she sometimes found her aged mother-in-law preparing food for her, bearing heat of the hearth.'

* * * *

Days wore on and would have perhaps so worn on. Lakshmi would have forgotten herself and parents become oblivious of the sore-mark of Satyen's absence from the family. And then in distant future it too could possibly be found that Lakshmi had somehow managed to grow happy within her own-self. Adjustments and admissions are but inherent characteristics of life—there would have been no exception in Lakshmi's case also.

'But what would have happened did not happen. Appeared on the scene a demon. The duteous doctor Bibhas could not forget his duty by this mily even after Satyen's death.

'The need of fruit-baskets did no more exist Satyen but certainly did for mother-in-law. In age one becomes greedy for sweets; Bibhas began import packetfuls of delicious sweets. On the Vij day he made obeisance to father-in-law by pay a tenner for no reason. When he objected Bib said sorrowfully, 'Why do you treat me as a str ger? Satyen was my friend, haven't I the least cla to his vacant place!' Bibhas was an accomplish talker. Tears came in father's eyes. 'No, my son,' said, 'one is gone, but we've got you to fill his pl at least to some extent. Can we ever think of you a stranger?'

'But Bibhas tried to establish himself in places left vacant by Satyen—even in respect Lakshmi too. Who knows if parents could unc stand anything; even if they did, there was perh nothing they could do. Poverty brings in its train inevitable meanness, brings in greed. Especi when poverty is succourless when it has no power move on taking heart with new hopes and fresh z it wants to hold on graspingly to any prop t comes to hand. No matter if it is a rope or a sn —the momentary assurance is for it the vital c sideration. Lakshmi did not know then but did la that Bibhas had lent father-in-law three hund rupees and felt not the least urgency for getting money back.

'Maybe Bibhas had developed a kind of ten feeling for this family, but that this had grown i an unseemly desire and a boundless greed Lakshmi was all too apparent. He would enter room without notice and say, 'Why are you sitt thus, sister? Come, let's have a chat.'

'She couldn't but acknowledge him to some tent. He had now attained the status of the yo ger son of this house; he was now Lakshmi's broth in-law, a person of the highest affection, and virtue of this relationship certainly entitled to dulgence of some excesses. Should she make complaint, the return she could expect was censu

* * * *

'That day was a Sunday.

'Parents-in-law had gone to the Ganga for dip. Children were enjoying a bear-dance inside neighbouring house standing on the footpath o side. And Lakshmi, after bath, was doing her h in front of a mirror upstairs.

'At this time, a shadow fell upon the mir Bibhas had entered stealthily like a thief.

'Sister,' he called.

'Lakshmi's face and eyes turned red in rag

'Why have you come into my room in this m ner?' she demanded.

'Why shouldn't I?' Bibhas made himself c fortable upon Lakshmi's cot. 'By jove, your bea is growing day by day. Really, you look like *Part*

thinned of austerities.' 'I don't need your adulations,' Lakshmi quipped in extreme anger. 'You mustn't come to my room at such an hour. If neighbours notice it, what they'll think, say!'

'What will they think, dear?' A devil's smile flashed upon his countenance. 'Pray, darling, tell me what they'll think. Honestly, your name is so befitting!'

'Lakshmi began to shake in fury and gave no reply.

'I've occupied Satyen's place in this house. Why then shouldn't I possess his Lakshmi as well?'

'He rose to his feet while saying this; then with a light pull he threw her right upon his own breast.

'Lakshmi's whole body became benumbed in a moment, not a word came out of her lips. It seemed for a second that she had ceased to exist. But for a second only. The next moment a powerful shove threw him off towards the wall against which his head dashed with a bang.

'Confounded, Bibhas remained staring a while, breathing heavily. Then he said in a stiff suppressed voice, 'Alright.'

* * * *

'Not within a month since he had hurried out of Lakshmi's room did Bibhas set his foot in this house. And rolling about on her bed, Lakshmi wept on from shame and disgrace. This could not be reported, none would believe it. Instead, the whole load of infamy would sit tight on her own neck inasmuch as she was guilty of widowhood.

'But Bibhas was also awaiting the day of reckoning. And it came in due course.

'An epidemic of measles broke out in the locality. Children of the house were attacked, so was Lakshmi. Her temperature rose as high as severe was her pain. Three days she could not open eyes nor notice what was or wasn't happening around.

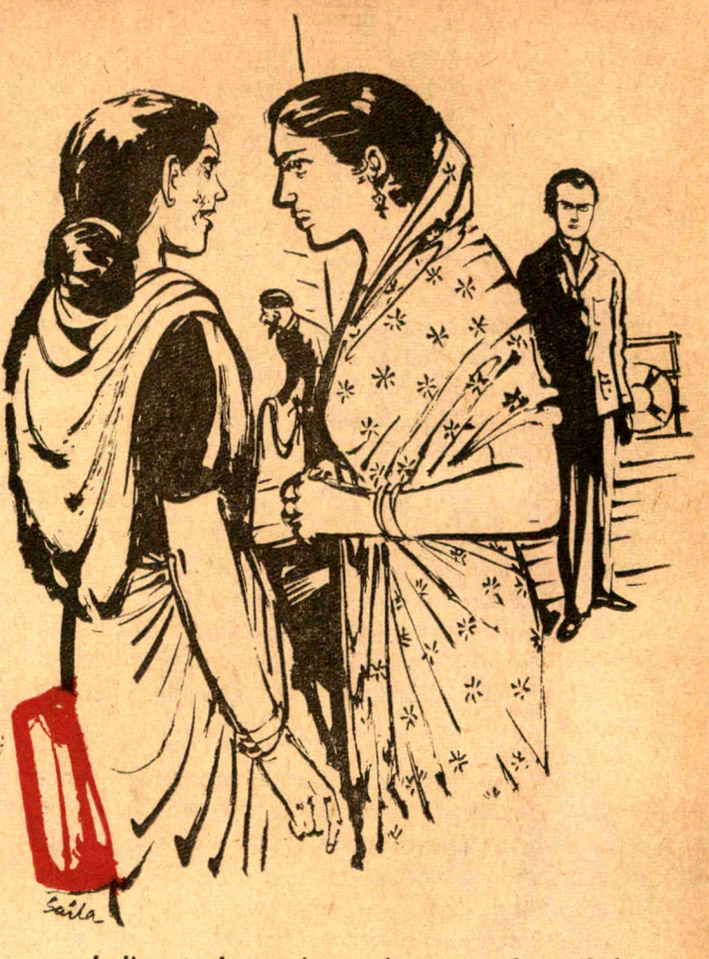
'In the circumstances, the helpless father-in-law called Bibhas.

'The doctor was young, hence dutiful. He brought a medicine, a good medicine. No prescription, he brought it himself. 'Smear her face with it,' he instructed. 'The eruptions will wither up and no pot will be left.'

'Soon as the lotion-brush was applied on her face, Lakshmi, drowsy and senseless, sat up from an unbearable pain, as if someone had daubed her whole face with some liquid fire. With the touch of fingers came out burnt up skins exposing blood-red grievous sores. Lakshmi became loathsome and dreadful for ever.'

Suddenly the hooter blew out piercingly. The searchlight flash had fallen upon a steamer-station. Indira rose to her feet. 'I'll get down here,' she said. 'Thanks, I'm so delighted to have made your acquaintance.'

'Wait, wait please,' Ila pleaded anxiously. 'She'll take a few minutes more to touch the landing stage. Tell us what happened thereafter.' Indira took up her suitcase and smiled: 'Nothing much. It was possible to proceed against Bibhas. But where was the proof? How could it be affirmed that he had himself brought the medicine phial? Besides, would parents-in-law want that the family scandal got



Indira took up her suitcase and smiled, "Nothing much. It was possible to proceed against Bibhas But where was the proof?"

publicity in newspapers? And they had neither money nor friends.'

The crew were shouting at the lower deck: Hafiz, Hafiz. The steamer was steered close to the landing stage, noise of the crowd could be heard.

'Good-bye,' Indira said.

'Good-bye.'

With something in her mind, Indira stopped at the approach to the staircase. Then she turned round and said, 'Yes, one word more. The latest news Lakshmi has received is that Bibhas has recently married—a very handsome sweet girl, say almost like you.'

She went down the stairs at swift steps.

'See, Ilu,' Bibhas laughed a dry laugh, 'what a fine story she's fabricated.....'

But Ila made no reply. Throwing from her two eyes flames of utter distrust, she rushed into her cabin and bolted the doors with a bang. Terribly distressed, Bibhas shouted, 'Ila, Ila, listen, listen....'

* * * *

Alighting from board the steamer, Indira was walking down the road. The story was really a fabricated one. Does she love to shatter everything she finds beautiful simply because all her own had been shattered? Her face had been burnt not by a Doctor's acid but in a stove accident.

— Rendered into English by Sourin Choudhuri

The HOUSE OF GOD

By PREM CHAND

FOR three days, Sukhiya had touched neither food nor water. Her sick son lay in front of her. For the last three days he had not opened his eyes. Sukhiya sometimes picked him up and then laid him down again. No one could tell what had happened to the child all of a sudden. Sukhiya had already lost two children. Her husband had gone earlier. Her only hope in life now was this child. She did not leave him alone even for a minute. He was with her even when she went to cut the grass or to sell it. She had got him a toy sickle. The child used to say, "Get me a proper sickle mother so that I may also cut lot of grass. Then you won't have to work. I will go and sell it in the market." The mother would ask, "What will you get me, son?" Jaiwan would promise her red sarees. These little delights of the son's innocent prattle came before Sukhiya's eyes, one by one, as she sat looking at him. The night had far gone. Sukhiya sat drowned in sorrow, wondering which god to propitiate, which goddess to ask for a favour. With these thoughts she dozed off. Suddenly she saw her husband standing by her side. He put his hand on the child's forehead and said, "Don't cry, Sukhiya, your child will get well soon. Go and offer prayers at Thakurji's feet tomorrow. He is your only Saviour." Sukhiya woke up with a start The dream had all the vividness of a recent happening. "He still thinks of me," muttered Sukhiya to herself and the thoughts filled her with great joy. She picked up the child and looking towards the heavens said, "Oh God, bring him back to health. I promise you my utter devotion. Take pity on this unfortunate widow."

A little later, Jaiwan opened his eyes and asked for water. The mother gave him some. After drinking the water, Jaiwan said, "Is it still night, mother?" "It will be day soon, son," replied the mother "How are you feeling?" "I am better, mother," said Jaiwan, "I shall get well soon." "May God bless you my son," said Sukhiya, "will you have something to eat?" "Yes mother," replied Jaiwan, "Give me some *gur*." "Not *gur* my son," said Sukhiya, "It will do you harm. Let me cook some rice for you." Give me some *gur*," insisted Jaiwan, "I beseech you." The mother could not turn down the child's request and opened the basket to give him a piece. Just then someone called from outside and she left. Jaiwan took out two or three pieces from the basket and ate them up hurriedly.

* * * *

Jaiwan felt better the whole day. He even ate a little rice and sat at the door for a short while watching his friends play. Sukhiya was certain that

child was getting well and said to herself that must go and offer prayers to Thakurji as soon as got some money. It was a winter day and like all ter days it finished almost before one realised it. the evening Jaiwan was ill again. Sukhiya was turbed. Perhaps, she thought, her not offering the yers had brought back the illness. The evening still young. She started collecting the things for Puja. Flowers she gathered from the landlord's den. *Tulsi* leaves grew right in front of her door. only things lacking now were some sweets to r to Thakurji and at least an anna. She went nd the whole village but could not get a loan to the sweets. She took off her silver bangles and tgaging them, brought some sweets. Collecting all things, she picked up the child and made her to the temple.

The temple bells were pealing. This was the e to offer prayers. A few devotees were standing und. Sukhiya also went and stood in front of the ple. The keeper asked rudely, "What do you t?" Sukhiya came upto the steps and said, "Maaj, I had taken a vow that I shall place offerings Thakurji's feet, if my son gets well. I have come eep my vow." The audience at the temple was fined to high caste devotees. It was unthinkable a woman like Sukhiya would even dare to make a proposition. Controlling himself, however, priest said, "Do you want to pollute the whole e? Go away." One of the devotees said sarcastiy, "She has come to purify Thakurji." Sukhiya eated, "Let me touch Thakurji's feet. I have ght all the things required for the puja." "Are mad, woman," retorted the priest, "How can touch Thakurji's feet?" Sukhiya had come for first time to the temple. Surprised she said, "Sarisn't Thakurji the world's Saviour? Don't the ers get blessed by propitiating Him? How can get polluted by my touch?" "Aren't you a cobbler an?" asked the Pujari. "But hasn't God brought lers into the world?" argued Sukhiya in vain. e cobblers' God is no different. Please let me my vow." The devotee who had spoken a little e ago shouted enraged, "Get away, you witch, re you contaminate the whole place. What is this d coming to? Even the cobblers want to offer ers in the temple." "Deluge cannot be far away," d another, "now that poor Thakurji will have ccept offerings even from cobblers."

It was a winter evening. Sukhiya was shivering r scanty clothes. The guardians of religion were ting on the future of the world. The child was gling in the mother's arms to steal some th. Sukhiya was resolute and stood riveted to ground. Again and again she felt like breaking gh the cordon and falling at Thakurji's feet. r all Thakurji was nobody's private property," she was saying to herself, "Outcastes like me also have a claim on Him. Who are these people to stop me?" But she was afraid that she may be manhandled and therefore refrained from taking the drastic step. Suddenly she had an idea and moved away into the shelter of a tree, some distance from the temple.

* * * *

After the prayers were over, the devotees listened to recitation from the Bhagwat Gita. The recitation finished at ten o'clock and all this time Sukhiya waited under the tree.

The devotees went home. The priest was left alone. Sukhiya came again and stood outside the temple verandah. The priest was busy listening to devotional music. Hearing footsteps, he turned his head, and found Sukhiya. Irritated he said, "You are still here?" Sukhiya put the offerings on the ground and addressed the priest with great humility, "Maharaj, I am an unfortunate woman. This child is my only hope in life. For the last three days he has been unconscious" and saying this she started crying. Her crying gave a jolt to the priest's sleeping humanity but he dared not let himself be moved. Who knows what calamity might befall the village if he let Thakurji be polluted by the touch of a cobbler woman. To get rid of her, he said. "Go home and pray. God willing your child will get well soon. I will give you some *Tulsi* leaves and the sacred water. Give it to him." Sukhiya entreated, "Let me touch the Lord's feet Maharaj I have borrowed money to collect offerings for the Puja. In a dream, I was asked to offer prayers to Thakurji I have got one rupee. Take it, but let me fall at the feet of the Lord."

The temptation made the priest think for a while but the fear of being found out kept him from accepting the offer. He pulled himself together and said, "Don't be foolish, woman. Nothing will happen by falling at His feet if you don't have faith. I have a charm, which is very costly. I will give it to you for a rupee. Tie it round the child's neck and tomorrow he will be well." Sukhiya insisted, "But won't you let me touch the Lord's feet?" The priest explained, "How can I let you do what has never been done before? What happens, if some calamity falls on the village as a consequence. You take this charm and God willing your trouble will be over tonight." Sukhiya had mortgaged her bangles for two rupees. One rupee she had already spent, the other she gave to the priest.

* * * *

On reaching home, she tied the charm round the child's neck but as the night advanced, his temperature rose and by the time it was three o'clock, his hands and feet had got cold. Sukhiya got very worried and started cursing herself for not offering

prayers at Thakurji's feet. Her restlessness mounted as the night went on. There was no time to lose. She decided that she must go back to the temple. After all Thakurji was not the private property of the priest that he could forbid her to offer prayers. Wrapping the child in a blanket, she picked up the offerings and made her way again to the temple.

It was a cold and dark night. The way to the temple led through the fields. Sometimes the dogs barked, sometimes the jackals howled, sometimes a murmur rose in the trees. People suspected that witches lived in this part of the village. Not even men dared to pass this side at night. Ordinarily Sukhiya would not have undertaken this journey even for a lakh of rupees. But now she moved on with dogged determination, completely unmindful of the soul-chilling noises, her lips only repeating the name of Thakurji.

When she arrived at the temple she found the doors closed and as if Thakurji could even escape through closed doors, a lock and chain had been put on them. The priest slept in an adjoining room. Sukhiya lay down the child, brought a stone and started hammering furiously at the lock. Soon the chain broke but the noise woke up the priest. Just as she was about to enter, he rushed out shouting, "Thief, thief." The shouts of the priest attracted a number of people. Sukhiya was undaunted. Addressing them she said, "There is no thief here. I have come to offer prayers to Thakurji." The priest tore his hair, "Oh what a calamity," he shouted, "this untouchable woman has polluted Thakurji." The priest's words almost sounded like a call to the collected crowd, to avenge the insult done to the stone god, and they fell mercilessly on Sukhiya. Suddenly someone gave her a push. The child fell from her hands. She bent down to pick him up but before she got there, life had taken leave of him. Sukhiya gave a painful shriek. There was a hushed silence in the crowd. Clenching her fists she shouted, "Why are you quiet now? The child is dead. Kill me also, so that your Thakurji may be avenged. Then you can safely keep him." No one moved. It almost looked like a Kingdom of the Dead. Sukhiya looked again at the dead child, gave a heart-rending cry and fell down unconscious never to get up again. And thus ended the story of a mother's unbounded love for her child.

—Rendered into English by Madan Gupta

Sukhiya laid down the child brought a stone and started hammering furiously at the lock of the temple.

LIGHT, MORE LIGHT

(Continued from Page 116)

rance matched with his skill, initiative and technical knowledge created wonders.

Each morning saw some talk begun, each evening saw it closed and every night he would speak to the old Mokshada how he was progressing. The old woman added fuel to his fire of enthusiasm.—Naru, I must go and see your lights with my own eyes.

Certainly, Didima.

Naru's march—the march of science, the march of life went over dense jungles and forests inhabited only by tigers, elephants and bears, far from the madding crowd, far from the inhabited lands. His transmission tower was the symbol of the unseen victory of progress over man's pride, prejudice and ignorance. It crossed towns and villages. It crossed hills and dales. It subdued hunger; it conducted power. It would make life easy, swift and serious. People would laugh, people would dance, men and women, children and old men, not merely drunk with alcohol but with a feeling of power as well, power of brain added to the strength of the muscle. There would be schools, there would be hospitals, there would be community plans, social service extension camps. Not for the privileged few, but for all and sundry, bringing in a socialised synthesis in a nationalised plan. Power, energy, light, were but the first steps of that great consummation.

That day work was proceeding fast at the junction of the river near the shrine of Chinnamasta. The cable was going by the side of the temple and lights were to be switched on there. Mokshada said she would like to be present at the time of the formal ceremony. The local people had collected to see the wonder. Electric power was a novelty to them. Well, the engineers were magicians who by waving the wand could make a dark place lighted.

The ceremony was performed with due pomp. Light, more light. The whole hill side was lit and the primeval river flowed as ever in that reflected glory. Suddenly there was a hissing sound as if a mad cobra was out from his lair. Well, it was a man, an old man in saffron clothes with the marks of Tantrik Sadhu.

—Who is the man who has brought this light-

Naru had heard of this old mad man with lock matted. He came nearer and looked at him intently-

—Yes, you can do this—You have the powe you have the privilege—Go on—Get on. You hav captured Indra's thunder and his lightning. You have made it descend but one has to ascend also a the same time. I tried. I failed. So I could not ge light, could not bring it down; you have got it.

My boy, my boy. He came and clasped him his breast and then started—Mother, Mother, Ta Tara, Light, Light.

The local people said—This Sadhu stays the in that cavern. For more than fifty years he is li ing there quietly, patiently mixing with the innocer and guileless people, Adibasis, giving them medicine succour and solace. He used to say that he would g as soon as light came. The old man heard this—Ye light has descended, so I would ascend, I would go

Where, father——

Why to the very kingdom of light.

Attracted by the sound and the commotion, Mok shada advanced to see what was happening and looked at the old man intently. She faltered—wh are you? The old man also turned and looked at he following the voice. They looked at each other i that silent hour of communion. In that flood-lit split second under a thousand candle-power lamp they again looked at each other. Eternity stopped. Mokshada broke the silence—You!

The mad man said—Yes, Me.

After so many years?

—Yes, because light has come.

They looked at each other once again.—Light more light, came back in their eyes.

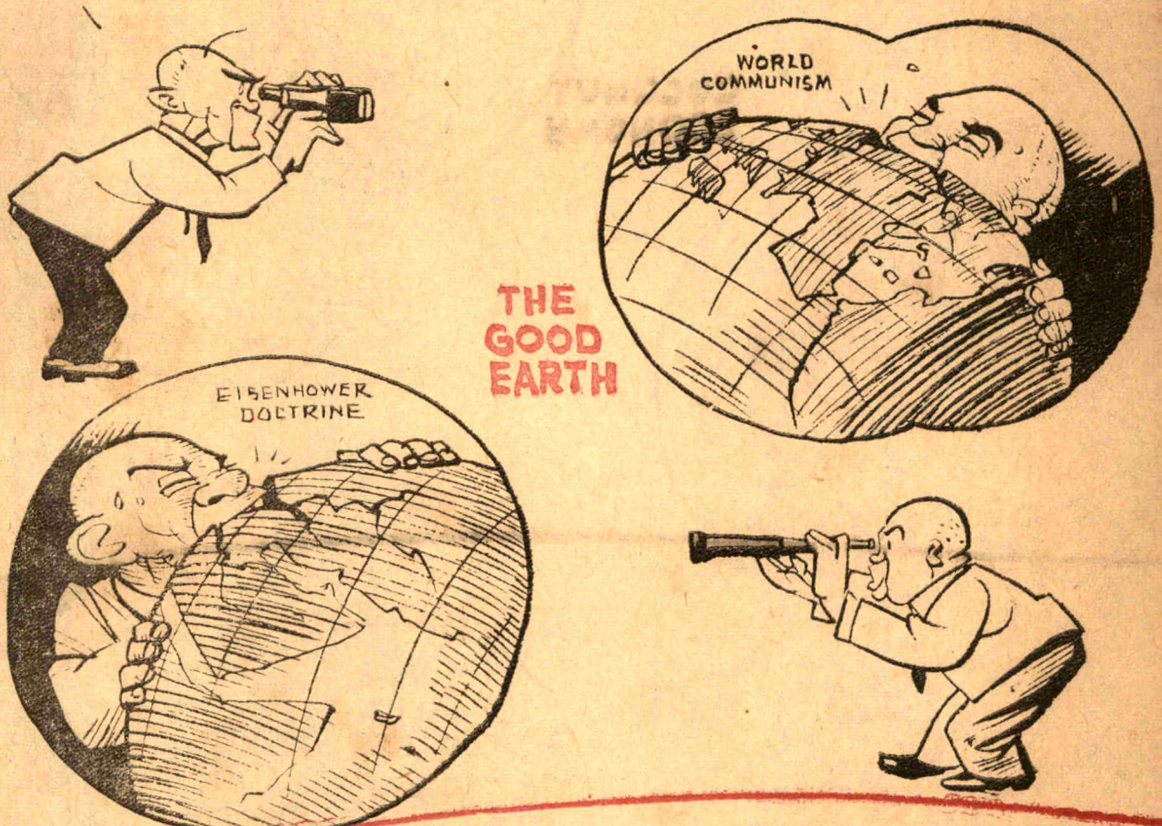
(Translated by the author from his original Bengali)

Naru had heard of this old mad man with locks matted. He came nearer and looked at him intently.

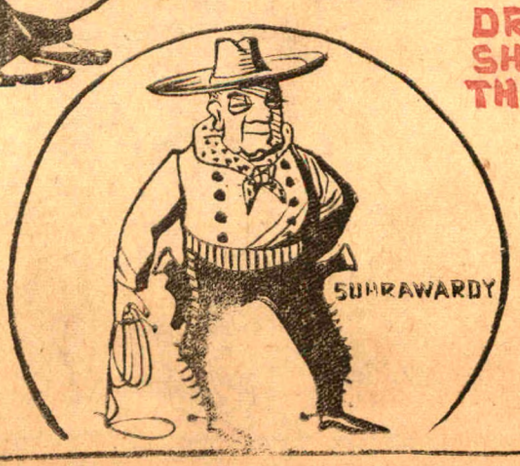
AS THE ONE SEES THE OTHER

By Ariel

'THERE IS NOTHING EITHER GOOD OR BAD, BUT THINKING MAKES IT SO'

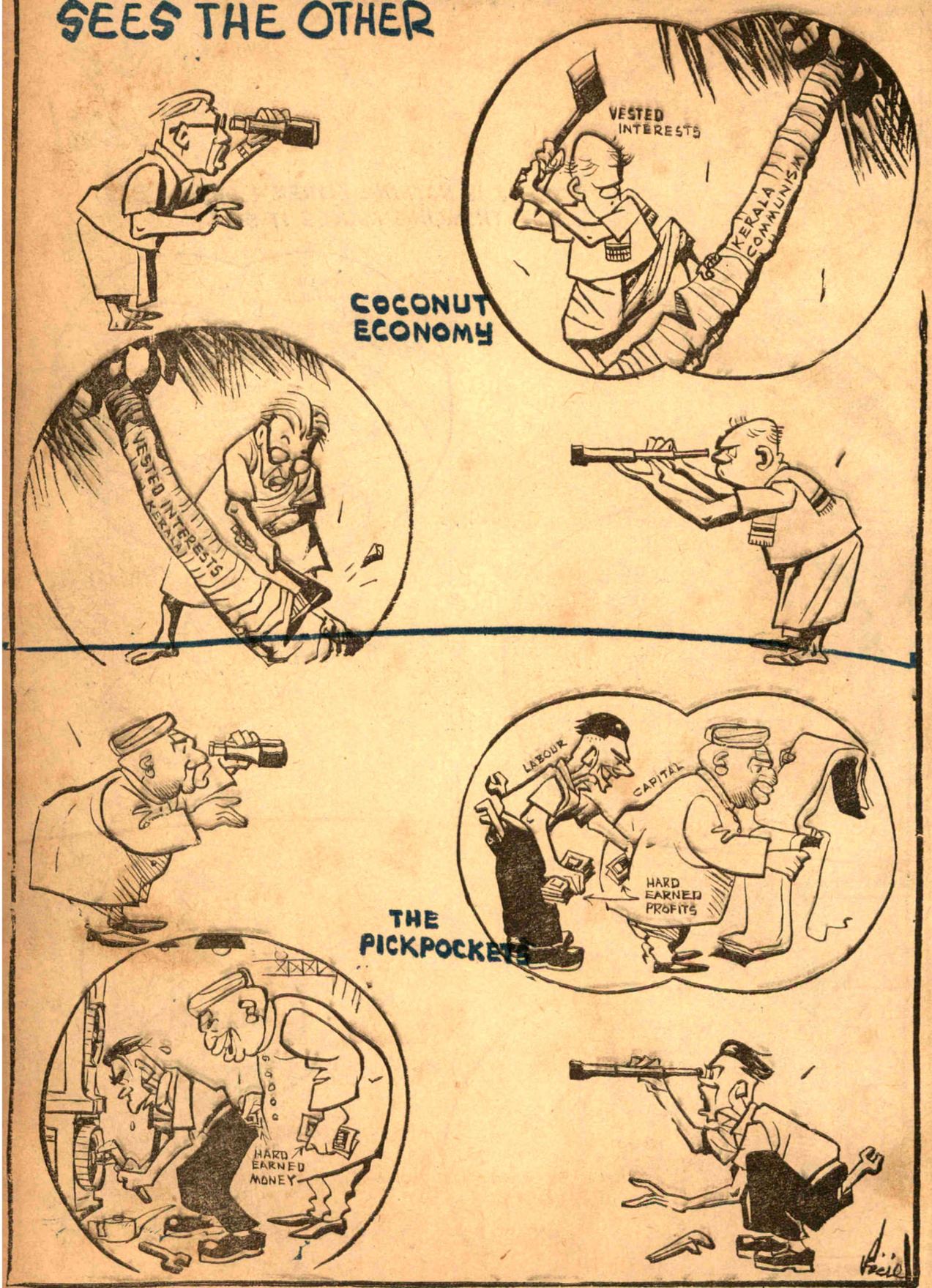


THE GOOD EARTH

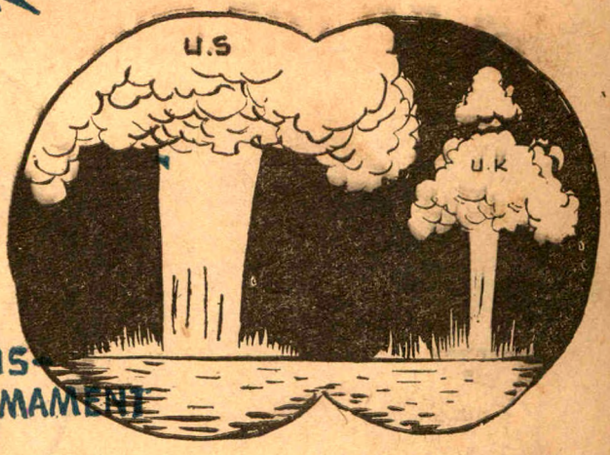


DRESS SHOWS THE MAN

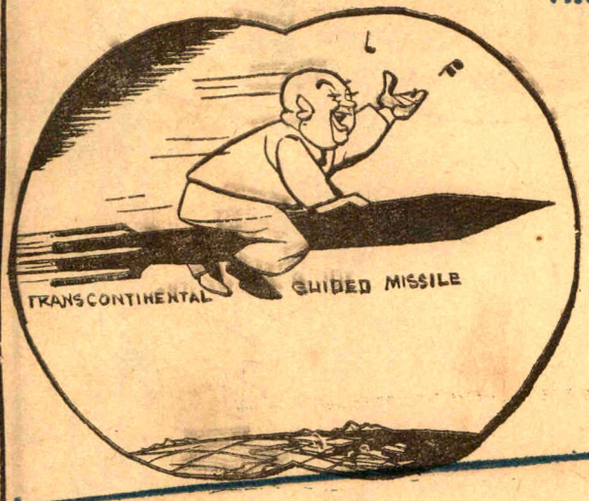
AS THE ONE SEES THE OTHER

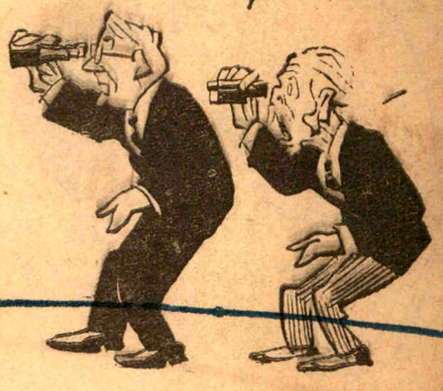


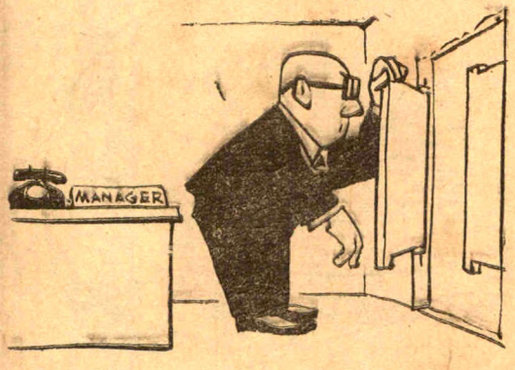
AS THE ONE SEES THE OTHER



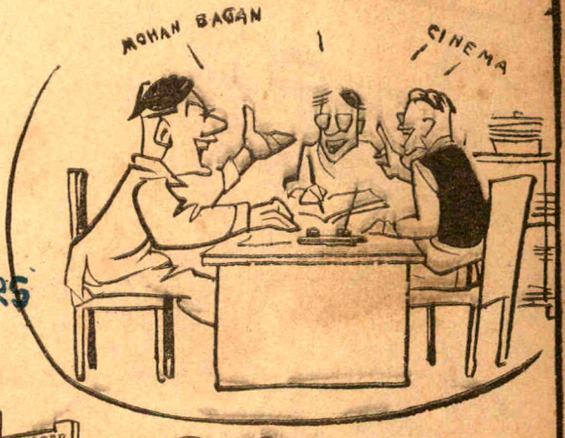
DIS-ARMAMENT

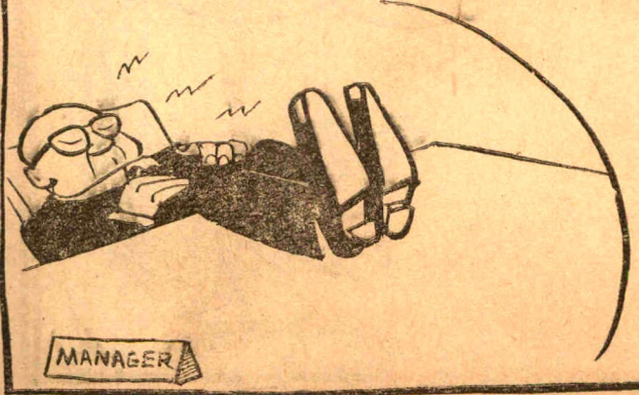




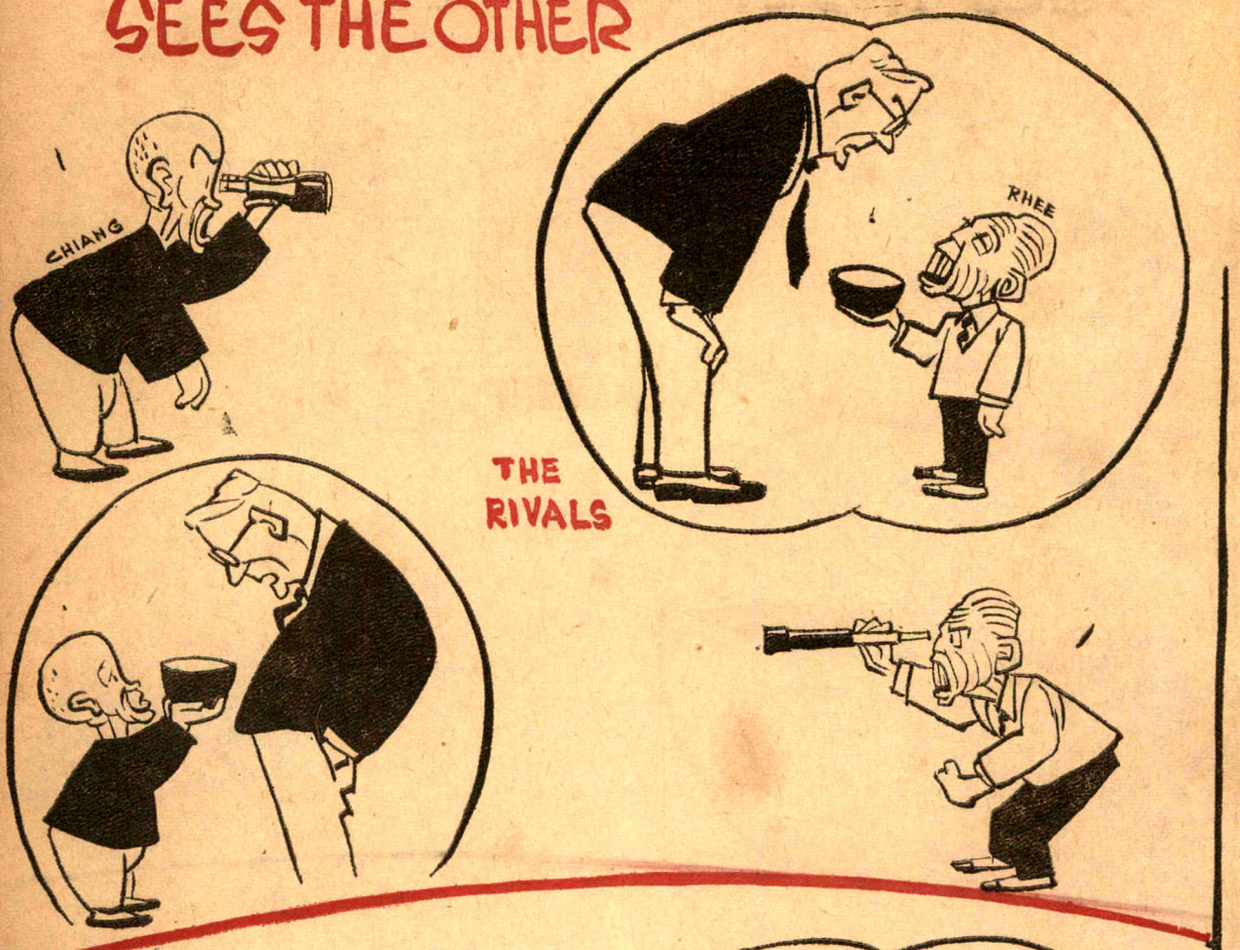


THE SLACKERS

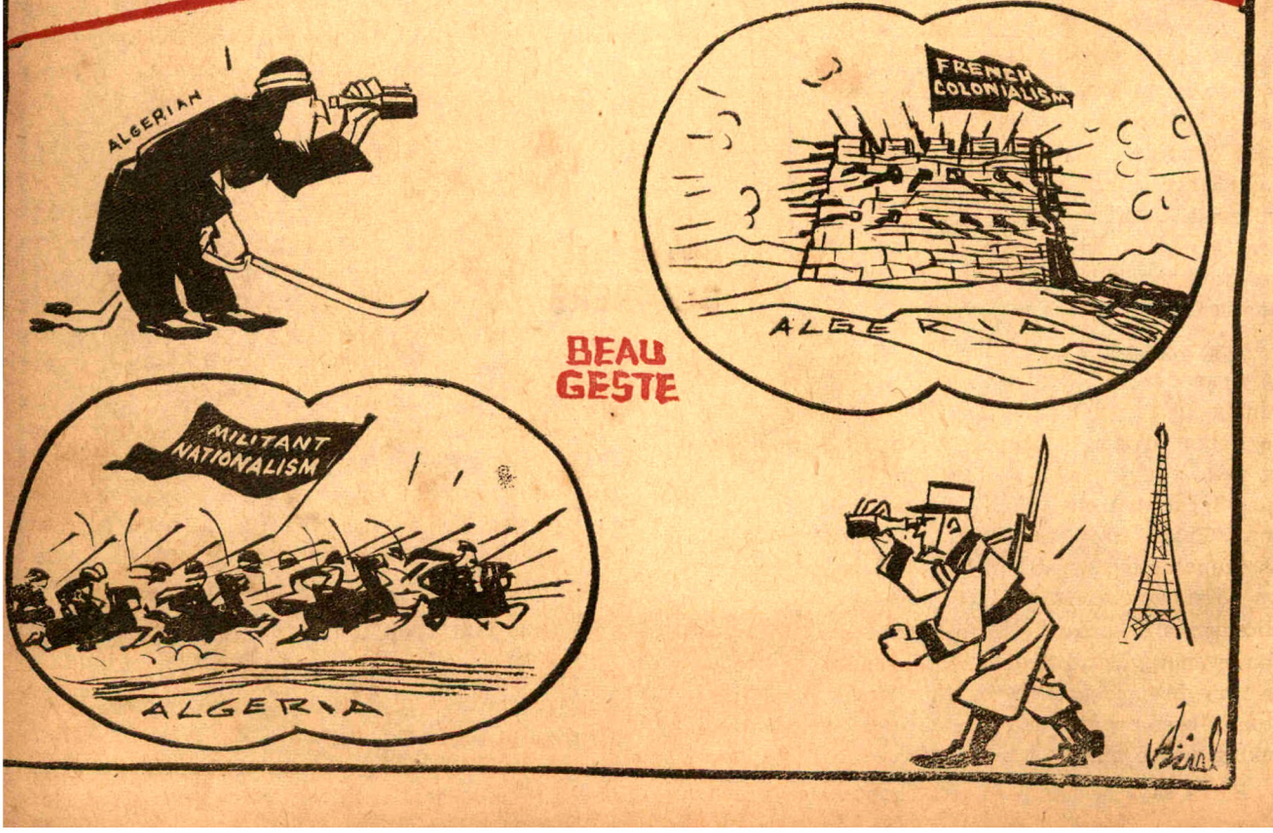




AS THE ONE SEES THE OTHER

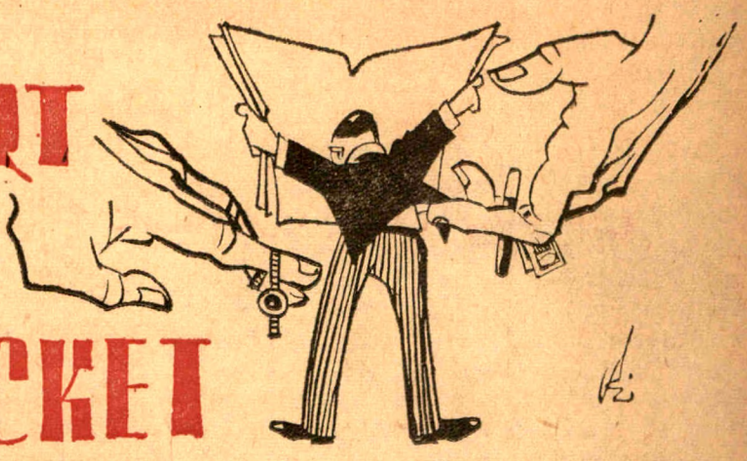


THE RIVALS



BEAU GESTE

THE ART OF THE PICKPOCKET



By Ralph Middleton

THE audacity of the clever pickpocket knows no bounds. At a recent dinner held in London, top police executive and CID men found at the end of the evening they were minus 14 watches, two rings, several pocket books, ties and a pair of braces. Among the men at the dinner was Detective Superintendent Daws, the man who has arrested more pickpockets than any other man in the entire British police force. He found that his cuff links had been stolen during the course of the evening.

The man who was responsible for this piece of trickery was Borra, the Jugoslavian stage pickpocket who is undoubtedly one of the world's greatest masters of this particular art. And art it certainly is, albeit immoral and dishonest. Borra had accepted a challenge from these top-ranking detectives and policemen. And he won that challenge hands down, even though the police inspectors knew that he was present throughout the evening waiting for any opportunity to rifle their pockets.

Borra was not one bit deterred by these seemingly impossible odds. At the beginning of the evening, he found that he had Sir John Nott-Bower, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, roaring with laughter as he picked the pockets of the Chief Superintendent, W. J. Chapman, and the Director of Public Prosecutions, Sir Theobald Matthews. His laughter increased when he discovered that his own wrist watch was suddenly missing. (Yes, even policemen are human !) As a result of this particular evening, Borra claims that he must be one of the very few pickpockets in the world who have actually been congratulated on their prowess by top-ranking police officers !

Borra says he has been picking pockets all over the world ever since he was 12 years old. He never misses an opportunity to practice, no matter whom he is with or where he is. This, of course, often lands him in trouble, but Borra's good-humoured, expansive personality soon quietens down his victims when they realise that he is really just a schoolboy at heart, playing pranks.

MILLIONS ENTHRALLED

He has enthralled millions of people with the "performances" he gives in theatres, night-clubs and circuses. He moves among his audiences and, within seconds, can produce watches, earrings, ties and braces from under their very noses and in spite of the fact that he is subjected to close scrutiny.

He is reported to have given the perfomance of his life on a recent journey across the English Channel from Ostend, in Belgium, to Dover, England, and then on to his hotel in London. He kept up his pranks throughout the nine hours of the journey—a journey that neither the ship's crew nor the porters and waiters on the train will ever forget. With incredible speed, he managed to "steal" something from every member of the crew whilst he was introducing himself and shaking hands with them. It was only when the ship was getting ready to dock that he went around and handed back all the personal belongings which the great majority of them hadn't even missed !

When a steward handed him his landing ticket, Borra asked him if he hadn't lost anything. The steward checked up on his ring, wallet and watch, and replied that he had everything. Borra thereupon produced the 28 landing tickets that had been in his pocket. On arrival at Dover, Borra greeted a police-

man he knew. He went over to shake hands, and two seconds later handed back the watch, chain, and pencil he had stolen from him. The policeman laughed and remarked that that was the second time Borra had played this trick on him. He had half-expected it coming, but Borra worked so quickly he literally couldn't see him taking these things from his pockets and slipping the watch off his wrist !

And so he goes on. Taxi-drivers, lift attendants, porters, bus conductors and waiters all experience his deftness wherever he goes. But they all get a laugh out of it. Naturally, everyone wants to know the secrets of his trade. But, as Borra explains, he makes an *honest* living out of pickpocketing and he sees no reason why he should divulge his methods to others who might choose to become authentic pickpockets ! His art has at least taught him to be cautious of other people. *His* gold watch is fitted with no less than three combination locks !

Real-life instances of the audacity of criminal pickpockets are legion. But perhaps one of the coollest customers in this field was the thief who stole a wallet from a Tokyo policeman's pocket while he was being questioned at the police station for a previous offence ! The thief was sentenced to three days' imprisonment and on his release calmly picked the pocket of one of his fellow prisoners.

POLICEMAN-TUTOR

London boasts an even stranger story than this which dates back to the last century when the police force was in its infancy. One detective constable by the name of Charles King, actually ran a school for pickpockets ! King trained three or four young lads at a time. When fully trained, their " takings " averaged about £100 a week each. He soon realised that his meagre pay as a constable in the detective branch was only a waste of time, and it wasn't long before he devoted his full attention to his school. After all, he had learnt all he could of the way in which the police went about catching these thieves. So he left the force and concentrated his tutoring upon one brilliant boy named John Reeves.

It was in 1855 that King saw his great chance to put his newest protege into action on a grand scale. The winter of that year was very severe and hundreds of people used to gather in Hyde Park around the lake to watch the skating, and to join the merry throng on the ice. It was quite easy for the young boy to " bump " into the wealthier-looking people on the ice and quickly go through their pockets in the ensuing struggle when they tried to get back onto their feet—helped, of course, by the apologetic boy who had " accidentally " knocked them down.

That winter netted enormous profits for King, but the young boy, Reeves, had become too sure of himself. It was not long before the law caught up with him. He was tried and sentenced to two years' imprisonment, after telling the prison authorities about the activities of his tutor. King was duly arrested, and while being taken by his former colleagues to the police court, managed to give them the slip. There was a chase half-way across London before he was finally caught, when he was deported to a penal colony for 14 years. And so ended the career of the ex-policeman who did his best to further the art of the pickpocket!

THE word "Approach" gained immense significance when Prime Minister Nehru said India has evolved a "Pagan Approach" to world problems. This raises the question whether there is any other approach to world problems. If there could be a Pagan Approach, there may be also Christian Approach, Hindu Approach, Jewish Approach, Catholic Approach, Buddhist Approach and Muslim Approach to the problems of the world. I do not think any political figure has used any of these terms in public, although all questions were and are still approached from any one of the above angles.

Typical of the human habit of being mad after a thing you do not have or really care about, the world has embedded religious and sectarian considerations into every problem. It is, therefore, natural that it should lose itself in its approaches and never reach the crux of the problem.

Let me admit, whether these separate religious and sectarian approaches are evident or proclaimed or not, socially and even professionally there are all sorts of religious, caste, sectarian and communal approaches to not only problems but even casual conduct. Such approaches are legion. When somebody bungled a problem, it is usual to hear friends exclaim: "What else could you expect? He approached the entire matter like a typical Brahmin, Bania, Mudaliar, Naidu, Marwari, Anglo-Indian, Goan, Hotel-Keeper, Bengali, Oriya, Telugu, Malayalee, Diehard British, Chinese, Japanese, Greek etc. etc. etc." It is not easy to name all the approaches there are in this world. You are led into utter confusion and just do not know what approach to make.

IN AWE & REVERENCE

The approach of the Pagan with his simple, blank, unbiased mind may then appear a better approach in the circumstances. In awe and reverence the Pagan approaches a problem and finds a respectful solution, without tearing the problem itself into shreds. I do not wish to enter into any controversy as to whether the Pagan or any of the sectarian approach is superior or preferable. An answer to this is itself dependent on how you approach the entire question yourself.

There are of course many who believe that the problem itself is not very material. Everything lies in the approach that is being made. They will tell you that if you make the right approach, all difficulties would disappear. When there is a right approach, there is a wrong approach also. It is the contention of many good friends that it is because people always make the wrong approaches, everything in the world is in utter confusion today. That is some definite approach to solving the problems of the world today.

RIGHT VS. WRONG

But before you start advising people to always make the right approach, it is better that you know there are people who specialise in making right approaches at the wrong moment and the wrong approaches at the right moment. If your head does not reel a bit, it may comfort you to know that there are others who are experts in making the wrong approach at the wrong moment. This definitely does not mean that there is an equal number of people who make the right approach at the right moment. In that case everything would be simple.

Now I do not know how you will take a direct approach. Many resent it. They are flattered if an indirect approach is made. An indirect approach requires a third party. It is good to know that some one else knows an approach is being made.

Many declare vehemently that, if a direct approach is made, they would be sweet and reasonable and they get intransigent only because an indirect approach was made. You may not be ready with an answer to their query: When an approach can be made through the front door, why should the approach be made through the back-door?

The personal approach is always welcome. But this becomes very inconvenient in the commercial or official world, although it flatters the ego of the

man approached. An impersonal approach in such cases is liked by many. A section would certainly hold that a personal approach is actually taking advantage in an undeserving manner. At the same time an impersonal approach is considered indicative of lack of human sense of value.

While ancient princes, lords and cavaliers made their approaches to the Ladies of their Love or Infatuation through maids or other servants, which may be termed an indirect approach, I do not think for a moment that any modern lady would like this indirect approach. She might feel insulted. In any case it is better to be on guard against making approaches of any kind, direct or indirect, to our modern Eves, unless you are sure of the ground under your feet!

AT HIGH LEVEL

Governments can make only high level, Ministerial or Diplomatic approaches. All these approaches are of course made only after tentative approaches. That is also the approach you make when you angle for a small loan from a friend. You make very tentative approaches at first and, when you feel the fool is ready to part with his money, you make a bold direct approach. That is also something like the approach your wife makes when she thinks of buying some costly sarees, or jewels or going home to her mother.

You get stymied when a negative approach yields positive results and a positive approach yields the negative result. You very haltingly suggest to a friend that he would not think of having lunch with you. He floors you with a heavy pat on your back and a positive assertion: Why not? That would be well. Oh, I was dying to eat a lunch prepared by your wife all these years.

You tell your boss you have made all the arrangements to spend the summer in the village with your family and ask him for a few days off. He says "No," much like your wife does when you take a taxi home early in the evening and ask her to go out with you. How could she do that when she was literally taking out your life only the other day to go out with her? Of course all you wanted then was to curl yourself in a corner of the house! Well, that is the mystery of the positive and negative approaches.

I must say God also follows your wife in this. When you make positive approaches for money, it does not come to you. When you make a negative approach towards children, you get more of them!!

I have seen a number of instances where a man approached for a favour was really ready to help. But a false approach like telling him what an important man the seeker was, a bad choice of word with the wrong shade of meaning or the slight modulation of tone bordering on the commanding or the demanding type turned the person against him. The help was withdrawn.

THROUGH STOMACH

The approach to a man's heart is supposed to be through his stomach. This may have been true in those days when only housewives and women knew the art of cooking. Things should be different now when men are the best cooks. And it is always woman and not man who has to worry about making an approach to a man's heart. Perhaps modern woman would have to worry about a substitute approach to man's heart, since she has lost the art of cooking.

Unfortunately, we still think of enemies and enemy approaches have to be severely guarded against. All approaches to our own defence system also should be heavily protected.

While speeding across, you sight a scrap heap of dung, rubbish and battered tins on the road. You don't have to turn around or take a closer look. You are sure you are on the approaches to a village or suburban town.

The medieval kings, lords and other aristocrats did not mean anything else except that you are allowed to go near and stand about six feet away from them when they said "Approach."

VERY VITAL IN LIFE

It takes an unrelenting series of hedging-in approaches from all angles, all at the same time, to get a rupee out of an unwilling grandfather or grandmother, as any school boy would ruefully remember. You have to adopt this approach even when you have to get your own money back from those to whom you have lent it. In my experience I have found this hedging-in approach is very vital in all spheres of life where anything has to be got done, like feeding the child, or giving it castor oil or pour education down into its unwilling protesting head. The rest I leave to your imagination.

Indeed the series of approaches are far too many for any one even to 'ist them. But it is all bound to boil down and culminate in the individual approach. Each individual has a way of approach peculiar to himself or herself. After reading all this, I am sure some one would say I have left out quite a number of approaches they know. When I say this, you can estimate the proper proportion of this problem of "Approaches." From being an approach to problems, the Approach itself has become a problem!

TO MARRY OR NOT TO MARRY ... THAT IS THE QUESTION!

By MUKUL GUPTA

"Needles and pins, needles and pins,
When a man marries his trouble begins."

WHOEVER might be the anonymous author of this pin-prick Nursery Rhyme, he would long be cursed or blessed as a gloomy prophet of panic or a gracious harbinger of homely truth. It is as likely as not that many a man have chosen to remain alone, lest the man-woman-alliance should prove needle-some and the prophecy of the rhymester come true.

Indeed, marriage and love have inspired many poems of hope, provoked many ballads of despair and woven many cobwebs of romance. Whether these poets, cynics and romantics have revealed their own minds and experience in their written words none would be able ever to swear. But they make a very interesting reading, nevertheless, to know what man has thought of woman, and woman of man.

Let us look, first, from the platform of the Man. Shakespeare gave an *ex parte* verdict when he said : "Frailty, thy name is woman." He did not stop at that. In *All's Well That Ends Well*, he warned that "a young man married is a man that's marred." And again in *Merchant of Venice*, his judgment was that "The ancient saying is no heresy, Hanging and Wiving go by destiny."

Women, men say, possess a very condensed vocabulary but a very quick turn-over of the limited stock of words they have. "Ten measures of speech," it is said, "descended on the world; women took nine and men one." Bernard Shaw pitied a lady who had lost the art of conversation but, unfortunately, not the power of speech. "I am very fond of the company of ladies," said Dr. Johnson. "I like their beauty, I like their delicacy, I like their vivacity, and I like their *silence*."

WEAKNESS FOR AGE

Women, men again complain, have a weakness for their age. They would never like to be told about their real age, particularly when they are on the wrong side of thirty. A London Society woman, having spent a large sum of money on beauty treatment, asked Bernard Shaw on his 93rd birth-day: "How old do you think I look ?" "Judging by your teeth," replied Shaw, "I should say 18; by your blonde curls 19; and by your attitude 14." The lady was flattered and said : "Thanks for the compliment but, still, how old do I look ?" "Well," said Shaw, "add together 18, 19 and 14 and the answer is 51."

But it is not only women but men also who would love to conceal their age. But it is the other way about. And the reason is the same. "Men wish to appear older than they are in order to rule sooner and women wish to appear younger than they are in order to rule longer."

Are women gifted with unbending strength of mind ? Chesterton would say, No. "Twenty million women got up and said : We will not be dictated to." And what did they really do ? "They all went out to become stenographers." Byron also tendered evidence against her when he wrote :

"A little while she strove, and much repented,
And whispering 'I'll ne'er consent'—consented."

But quite to the contrary was the experience of Cervantes in *Don Quixote* when he confirmed that "Between a woman's Yes and No, there is not room for a pin to go."

Women hardly ever give way in argument. Though vanquished, they will argue still. Few could lime-light this womanly virtue better than P. J.

Toulet in the fewest of words: "If you're in the right, argue like a man; if you're in the wrong, like a woman." In any case, it is always futile to argue with her and one would do well to heed the advice of the New York Post: "Fools try to convince a woman: wise men persuade her."

"GOD'S MISTAKE"

No woman would pardon the cynic philosopher Nietzsche for his provocative judgment on her tribe. "God created woman," said the philosopher, "and boredom did indeed cease from that moment." Every woman would have felt flattered if he had stopped at that. But, no, the unkindest cut was to follow. "But many other things ceased as well. Woman was God's second mistake." Lord Chesterfield joined the issue with Nietzsche when he said: "Women are only children of larger growth." But women had a much earlier advocate of their cause in Dryden who stoutly sang: "Men are but children of larger growth."

Another famous author has spoken about women and it is for the women to say if he was right or wrong. About their sincerity, Joseph Conrad said that he would call a woman sincere when she would volunteer a statement resembling remotely in form what she really would like to say.

This is what man hath said of woman. But much has been said by woman of man too. And not a few gallant gentlemen have taken sides with the weaker sex. But are they really so weak? Surely not. The weaker sex, it has been very aptly said, is the stronger sex because of the weakness of the stronger sex for the weaker sex.

Fault-finding is essentially a man's habit, the women contend. "If I wear a hat with two feathers," declared Dr. Edith Summerskill, M.P. "they say *Feminine stuff*. If I wear a severe-hat, they say I am masculine." Indeed, where she really stands? But John Carpenter of the Evening News perhaps would not agree. He would place the blame at the woman's counter. "According to my wife, there are only two things wrong with me: everything I do and everything I say."

SENSE OF HUMOUR

Women are often accused of not having any sense of humour or wisdom. George Eliot was profoundly annoyed with the charge and her reply was equally devastating. "I'm not denying," she said,

"the women are foolish: God Almighty made 'em to match the men." Supremely witty was the outspoken comment of Miss Outhwaite, President of the Psychology Fellowship of Melbourne when she said: "I agree that God made woman without a sense of humour. But, why? So that they could love men, not laugh at them."

Women are often gifted with rich wit. An illustration to bear out the point was obtained in a fancy-dress ball in which Kipling was present. Each guest was dressed in a costume that was supposed to represent the title of a book. Most of them were easily recognisable, but that worn by one woman puzzled everybody. She represented a patent cigarette-lighter. At length, Kipling asked the dancer the name of the volume she had had in mind. "Why, Mr. Kipling," replied the girl, "it represents one of your own books." "Which one?" "The Light that Failed."

In advocating the cause of the woman, both Thackeray and Fielding spoke out certain home-truths about the psychology of the man. "If the women did not make idol of us," said Thackeray, "and if they saw us as we see each other, would life be bearable and could society go on?" Fielding went a step further in saying that there was nothing a man of good sense would dread in a wife as her having more sense than himself. Mark Twain, in spite of being a man, championed the case of woman in ten small words more forcefully than a torrent of eloquence could succeed in doing. "Man is the only animal that blushes. Or needs to."

LABOUR OF LOVE

But whatever man may say against woman or vice versa, they are the players in a common drama known as Marriage. They are equal partners of a running business—love. And what is love? Shaw has said that first love is only a little foolishness and

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That Puja Tea

By M. B. Mazumdar

"WHY are you giving me a blank stare?" my wife asked me.

"I am not giving you a blank stare," I told her sharply.

"Oh, yes, you are. You look totally absent-minded."

"You are quite wrong, woman. My mind is wonderfully alert. I remember every single detail of the task you have imposed on me."

"Let me see. Have you got those twenty one-rupee notes secure in your inside pocket?"

"I have."

"Is that list of things to be bought safe in your trouser-pocket?"

"It is."

"That's all right. And I can see that pen of yours. You remember what that pen is for?"

"It is for putting a tick against an article in the list when it is bought."

"And what are you carrying that cloth-bag in your hand for?"

"To bring the things home in."

"Can you reproduce the list orally?"

"I can. Listen. A pound of tea, a pound of sugar, a tin of assorted biscuits, and a dozen bananas."

"Very good. Of course you know very well why I have asked you to do this purchasing job?"

"Very well, indeed, wife. The Puja holiday is on. One of your foreign friends is coming to tea this evening to have some idea of our customs and traditions. It is the close of the month, and we have run out of most of our kitchen-stuff. Hence this mission of mine."

"Thanks. You may go."

As I walked along the street, nervously swinging the cloth-bag by my side, I felt like a fish out of water. And not merely like a fish out of water. To be exact, I felt like an out-of-water fish that has suddenly found itself in an active frying-pan.

At the turn of the street I found a banana-seller squatting on his haunches behind a huge wickerwork basket heaped up with quite ripe and luscious fruit. I bought a round dozen of this man's best bananas for a rupee. I put a tick against the bananas in my list and saw the pen back in its pocket. I handed the vendor a rupee-note and restored the rest of the amount to the inside pocket. I put the bunch of the bananas into the cloth-bag. I felt very happy. I had successfully carried out twenty-five per cent of my job. I sauntered away from the banana-man with the latest cinema song on my lips. I set my course for the tea-agent with that gloriously cheerful mood which comes to those brave and efficient men who have really and truly bagged their bananas in accordance with their wives' instructions.

"Polish, sir?" a high-pitched voice assailed my ears.

I stopped and found a bootpolish-boy and a newspaper-boy sitting together by the road-side with their stocks-in-trade before them. This was an ideal pair, to be sure! I looked at my shoes, and decided to get them polished. I went up to the pair, bought a paper, put down my bag, and ordered the boot-black to do his best for me. He started on his job, and I started running over the headlines. The shoes were expertly shined before I had done the front page. I paid out an anna, folded up the paper, and to make up for the lost time shot through the cluster of the boot-black's clients that had formed behind me. I must have hit one of the men rather badly in the process of getting out of the throng, for a pained shout rang out after me. I ran for the tea-agent. I am rather shy of meeting men whom I have unconsciously struck.

"A tound of pea," I told the tea-agent, breathlessly.

"Sir?" he enquired with raised eye-brows.

"A pound of tea," I corrected myself. "And let it be the best blend you have."

"Here you are, sir," he said, slapping a neat packet down on his counter. "Three rupees and four annas."

The price was paid. The item was ticked. The remainder of the cash, the list, and the pen were carefully returned to their respective pockets. Fifty per cent of my task done! I was just about to break into a merry tune when it dawned on me that I had left that cloth-bag of mine (with the dozen bananas) beside the boot-black's block. No bullet ever whizzed out of its barrel as I whizzed out of the tea-agent's shop.

I arrived at the boot-black's open-air establishment as the Frontier Mail arrives at the Bombay Central. I experienced great relief when the boot-black, a boy of sterling moral character, passed me

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TO MARRY OR NOT TO MARRY

(Continued From Page 138)

a lot of curiosity. Bulwer-Lytton would look upon love as the business of the idle, but the idleness of the busy. In between stands the cynical contributor to the New Zealand Mirror who unblushingly says that love has conquered all things except poverty and tooth-ache.

But young lovers need not be in want of wise counsels. Stephen Leacock has given the warning that many a man in love with the dimple makes the mistake of marrying the whole girl. Even so taciturn a person as Thomas Carlyle has advised that if you are ever in doubt as to whether you should kiss a pretty girl, always give her the benefit of doubt. Many would, however, question the summing up made by Shakespeare when he said : "Men are April when they woo, December when they wed."

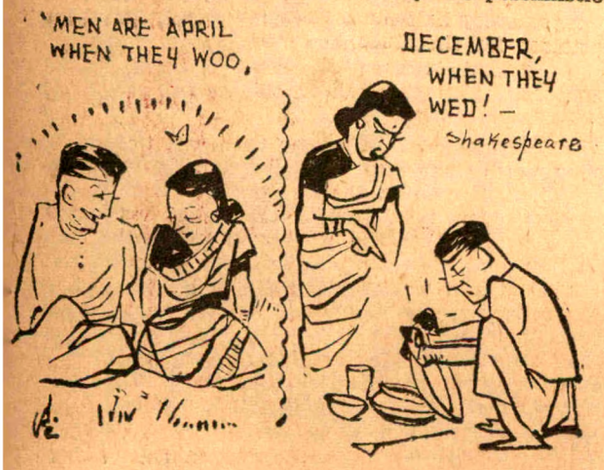
The next step, false or wise, to love is marriage. People have looked at marriage from hundred-and-one angles. And experience varies. No sooner does a man marry than he finds himself with a critic at his elbow. Very few men realise, others say, how short they fall of perfection until they possess a wife. Marriage, says a third husband, is a committee of two on ways and means; one gets her way, the other provides the means. A woman worries about the future, asserts an observer, until she gets a husband while a man never worries about the future until he gets a wife.

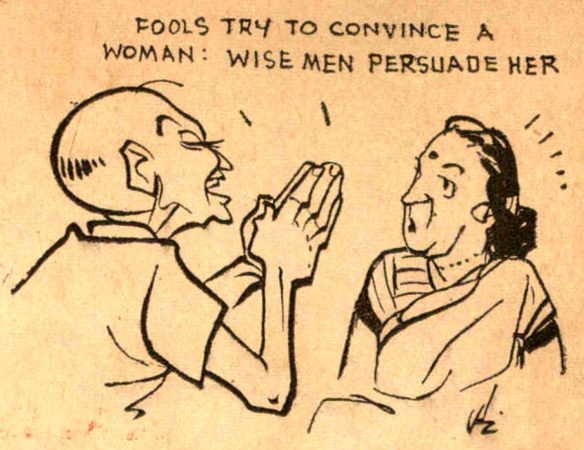
GREAT UNCERTAINTY

Nowhere the future more stoutly denies to take off its shroud of uncertainty than in the case of marriage. "Matrimony", says Heine, "is the high sea for which no compass has yet been invented." "No navigator," Balzac supports him, "has yet traced the lines of latitude and longitude on the conjugal sea."

But once married, there is no looking back. Two women writers of eminence have given the warning. "Wedlock," says Miss Mulock, "is a lane where there is no turning." And to men Mlle. Scuderi's counsel is: "They should keep their eyes wide open before marriage, and half-shut afterwards."

But let us not take too seriously the pessimistic





outbursts of Colley Gibbe: "Oh! how many torments lie in the small circles of a wedding ring." In contrast is the soothing saying of Goethe when he says: "A wife is a gift bestowed upon a man to reconcile him to the loss of paradise."

Montaigne gave a prescription for a good marriage. "A good marriage," he said, "would be between a blind wife and a deaf husband." Dean Swift perhaps had no high opinion about marriage. Otherwise he would not have said : "What they do in heaven we are ignorant of; but what they *do not* we are told expressly, that they neither marry nor are given in marriage." Francis Bacon was asked when a man should marry and his reply was : "A young man not yet, an elderly man not at all". To those who marry for the second time, Dr. Johnson's words of condolence were : "Alas ! another instance of the triumph of hope over experience !"

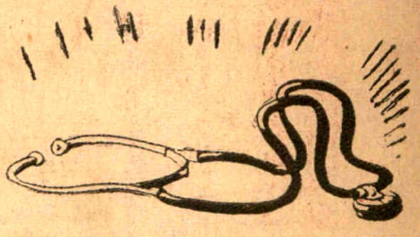
CONVERSION-TABLE

In a most amusing conversion-table of first-love-turned-to-marriage, a contributor to *The Tatler* has discovered eleven stages of transformation. They are :

FIRST LOVE	MARRIAGE
MEANS	MEANS
Trusting	Dusting
Weeping	Sweeping
Thrilling	Grilling
Crying	Frying
Spending	Mending
Minding	Grinding
Petting	Sweating
Yearning	Earning
Raving	Saving
Caring	Sharing
Hoping	Coping

And thus the tale of Adam and Eve goes on. Adam and Eve may and do quarrel. But they, as Sydney Smith, Canon of St. Paul's said so beautifully a century ago, "are like a pair of shears, so joined that they cannot be separated, often moving in opposite directions, yet punishing anyone who comes between."

SMOKE AND THE DOCTOR



By Candy

"Fifteen men on the dead men's chest. . . . .
Yo Ho Ho and a packet of fags. . . . . .
Smoke, and the Doctor will do the rest. . . . ."

BOWDLERIZING R.L.S. If you can call up your *Treasure Island,* you will remember the lines. What held good of a bottle of rum is now good for a packet of cigarettes. I don't think there will be a riot over my changing the "Devil" to "Doctor."

Smoke and you get cancer. Who says so? The doctor does. It is a funny thing, but when I checked up the few men I have known to have got cancer, I found that not one of them was a smoker. But that, of course, proves nothing.

And yet, in the *Time* Magazine of America, I read a remarkable confession from a reader: "I've read so much about smoking causing cancer that I've finally decided to give up—*reading.*" That was a good one, wasn't it? I am afraid, it represents quite a large school of thought.

Of late, there has been a whisper gathering momentum all over the place that I am not the man I was,—that the "Patter" is not the "Patter" it was. I don't wonder. One can't have everything. It is now definite that I am not going to have cancer. I have been listening to doctors.

Not doctors only. For nearly fifty years, I have been hearing the same thing. Not cancer, but every other blessed disease known or unknown to the pharmacopoeia. I am like that man who went to his doctor with a broken ankle.

After a careful examination, the doctor enquired: "How long have you been going about like this?" "Two weeks," said the patient. The doctor was amazed. "But good Heavens, man, your ankle is broken: how you managed to get around is a marvel. Why didn't you come to me at first?"

Listen to the victim's reply. "Well, doctor," he confided, "Every time I say something is wrong with me, my wife declares I'll have to stop smoking." The mother does before you start getting married. And then, every time, you get married, every wife will say the same thing. Take it from *me,*—she will.

She doesn't now, for I've been listening to doctors. There is a complaint that I have been showing signs of losing my temper now and then. Well, you can't have everything, can you? You can't shoo off cancer and yet not lose your temper.

With smokers, the rule is that the more they fume, the less they fret. You make "cuts" in his fumes, how can he help fretting? At least, for some months.

A year ago, I could dash off an article like this in half-an-hour. Today, I have been struggling with the thing for 24 hours. And all because I have not permitted myself more than three half-cigarettes during the process. Last year, it would have been just five cigarettes for the article.

Yes, my daily quota was twenty-five. Nothing to write home about, nothing to shout from the house-tops. I know. Yet,—it is something, you will surely concede. From 25, it has come down to 5, just five. And I smoke them in 10 smokes. Ten half-cigarettes.

It is some performance, believe me. For one of the hardest jobs in the world is for a veteran smoker to *cut down* his daily ration. It is far easier to give it up. I have met quite a few who, after smoking half their life-time, have eschewed the habit outright. But none who has made a good cut and kept it up. I have,—for 6 months now.

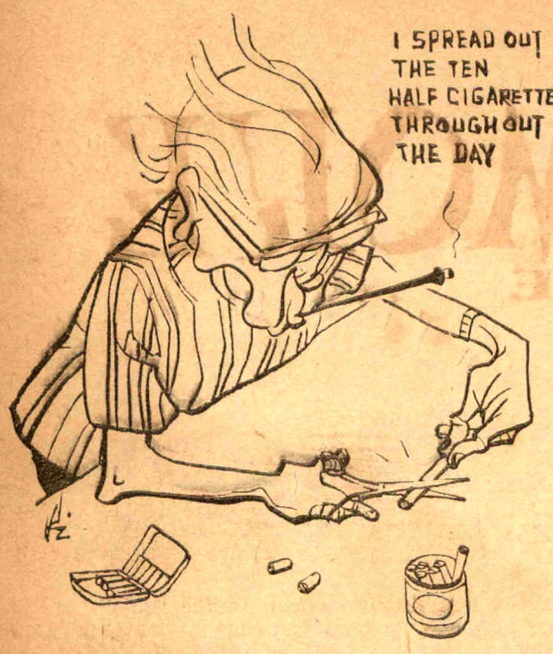
I spread out the ten half-cigarettes throughout the day. One after tea, another after a snack, a third after lunch, and so on right up to bedtime. And I enjoy every half more than ever. By the way, I use a holder for the stubs.

I said, it was difficult to make voluntary cuts. It wouldn't be, if you can manage to have a spot of c.t. C.T., you know, the thing every man of note in town is expected to have. Coronary thrombosis. Once you have that, it will not be so difficult to listen to doctors.

Pardon me if I interrupt myself to strike a note of warning. Not always is it wise to take doctors literally. I am thinking of the case of the man who was prescribed by a new doctor "a diet of fruits, no drinks, and just one cigar after breakfast." When the doctor enquired after a fortnight of it how he was keeping, you know what the patient said?

"The fruit was alright, doctor. And I didn't mind the ban on whisky. But, doctor, *that cigar after breakfast was too much!*" You see, the man had never smoked a cigar in his life before. The doctor had taken too much for granted.

Now, listen. Take it from me,—and let the doctors say what they will,—you stick to just one packet of ten cigarettes a day (not ten halves), and nothing will touch you. Follow my way. Cut the 10



into 20 halves and spread the lot throughout the day But can you do it?

The process will be helpful if you have the right kind of wife. I mean, a wife with the sort of will which wives should have in these days of masculine skulduggery. Let *her* have the tin or the packet. Let *her* cut the ten into twenty neat halves with her pair of scissors or one of your own new razor-blades. And let *her* dole the lot out to you from hour to hour.

A new chapter of connubial bliss will open to you. And the stubs will taste all the sweeter on the tongue. I am, of course, presuming that the lady is not a smoker herself. In that case, the recipe will be no good. And in that case, you might just as well settle down to cancer.

Post Script :

If you think that the above cuts will make the stubs too small for a decent smoke, try the following recipe. But remember that a full smoke does not mean an entire cigarette but only two-thirds of it. If you procure half-a-dozen pieces of rice paper and follow the routine as I give it, you will get 15 FULL SMOKES OUT OF 10 cigarettes.

Take 10 cigarettes. Keep I out for the present. Smoke nine. That gives you NINE SMOKES and nine one-thirds which you roll up to make 3 cigarettes. Smoke all three, making TWELVE SMOKES, and leaving 3 one-thirds which may be rolled to make one cigarette which may be smoked, making THIRTEEN SMOKES, and leaving one one-third stub.

Now take the 10th cigarette, and smoke it. That gives you your FOURTEENTH SMOKE, and one one-third stub.

What now? You have had 14 smokes and two one-third stubs. How can you possibly make a 15th smoke out of two stubs? This is how.

Borrow a cigarette from a friend. Smoke that, making your FIFTEENTH SMOKE, and leaving one one-third stub.

You have now three stubs of one-third length. Roll these into one complete cigarette and hand it to your friend with a thousand thanks.

It is NOT a "dud." Follow the routing step by step, carefully. You will see that it works

THAT PUJA TEA

(Continued From Page 139)

up my bag with its contents intact with the honey-sweet words "You forgot it here, sir. I shouted loudly after you, sir, but you would not hear me, sir." I thanked him very warmly, gave him one naya paisa I located in my shirt-pocket, and made for my favourite provision-stores for the biscuits and sugar. I dropped in at the post-office on the way for a couple of envelopes I badly wanted. There was a bit of a crush at the window, but I managed to get my envelopes in twenty minutes. I was at the provision-stores in another fifteen. I received the tin of assorted biscuits and the pound of sugar, paid for the same, saw no necessity of any more ticks, and emptied my bag on the counter to have a final check-up of my purchases. You see, I am a very careful and cautious man. Goodness gracious! What was I seeing before me? Where on earth was that packet of tea? Had I forgotten it at the tea-agent's?

I dashed out of the provision-stores and streaked up to the tea-shop. The agent was expecting me. He looked very much like one of Mr. William Shakespeare's 'bright-eyed cherubin' when he put me in possession of my packet of his best blend of tea. One moment I was overwhelmed with this honesty of these boot-blacks and these tea-agents, but the next I was almost broken down with the realization that I had forgotten that bag and those three other articles at the provision-stores.

Gentle Reader, there is a limit to the ills which human flesh will bear. I was dog-tired. Completely done up in wind and limb. My wife still maintains that I ought never to have hired that taxi. But you will appreciate my predicament and understand clearly that there was no other way out for me. The taxi was tootling along temptingly. I was a mass of fagged out flesh and jangled nerves. I was tempted. I hailed the blessed vehicle. It stopped obediently. I got out of the shop and heaved myself into it. I sank into its cuddling depths. I ordered the driver to take me to the Ideal Provision Stores.

The provision-stores man, too, was eagerly waiting for me. I reclaimed my purchase, saw all the four items safe and sound in my bag, threw myself and the bag into the gently purring taxi, and drove home. I had done my job in full at long last. In the taxi I burst into a combination of six different tunes.

I dismissed the taxi at my gate as a monarch of old might have dismissed a slave. It droned away behind a thick cloud of dust. I marched proudly up to my door and gave it a triumphant rap. It opened. "Brought the things?" my wife asked.

"Look, woman!" I exclaimed, holding up the cloth-bag.

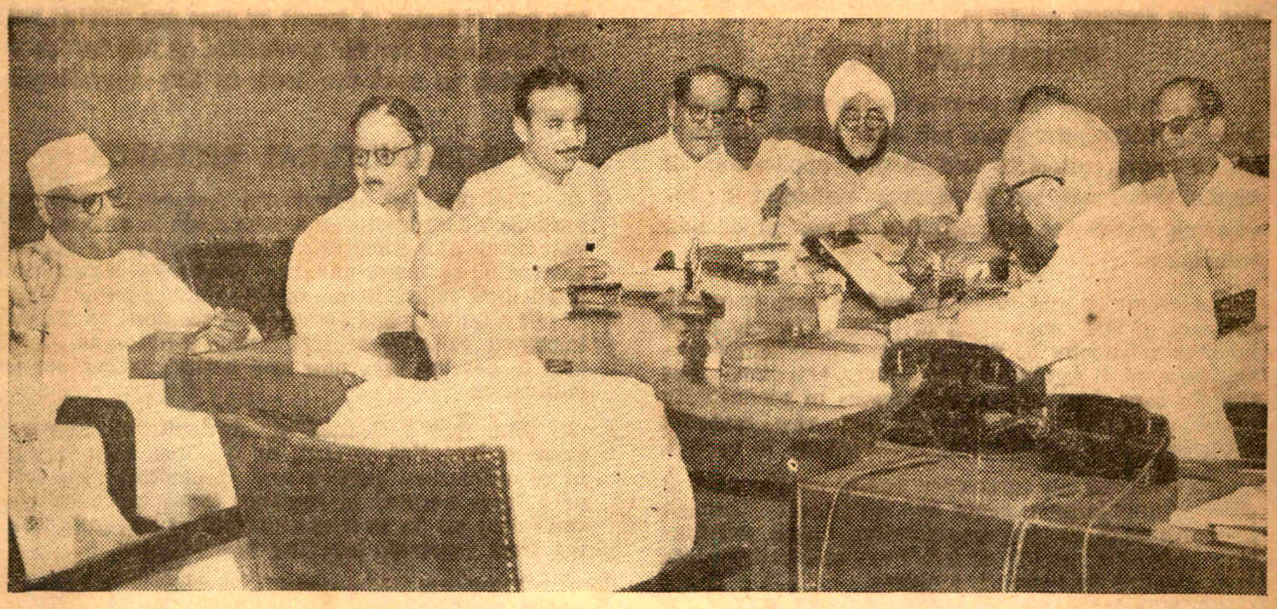
"But it is empty!"

Yes, it was empty. I was flabbergasted at this discovery.

"That taxi jolted badly," I tried to explain the mystery of the empty bag to my wife the moment I had recovered my senses. "I am sure the things ran out of the bag and fell down on the floor because of the jolts."

"Hrrrmph!" snorted my wife most contemptuously.

That taxi-driver never turned up with my lost things. He destroyed the faith in humanity that had been built within me by the boot-black, the tea-agent, and the provision-stores man. Please note that. And please note this, too. Some rascal picked up my pen at the post-office.



WHAT THE PLAN SEEKS TO ACHIEVE

On May 15, 1956, the draft Second Five-Year Plan was presented to the Indian Parliament. Nearly its double in size, the Second Plan is intended to carry forward and accelerate the process of development initiated in the First Plan. Picture shows Prime Minister, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, signing the draft Second Plan in the presence of members and officials of the Planning Commission

INDIA is now in her Second Plan period.

The First Five-Year Plan was instrumental in bringing about a marked improvement in levels of production, both in agriculture and in industry. It also initiated a number of structural and the titutional changes. The Plan evoked widespread public interest and enthusiasm and there is a new and insistent urge for rapid development all over the country.

Following the First Plan the Second Five-Year Plan has evoked keen enthusiasm. What the latter Plan envisages in different spheres is told here in a nutshell and the pictures accompanying the article tell the rest.

The place of public co-operation and participation in the scheme of democratic planning is well recognised.

An under-developed economy, such as India's, has large resources in man-power which are only partially utilised. And the ambitious scale, on which the country's development plans have been drawn up and are being implemented, makes it essential that the vast man-power of the community should be mobilised to the fullest extent.

Public co-operation in community growth is achieved in a number of ways, for instance, in constructing local works such as village roads, tree plantation, tanks, water-supply and drainage, and maintaining and improving existing minor irrigation works. The Second Plan envisages extensive opportunities for co-operative action both in urban and rural areas.

The National Extension Service and Community Projects, which have become such an important part of our development effort, were started with the object of rebuilding village life through work done principally by the people themselves. The vigour and enthusiasm with which the people responded to this call for self-help has been most encouraging, and has given rise to a great deal of optimism regarding the attainment of targets fixed for the Second Plan.

The value of the contribution which the people have made to the works undertaken in the National Extension and Community Project areas during the First Plan period amounted to more than one-third of the total expenditure on the works. Even more significant is the prevailing new spirit of self-reliance.

Public co-operation in development work has not remained confined to Community Projects and National Extension Service alone. Men and women all over the country and students from colleges and schools are taking an increasing share in the task of national development through *Shramdan*—for example, in building Kosi embankments in Bihar—and other works sponsored by official and non-official bodies.

Among the latter, the Bharat Sevak Samaj has made a major contribution. It has been able to attract a large number of voluntary workers for its

programmes, which now cover a wide field, and include social education, health and hygiene, work centres, youth and student camps, information centres and cultural activities.

PRODUCING FOOD

A continuous and progressive increase in India's level of living presupposes not only more effective use of known resources and better application of known techniques, but it requires vigilant and increasing search for and adoption of new production techniques.

Agriculture and allied pursuits absorb about 70 per cent of the population of India. Development involves a transfer of part of this stupendous working force from agriculture to other activities, but this, in turn, presupposes an increase in productivity in agriculture itself—if the food and raw material requirements of a developing economy are to be met.

All this means intensified efforts on the part of workers and improvements in agriculture through measures such as land consolidation, land reclamation, irrigation, supply of fertilisers and better seeds and adoption of better techniques.

Striking improvement in agricultural production under the First Plan imparted a measure of stability to the national economy. It enabled abolition of all controls and reduced the country's dependence on imports.

More than any other factor, in fact, the increase in agricultural production has paved the way for a higher rate of development during the Second Plan. The Second Plan aims at an increase of 15.5 million tons of foodgrains over the 1955-56 figures (estimated at 65 million tons).

PRODUCING CASH CROPS

Befitting her size and population, India ranks high among the producers of cash crops, such as tea, jute, coffee and tobacco, in the world.

These crops, in turn, constitute a significant factor in Indian economy, both in terms of internal consumption and potentialities for earning much-needed foreign exchange.

For tea alone, the Second Plan visualised an export target of over 500 million lbs. Other important earners of foreign exchange are coffee and tobacco, and both come under an ambitious development programme. A sum of Rs. 31 lakhs has been set aside for strengthening tobacco research and organising tobacco extension service in the Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh, the most important tobacco growing area in the country.

Vegetables are no earners of foreign exchange, but they constitute an important article of internal consumption, and provide a profitable side-activity to our farmers. Programme for encouraging fruit and vegetable production consists of schemes for the establishment of new orchards and seed nurseries, provision of seeds and plants to vegetable growers on credit, and organisation of marketing co-operatives for fruit and vegetable growers.

The target for cotton production laid down in the First Plan was exceeded in 1954-55, when production reached 42.98 lakh bales, giving the much-needed fillip to the textile industry, which reached a high production mark in 1955.

Next to textile industry in importance comes the jute industry. A target of over one million bales has been fixed for the production of jute in the Second Plan to meet the needs of this expanding industry.

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

The place of agricultural research in any programme of agricultural development is obvious. The vast army of agriculturists engaged in the gigantic enterprise of increasing the country's agricultural production relies, to no small extent, on the ability of our scientists and research institutions to discover improved varieties of fertilisers, seeds and crops, and to develop ever new and better techniques of cultivation.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research, since its inception as early as 1929, has been engaged in co-ordinating, guiding and promoting the work of a large number of research institutes, each concentrating on its own special field of research, ranging from vegetable breeding to veterinary.

The Second Plan provides for an expenditure of nearly Rs. 38 crores on various agricultural research and development schemes, which include intensive work on breeding of high-yielding crop varieties, development of manurial resources, afforestation, and the control of pests and plant diseases. A small but significant beginning has recently been made in the application of atomic energy to agriculture.

At the same time, training machinery is being geared up to meet the growing requirement for trained personnel to man multifarious research projects in agriculture. Attention is also being given to the complex task of co-ordinating research work with the actual experience and needs of the farmer, placing the research scientist closer to the cultivator in the field.

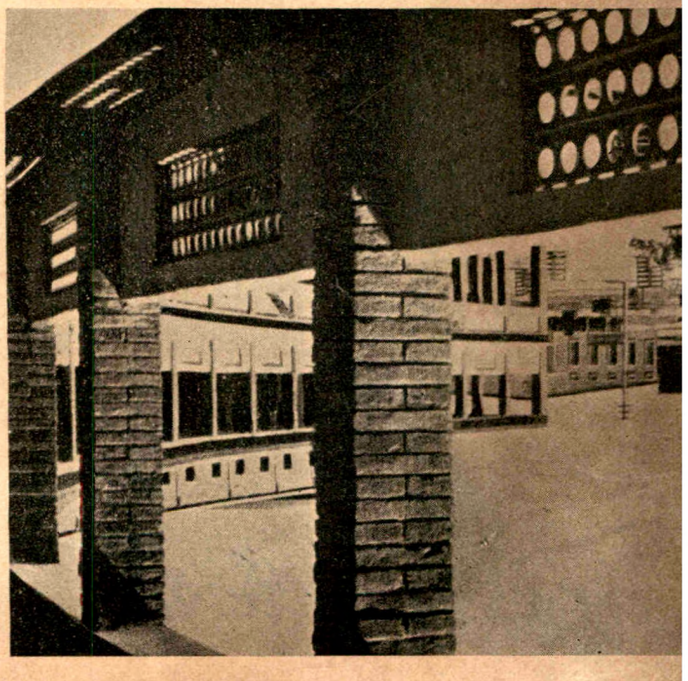
FIGHTING FLOODS

Floods often present an impressive spectacle, but they always make a sad story. Year after year, swelled by monsoons and melting snows, rivers in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Assam and other places overflow their banks to spread devastation over large areas. In one single year alone, in 1955, the extent of damage caused by floods in different parts of the country was of the order of Rs. 107 crores.

The immensity of the problem created by the recurrence of flood disasters and the nature and extent of damage caused by them led to the setting up of a machinery for the prevention and control of floods on a nation-wide scale.

Work under a broad programme of flood protection has already commenced in several States. Aerial photography and spot-levelling, and researches undertaken at the Flood Control Wing of the Central Water and Power Commission facilitate speedy implementation of long-term flood control measures, which include construction of embankments, reservoirs and drains for the diversion of flood waters.

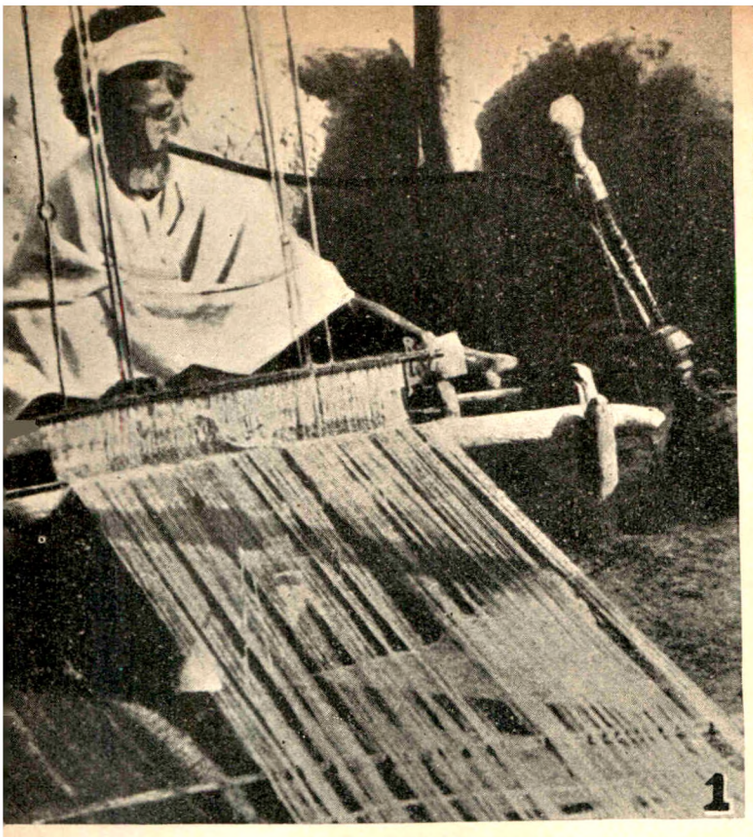
A provision of Rs. 60 crores has been made in the Second Plan for immediate and short-term measures. Long-term measures form part of the multi-purpose irrigation and power projects. The total ex-

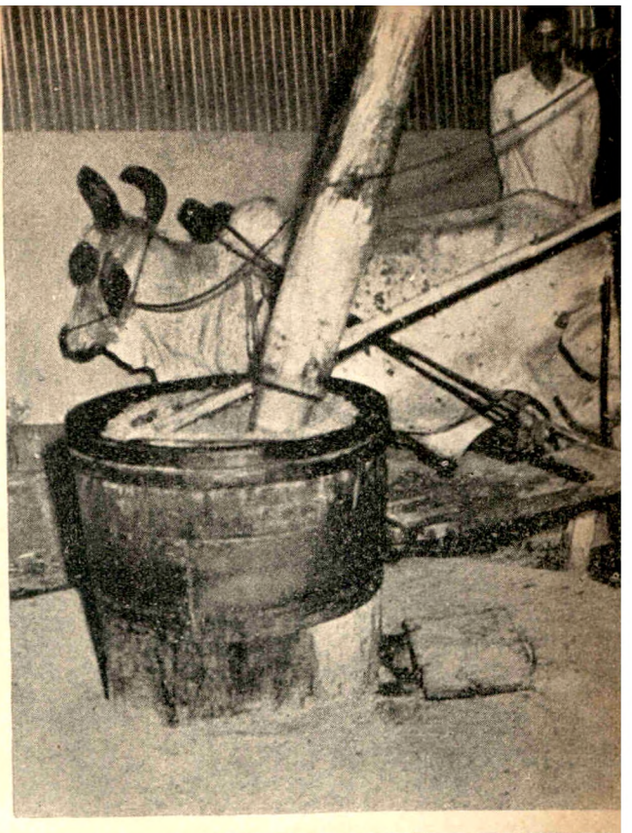


Pictures Tell The Plan

REFUGEE REHABILITATION

(1) Habra, one of the townships for refugee rehabilitation in West Bengal. (2) A training centre for refugees in West Bengal. (3) A refugee from West Pakistan at work. (4) Nilokheri, a township for displaced persons.

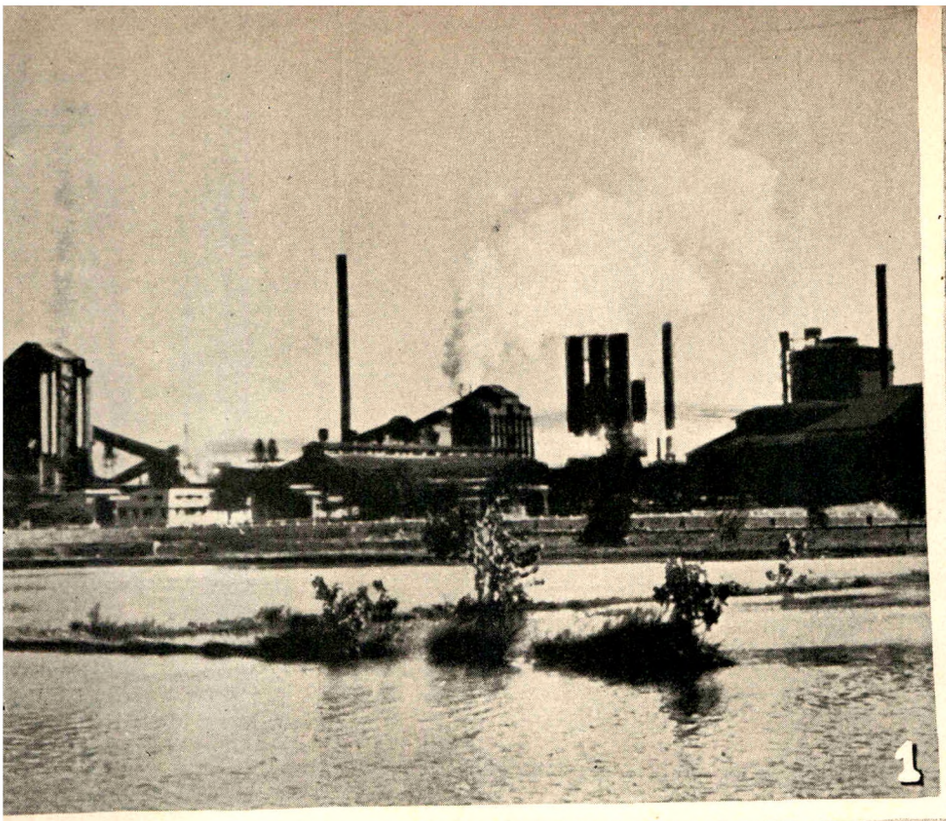


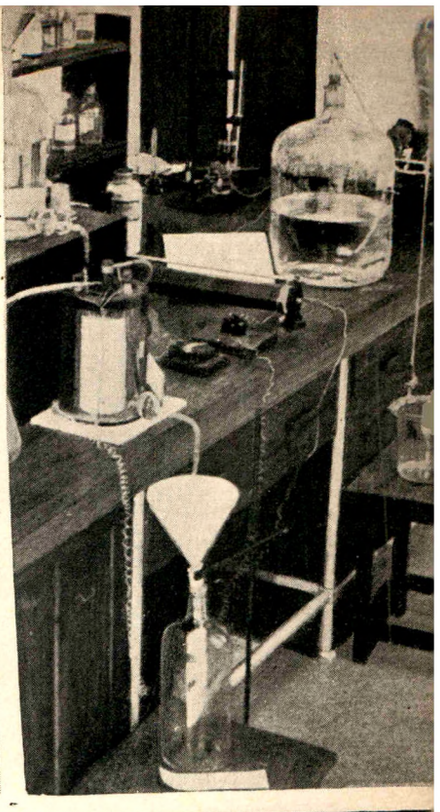


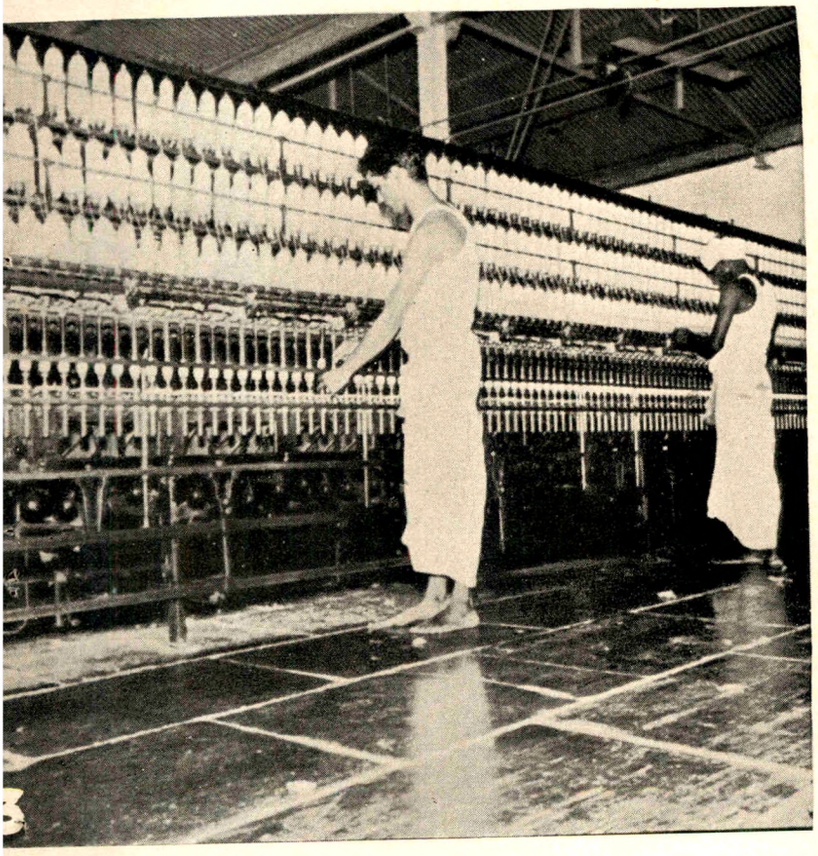
Pictures Tell The Plan

VILLAGE INDUSTRIES

1. *Carpet Weaver Busy at his Loom.*
2. *Extraction of Ghani Oil.*
3. *Potters at Work.*
4. *A Village Woman Making Fruit Basket*



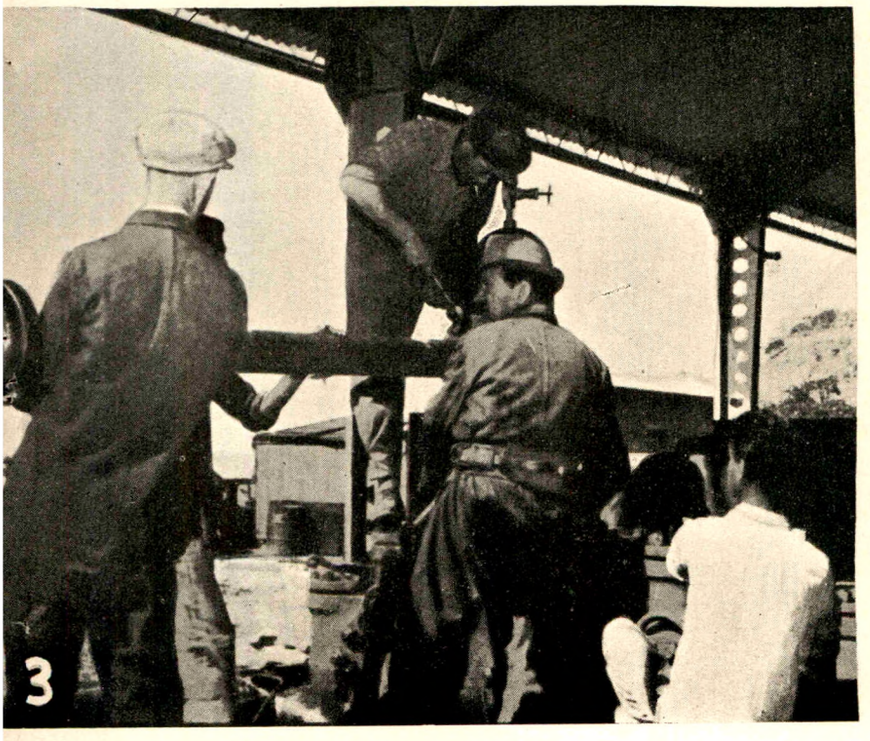


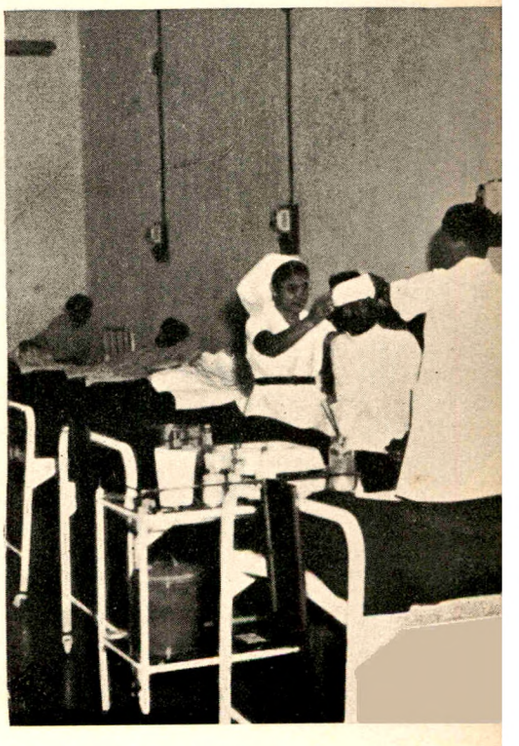


Pictures Tell The Plan

INDUSTRY

(1) Tata Iron & Steel Works. (2) Chemical Metal lurgy Laboratory. (3) Part of the Spinning Sectio of a Cotton Mill. (4) Trainees assembling radi set at recently started Bharat Electronics, Bangalore

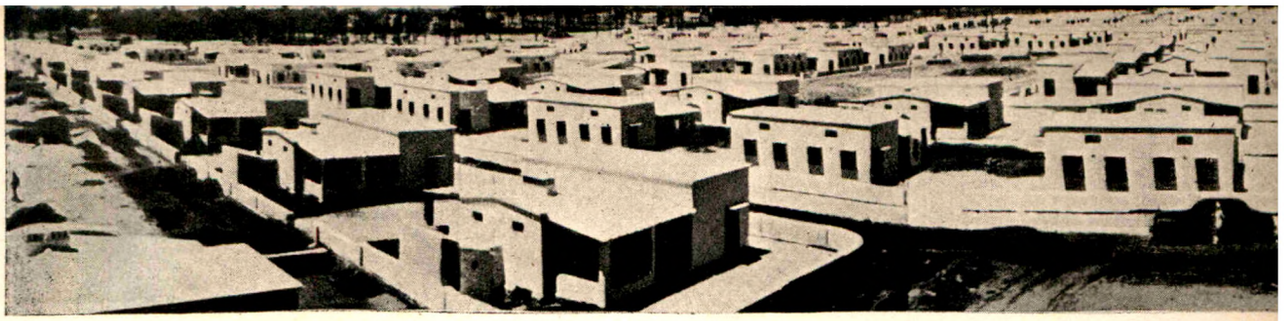




Pictures Tell The Plan

MINERAL RESOURCES

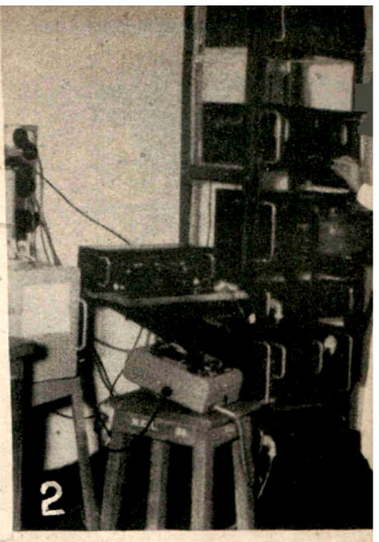
(1) A miner at work in the bowels of mica mine. (2) Digging for lignite. (3) gineers at the base of an oil derrick during d ling operation. (4) Miners' Colony Hospi

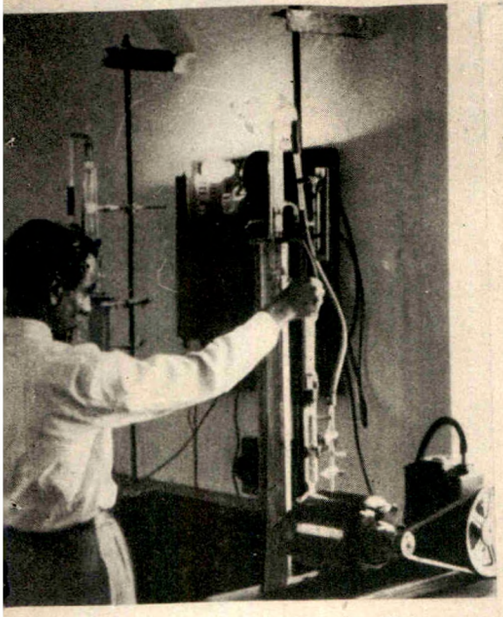


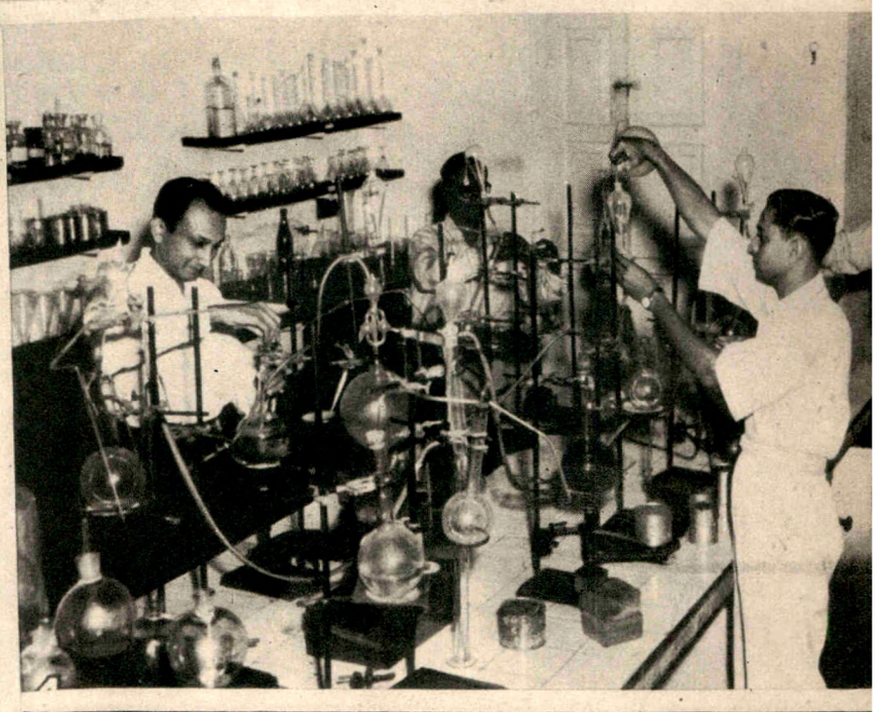
Pictures Tell The Plan

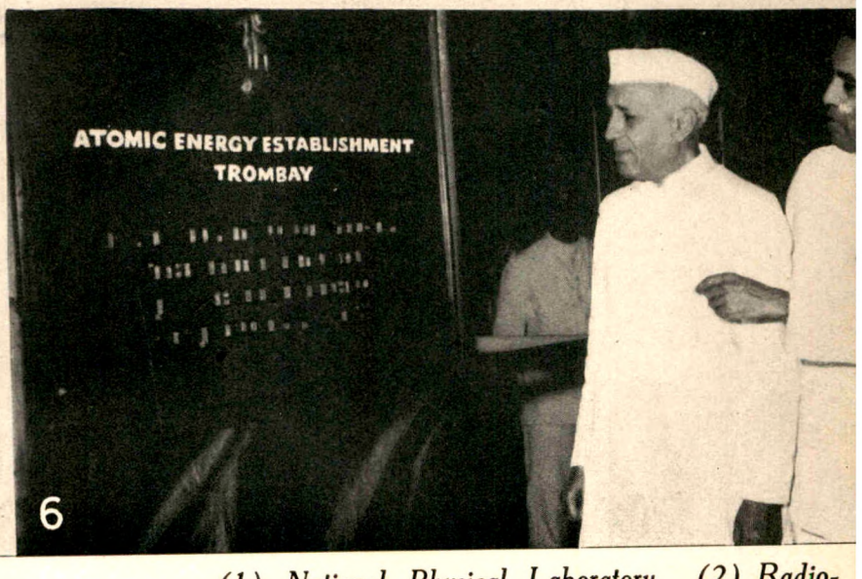
HOUSING

(1) An Industrial Housing colony. (2) A family former slum dwellers in the new home built under the slu clearance scheme. (3) A group of villagers in W Bengal building their own hut with their own ha and own material. (4) Fishermen on a Tripura Lak









Pictures Tell The Plan

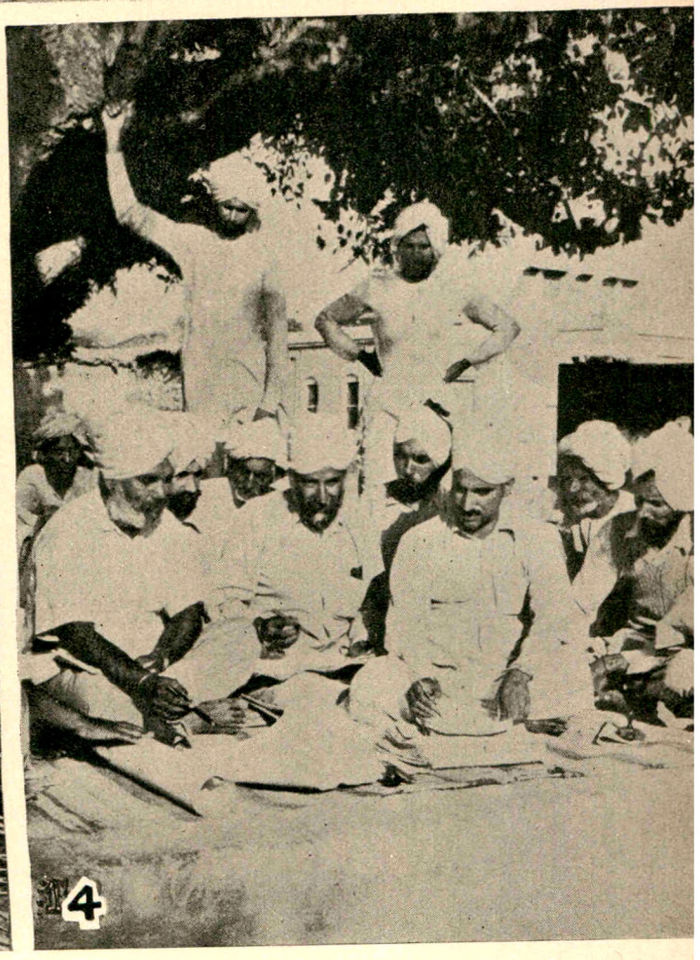
SCIENCE CENTRES

(1) National Physical Laboratory. (2) Radio-Active Tracing Centre of National Chemical Laboratory. (3) Turpentine Research Apparatus. (4) Central Food Technological Research Institute. (5) A Bullock Cart 'Wheel Tester'. (6) Atomic Energy Establishment. Nehru & Bhaba watching.

Pictures Tell The Plan

CASH CROPS

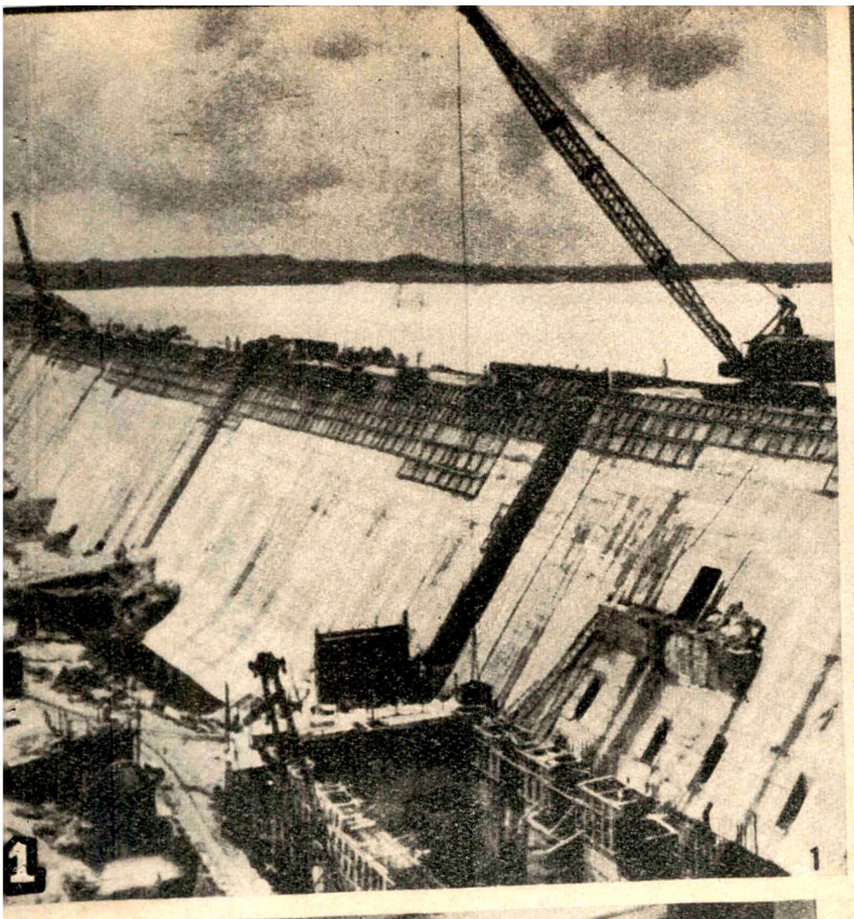
1. *Vegetable Grower.*
2. *Jute Cultivation.*
3. *Tea Gardens.*
4. *Coffee Plantation.*

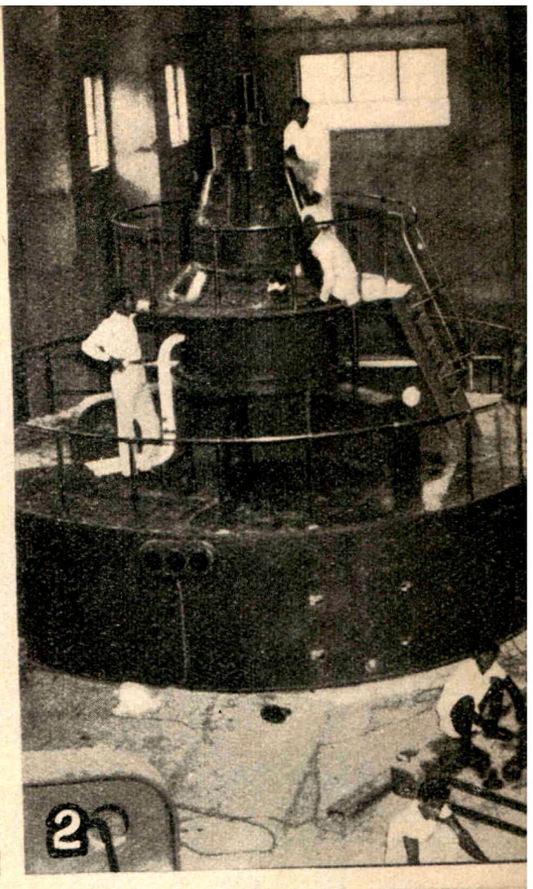


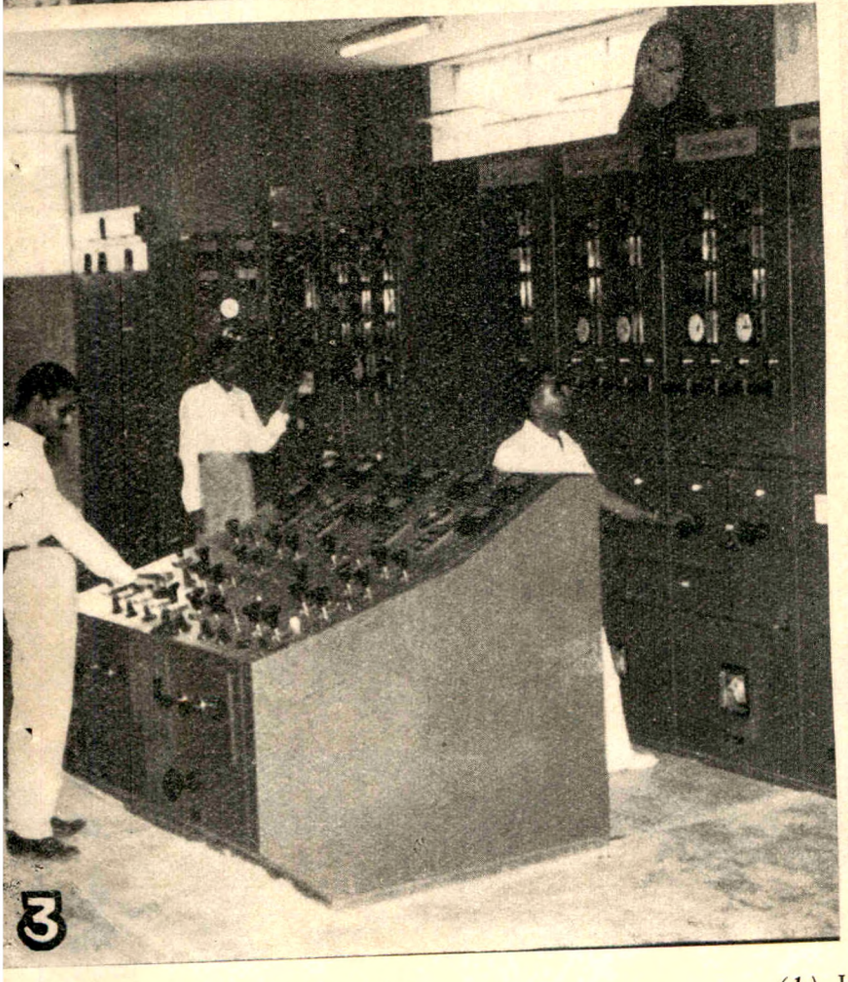
Pictures Tell The Plan

PRODUCING FOOD

(1) A team of tractors busy on a stretch of wasteland. (2) Farmers at work on a typical farm. (3) A harvest scene. (4) Farmers in a Punjab village sitting down with two Revenue officials to carry out land consolidation work.



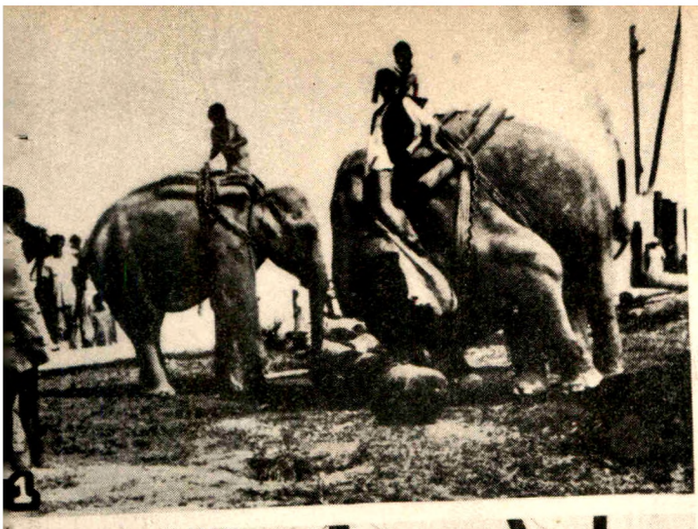


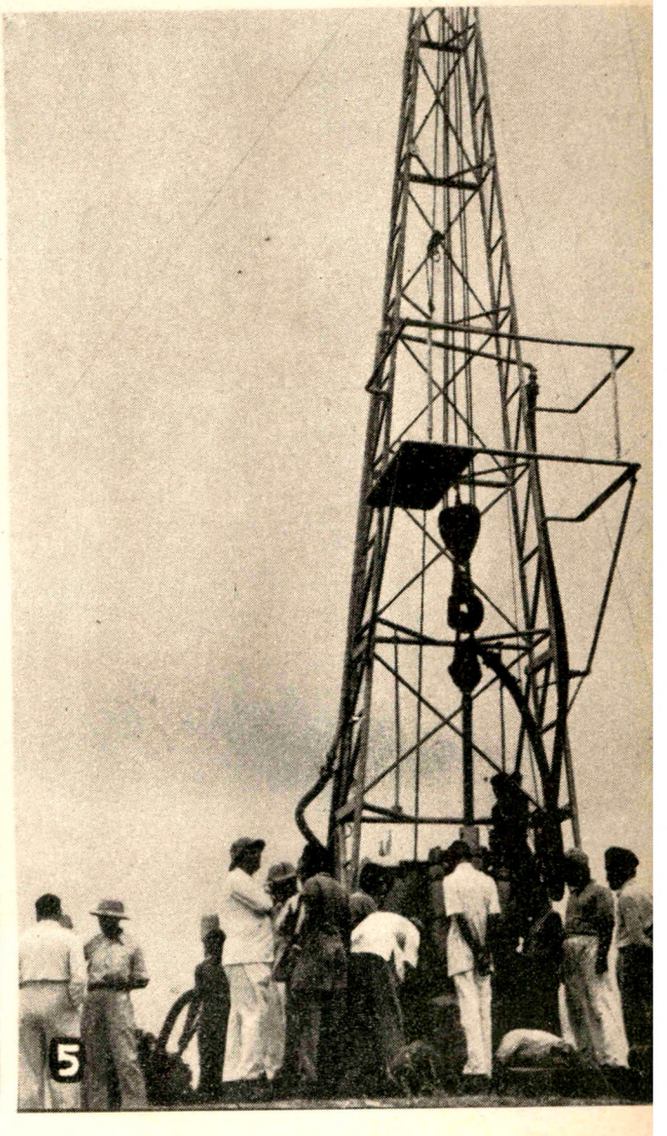


Pictures Tell The Plan

POWER SYSTEM

(1) Work in progress in Tilaiya Dam. (2) O
of the generators at Tilaiya Hydel Station. (
Main Control Board of a Hydel Station. (
A Tubewell in an East Punjab Power Syste

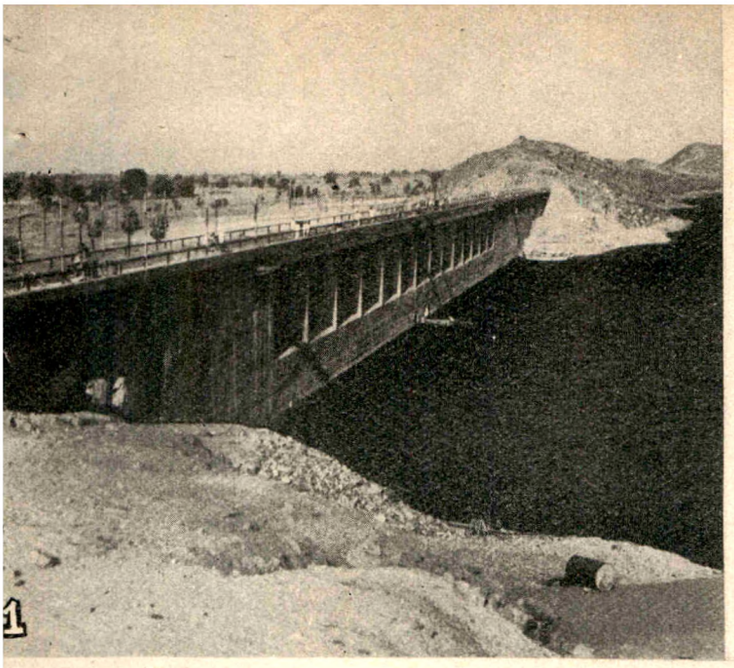


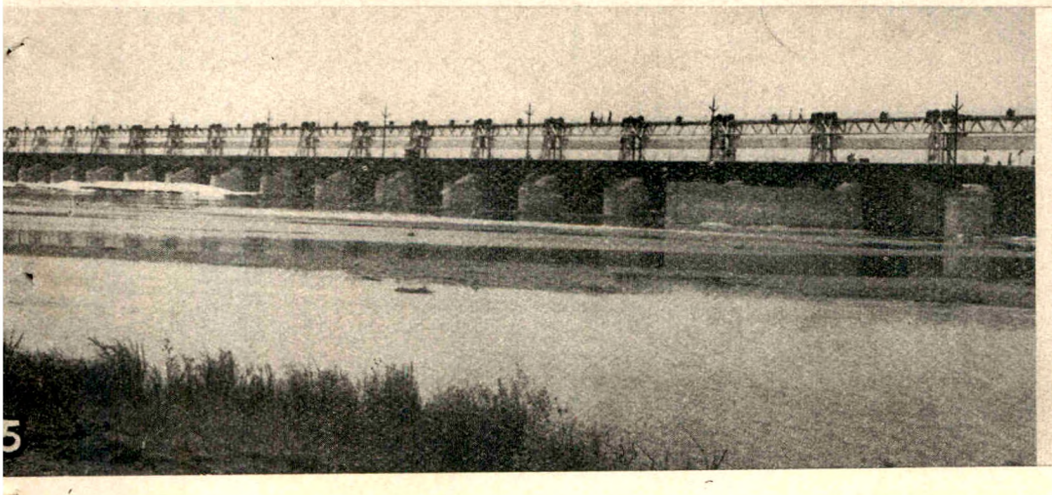


Pictures Tell The Plan

FIGHTING FLOODS

(1) Elephants being put to service in Assam. (2 Women labourers working on a spur. (3) Woo pylons being driven along river bank. (4) Pilin bamboo to control the Kosi. (5) Tubewell drilling

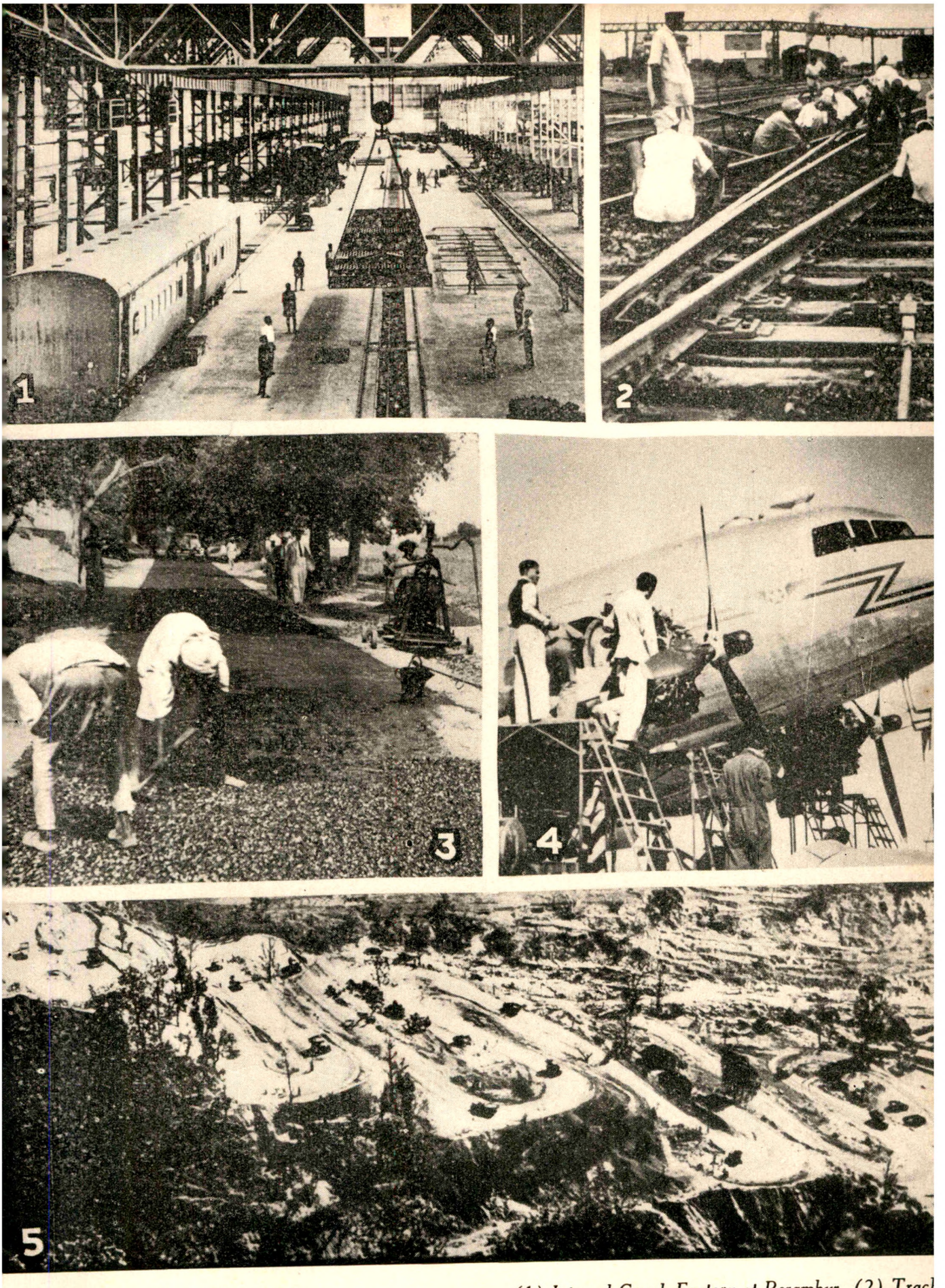




Pictures Tell The Plan

RIVER PROJECTS

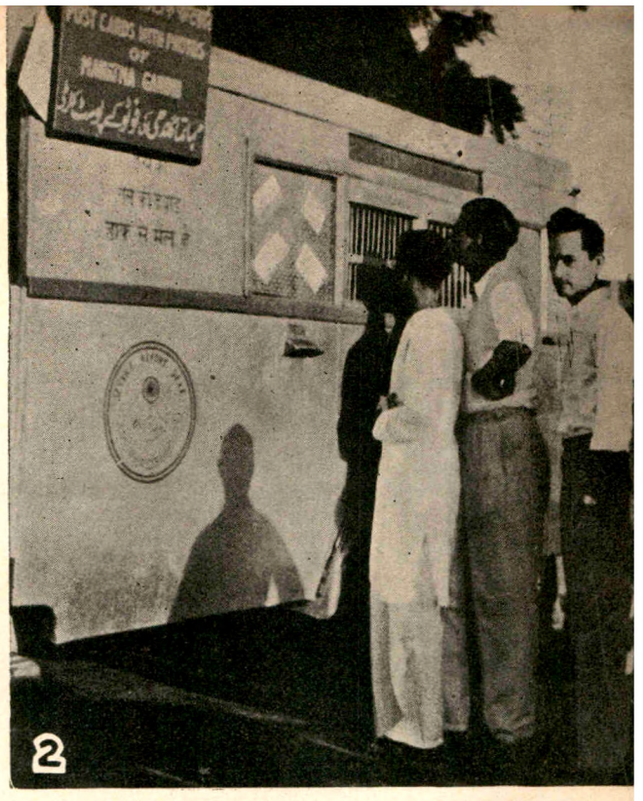
(1) Damodar. (2) Tungabhadra. (3) Hirakud. (4) Bhakra Nangal. (5) The Durgapur Canal. (6) Fifty-foot diameter Diversion Tunnel at Bhakra Nangal.

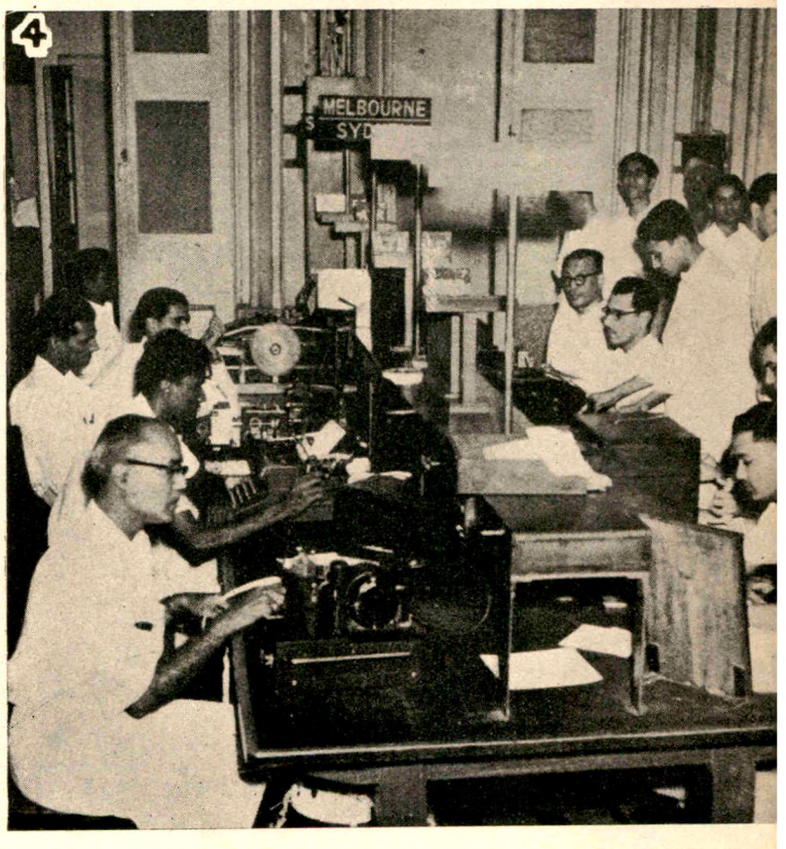


Pictures Tell The Plan

RAIL ROAD AND AIRWAYS

(1) Integral Coach Factory at Perambur. (2) Track repairing. (3) Road builders at work. (4) Passenger service planes. (5) Indo-Nepal Road is like a giant staircase skirting several Himalayan folds

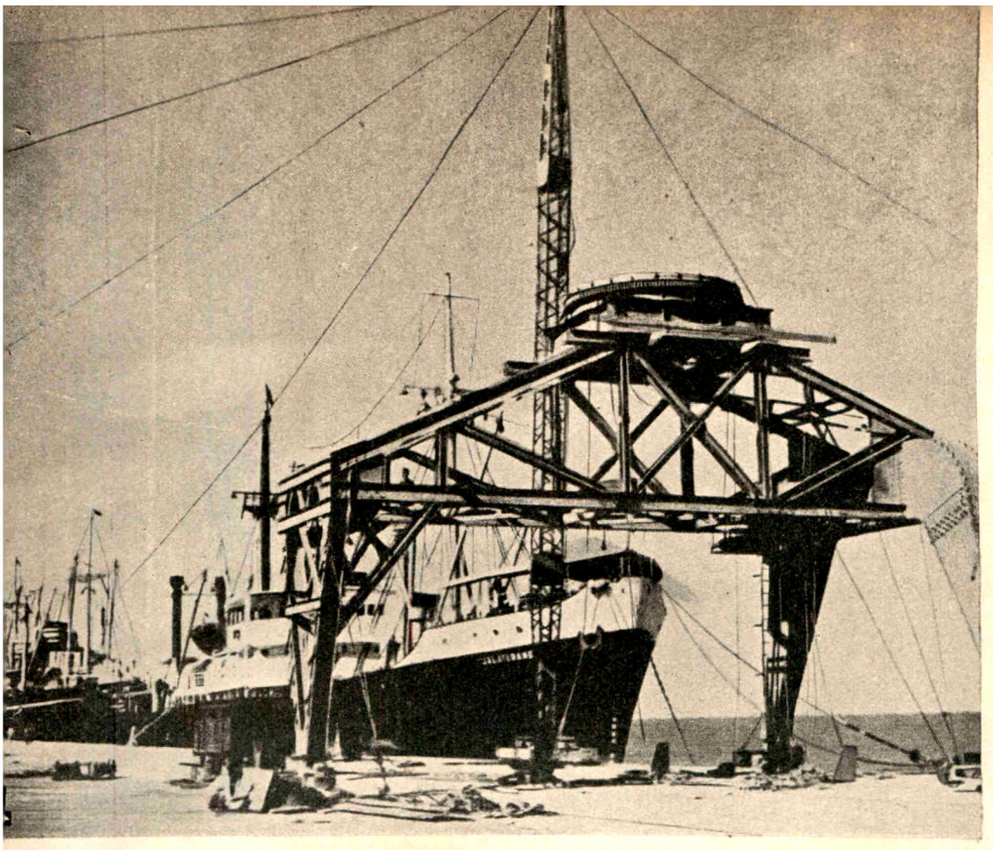


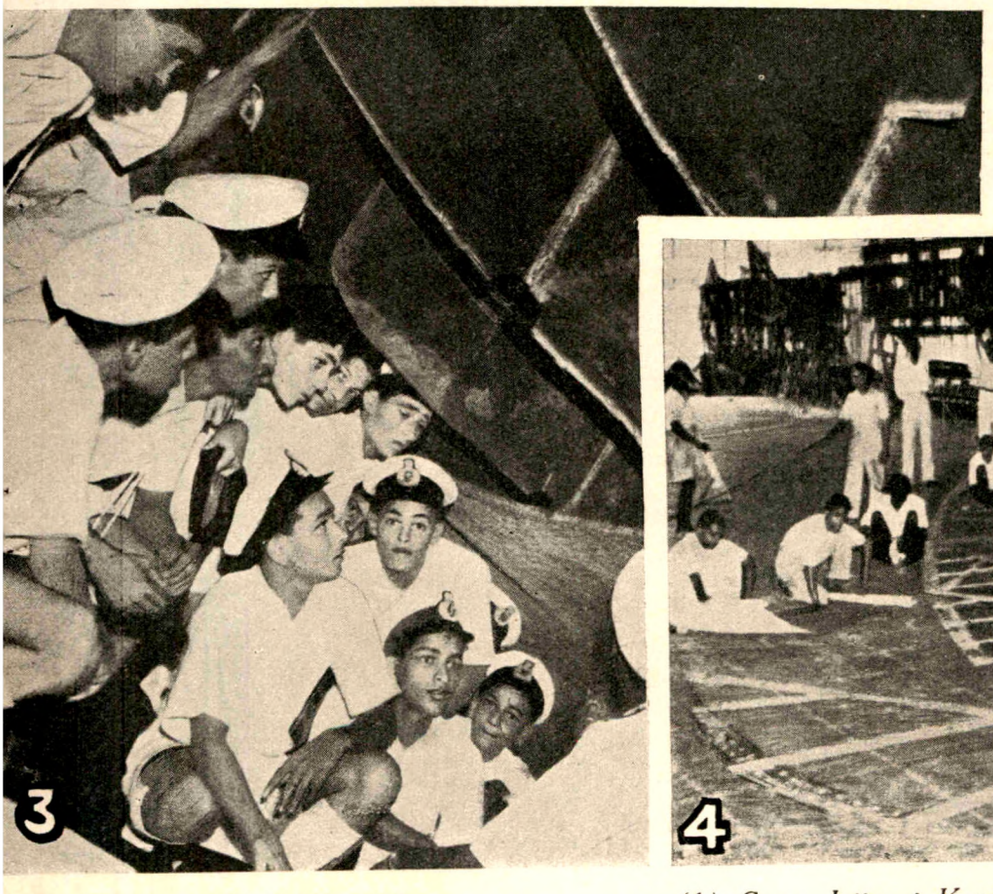


Pictures Tell The Plan

COMMUNICATION

(1) Statue of an old-time "Postal Runner". (2) special post office mobile van at one of its stops. (Inside view of a telephone exchange. (4) Instrum room in the Central Overseas Telegraph office in Bomb





Pictures Tell The Plan

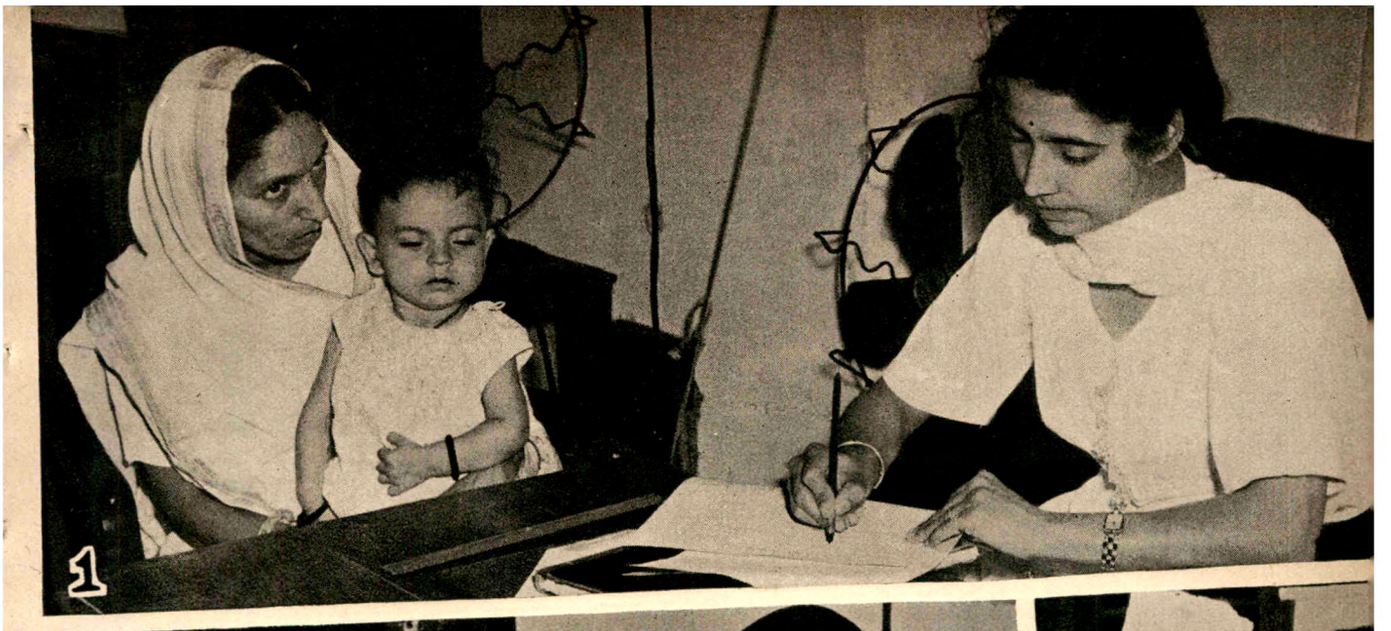
SHIPPING

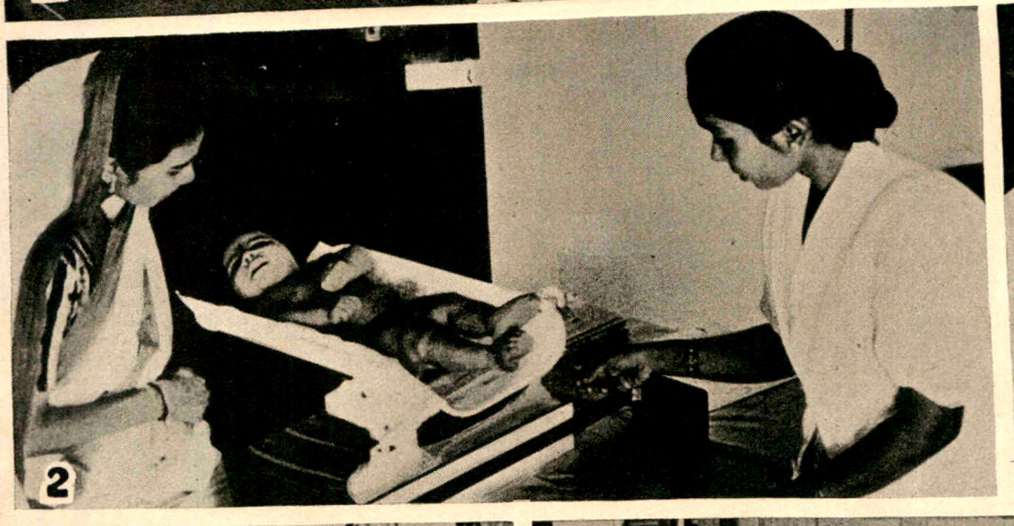
(1) Cargo Jetty at Kandla Port. (2) Country boats plying in one of the waterways of Malabar. (3) A group of Naval cadets on the training ship "Dufferin". (4) Shipbuilding Yard at Visakhapatnam.

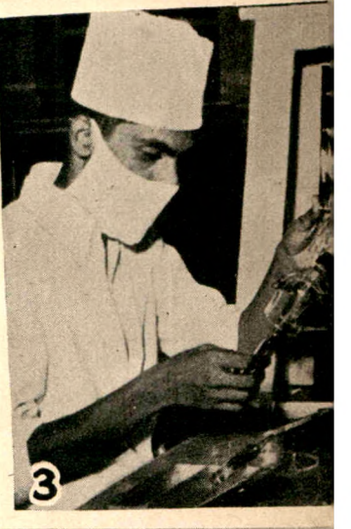
Pictures Tell The Plan

HANDICRAFTS

1. *Handicrafts Display Centre.*
2. *Assam Hill Girls Learning Silk Yarn Weaving.*
3. *Women Painting on Porcelain Wares.*
4. *Women Spinners at Work.*







Pictures Tell The Plan

HEALTH

(1) A Family Planning Clinic. (2) A chil being weighed at a Health Centre. (3) A youn medical student at work in his laboratory. (4 An anti-malaria squad in operation in a village (5) A training class for the nurses in progress

penditure proposed in the Second Plan for the execution of all flood control projects, including long-term ones, amounts to Rs. 117 crores.

DAIRY-FARMING & FISHERIES

The Second Plan's pattern of diversified agricultural economy takes in, besides crop production, the simultaneous development of animal husbandry, dairy-farming, forestry and fisheries.

The scope of the key-village scheme for scientific breeding, feeding, disease control and management of cattle which was initiated in the First Plan, is being extended under the Second Plan. Although India's cattle population is large, the amount of milk available for human consumption is comparatively small. The new Plan aims at a 30 to 40 per cent increase in milk output in intensively worked areas over 10 to 12 years.

Poultry development schemes, which make for improved nutritional standards and the introduction of mixed farming, envisage the setting up of four regional farms and 300 extension centres.

To supplement land resources by the resources of sea and river, a programme for the development of inland and marine fisheries, which was included under the First Plan, will now be carried out on a more intensive scale. It provides, among other things, for the survey and charting of fishing grounds, improvement of fishing methods and organisation of transport, storage, marketing and utilisation of fish. Fisheries yearly contribute about Rs. 27 crores to the country's national income and employ some 750,000 fishermen along a coastline of about 3,000 miles.

IRRIGATING THE LAND

Dams have very aptly been described as shrines of new India. Large, strong and massive, they are truly the embodiments of a big and powerful nation's will to progress.

Adequate data are not available for determining the extent of irrigation development possible under different kinds of sources in the country. It has, however, been roughly estimated that about 75 million acres may eventually be irrigated by multi-purpose, large and medium irrigation works, and about an equal area could be irrigated from other sources like small-scale irrigation works, tube-wells etc.

The total cost of irrigation and power projects included in the First Plan was of the order of Rs. 970 crores. When fully completed, these will irrigate about 22 million acres. Most of these projects are being continued in the Second Plan, which envisages taking up of additional 145 projects, thus bringing another 21 million acres under irrigation.

In the selection of irrigation projects for the Second Plan, marked preference has been shown for small and medium-sized schemes. Nearly 138 out of 195 schemes included in the Second Plan will cost less than Rs. 5 crores.

Sources other than river water are also being tapped for irrigation facilities. The Second Plan provides for an extensive scheme, costing Rs. 70 crores, for drilling tube-wells and expanding the possibilities of utilising underground water. More than 3,000 tube-wells are proposed to be constructed to irrigate nearly 900,000 acres by the end of the Plan period.

INDUSTRIAL PLANS

Though a number of major industrial plans were got going under the First Plan, these years were essentially a period of preparation for large-scale industrial and mineral development in the country. Projects of industrial and mineral development did not figure prominently in the investment plans of the public sector.

A major point of departure in the Second Plan—as compared to the First—is the precedence given to the public sector in industrial and mineral development. Practically the whole of the proposed outlay of Rs. 690 crores for large-scale industries and mining is for development of basic industries, such as iron and steel, coal, fertilisers, heavy engineering and heavy electrical equipment.

Several of the projects completed during the First Plan, such as the DDT plant, the Indian Telephone Industries, the Penicillin Factory, etc. will be expanded.

Bulk of the investment in the private sector is also for the development of basic industries though consumer industries and village and small-scale industries too get due consideration.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

The idea of a network of laboratories devoted to different fields of applied research was conceived by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research soon after its establishment in 1942. The idea took shape only after independence which created the climate necessary for constructive endeavour. Scientific research got top priority. As a result, we have today as many as 16 national laboratories functioning in their specialised fields of research in the country.

While in the First Plan attention was chiefly devoted to the building up of national laboratories, the primary object in the Second Plan is to develop the existing facilities and to bring the work of scientists in the national laboratories and of research workers in the universities and other centres to bear as closely as possible upon important problems in different fields of national development. Contributions of scientific research to advancement in the field of industry as well as agriculture are already becoming significant and, in course of time, promise to become substantial.

To carry the fruits of scientific research to India's villages, a large number of rural scientific centres known as "Vigyan Mandirs" are being established in different parts of the country. It is proposed to set up 90 to 100 such centres during the Second Plan.

The object of the "Vigyan Mandirs" scheme is to help and advise villagers on matters widely concerning their well-being and to educate them on

methods and outlook of science which would enable them to take greater advantage of development programmes in agriculture, health, sanitation, etc.

PRODUCING POWER

Encouraged by the fact that the combined hydro and coal resources of the country are sufficient to meet the power needs of the country for a long time to come, the Planning Commission drew up an ambitious programme of power development. At the time of the formulation of the First Plan, the 15-year target for additional power capacity was at 7 million kw. In view of the progress which has been done in other fields, and the growing demand for power from industry, small towns and rural areas, this target may be moved upward.

In the Second Plan, about Rs. 160 crores out of the total outlay for power will be spent on continuing schemes, and about Rs. 245 crores on new schemes. The major schemes like the Tungabhadra, Hirakud, Damodar Valley Corporation etc. continue, and nearly 44 new power schemes have been initiated. The bulk of these schemes will start yielding results long before the end of the Plan period.

Efforts are now concentrated in the main to correct the present urban bias of power distribution. In the Second Plan period, a sum of Rs. 75 crores will be spent on the electrification of small towns and villages. By 1961 the number of electrified small towns and villages in the country is expected to rise to 18,000, more than double the figure for 1956.

The use of electric power is sought to be extended to agricultural operations. Already it is being widely used for pumping and other water operations. To encourage the use of electric energy in agriculture and in rural cottage industry, long-term loans are being given to village co-operatives for rural electrification and development.

MINERAL RESOURCES

The emphasis on industrial development in the Second Plan involves an intensified programme of mineral development. Systematic and detailed investigations and survey for the qualitative and quantitative assessment of the country's mineral resources initiated in the First Plan period are being continued in the Second Plan period with increased vigour.

In view of its basic importance as a fuel for a variety of industries, and also as raw material for industries like iron and steel, coal naturally claims high priority. But the increasing participation by the State in the country's industrial development will require detailed investigation of deposits of other mineral materials such as iron, manganese, lime stone and refractory minerals. This has necessitated a great deal of expansion in the operations of the Geological Survey of India and the Indian Bureau of Mines. Proposals costing Rs. 6 crores for a further expansion of these institutions are included in the Second Plan.

Search for mineral resources has recently entered another vital field, namely mineral oil. Surveys conducted in recent years have led to the possibility of rich oil deposits being found in Jwalamukhi and neighbouring areas in Punjab, Rajasthan, Ganga Valley, West Bengal, Cambay, Kutch and parts of the South. Work on a Rs. 30-crore scheme for simultaneous exploitation of oil in all these places is already bearing fruit in the form of successful oil drilling operations recently carried out near Jwalamukhi and Jaisalmer.

HANDICRAFTS DEVELOPMENT

The First Five-Year Plan, for the first time, gave the planned development of handicrafts a certain shape and sense of direction. A Handicrafts Board was constituted to organise programmes for production and development of handicrafts.

Handicrafts appeal to consumers principally through their distinctive and artistic designs. Recent efforts to develop this rich heritage have yielded encouraging results. During the Second Five-Year Plan schemes to improve designs and to organise regional designing centres are to be undertaken. In this some progress has already been made. In addition, art schools are to be assisted in setting up design development sections, and scholarships are to be given to working artisans for training in improved craft designing.

Assistance will also be given to technical research institutes to undertake specialised research in handicraft techniques. To enable artisans to use better techniques, improved equipment is to be supplied.

For the development of traditional and new crafts assistance is given to States on the advice of the Handicrafts Board. Training or training-cum-production centres are being set up in the States for various crafts such as art metal work, toys, palmyra fibre, stone and marble carving, lacquer work, lace and embroidery, bamboo articles, carpets, fancy leather goods and glazed ceramic-ware.

For improvement of marketing arrangements within the country, new emporia and sales depots as well as crafts museums are to be set up at a number of centres; mobile vans are to be used to serve rural markets, fairs, etc; sales shops and showcases are to be provided at places visited by tourists, stations and aerodromes.

Special attention is also being given to the introduction of the co-operative form of organisation in the marketing of handicrafts. The export mar-

kets are also being developed through participation in international exhibitions and trade fairs, display centres and through publicity.

VILLAGE INDUSTRIES

The primary object of developing small industries in rural areas is to extend work opportunities, raise incomes and standard of living and to bring about a more balanced and integrated rural economy.

As the rural economy develops, technical changes will take place in different fields and correspondingly the pattern of rural industrialisation will also change from simple crafts meeting elementary needs of small industries based on steadily improving techniques designed to satisfy the needs of a more advanced character. These developments will necessarily be spread over a long period.

Two important steps taken during the First Plan period were the setting apart, by the Central Government, of substantial finance for the development of village and small industries and the building up of a number of all-India boards to deal with the problems of khadi and village industries, sericulture, coir industry, etc.

The programme to be carried out during the Second Plan is considerably larger than the first. It provides for a sum of Rs. 200 crores for development of village and small-scale industries; of this Rs. 59.5 crores are earmarked for handloom industry, Rs. 55 crores for small-scale industries, Rs. 55.5 crores for khadi and other village industries and the rest for items like sericulture and coir spinning and weaving.

For village industries the pattern of development is opening of production and trading centres, subsidies for the purchase of improved equipment by village artisans, and the production subsidy for the schemes run by the Khadi and Village Industries Board. A research institute for village industries is planned to be set up shortly.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

The Constitution of India enjoins upon the State the provision of free and compulsory education to its children.

If the directive of the Constitution is to be fulfilled, it is imperative that the resources of the Government, under heavy strain from development activities in many directions, are supplemented in increasing measure by local community effort.

The Second Plan sets aside a large portion of Rs. 307 crores allocated to education for the expansion of elementary, basic and social education. In addition, the allotment made in the Second Plan for National Extension and Community Projects includes a provision of more than Rs. 20 crores to be spent on building schools and extending educational facilities to an increasingly large number of villages.

Progress in education is sought to be maintained at other levels too. Schemes have been specially designed to raise the standard of education at the secondary and university levels.

To meet the growing demand for technical personnel created by industrial development, expansion of technical education has to be hastened. During the Second Plan, it is proposed to convert 19 engineering colleges and 46 polytechnics into larger units so as to provide nearly 7,000 new seats for degree and diploma courses.

A network of Rural Higher Education Institutes is proposed to be set up to carry higher education, with particular emphasis on the learning of agricultural sciences and techniques, to the farmers in the villages. Ten such institutes have already come into being. Situated at Shriniketan, Udaipur, Madurai, Muzaffarpur, Sanosara (Saurashtra), Coimbatore, Amaravati, Kolhapur, Turki (Bihar) and Jamia Millia (Delhi), these Institutes between themselves cover a wide area in the country.

COMMUNICATION SERVICES

The growth of communications services—postal, telephone and telegraph—is an integral element in the technological and social advancement of the country. Expansion in industrial and commercial activity, improvement in living standards of the people and the changes in social life that accompany economic advancement are factors that influence the rate at which communications and other essential services are developed.

A major development in the field of communications is the increasing number of post offices that are being opened particularly in the rural areas. Before the First Plan, there were 36,000 post offices in the country. By December 1956, this number had risen to 56,000. The aim is to provide a post office in each group of villages having a total population of 2,000. In addition, during the Second Plan period, post offices will be provided at the headquarters of all National Extension and Community Project areas.

Among the schemes included in the programme of development of communications, special mention must be made of the foundation laid for building up a Telecommunication Engineering Industry in the country. The Indian Telephone Industry has already reached the weekly production figure of 1,000 telephones. The Hindustan Cables Factory and the Bharat Electronics will also be able to meet in a sh...

period of time a major part of the country's requirements of cables and other communications and radar equipment.

GEARING UP THE RAILWAYS

The immense size of the development programme undertaken in the Second Plan is itself a fair measure of the new burdens that the Railways in India have been called upon to carry.

But the Indian Railways, worthy of their size and importance as one of the principal vehicles of the nation's economic advancement, have learnt to carry their burdens willingly and well.

They are today further fortified by an intensive development programme of their own which, apart from increasing line capacity, aims at attaining self-sufficiency in meeting the Railways' normal requirements not only of wagons and coaches but also of locomotives. The production at the Integral Coach Building Factory at Perambur (Madras) is well ahead of schedule, and the Chittaranjan Locomotive Works near Calcutta is expected to exceed its scheduled monthly turn-out of 200 broad-gauge locomotives.

Consistent with the fact of their being the biggest public enterprise, with a total capital investment of about Rs. 974 crores and a staff of more than 10 lakh people, the Railways are paying increasing attention to providing greater comfort and travel amenities to the travelling public. Only a few months ago, for the first time in the history of Indian Railways, an all-air-conditioned vestibulated Janata train for third class passengers was placed on the rails.

DEVELOPMENT OF SHIPPING

For the development of shipping in India, the objective for the Second Plan period is: first, to develop coastal trade with due regard to the possibility of diverting some traffic from railways to coastal shipping, and secondly, to secure an increasing share of India's overseas trade for Indian ships.

Today, practically 100 per cent of the coastal trade is carried on Indian ships manned by Indian personnel; and the Indian shipping companies have regular cargo services on all the major sea routes connecting India with the rest of the world.

The growth of Indian tonnage has kept pace with the expansion in the country's commercial and industrial activity. At the beginning of the First Plan, India had a tonnage of 390, 707 G.R.T. A target of 901, 707 G.R.T. has been fixed for the Second Plan period. With the attainment of this target, the Indian shipping is expected to carry about 12 to 15 per cent of the country's overseas trade, and 50 per cent of her trade with adjacent countries.

Apart from continued financial assistance to shipping companies to help them build up the size and operations of Indian shipping, the Second Plan envisages a Rs. 40-crore scheme for the development of ports, training of technical personnel, and expansion of the ship-building yards at Visakhapatnam.

Schemes totalling over Rs. 3 crores are included in the Plan for the development of inland water transport. It is estimated that 5,000 miles of river routes in India could be made navigable by modern power-craft, thus providing a much-needed adjunct to roads and railway transport systems.

ROAD BUILDING

The current road development programme in India was undertaken in view of a long-term plan, known as the Nagpur Plan drawn up in 1943, which envisaged that by the end of a period of 20 years or so no village in a well-developed area should remain more than five miles away from the main road.

The First Plan contained a provision of Rs. 28 crores for national highways, including the recently completed Bannihal Tunnel, linking Jammu & Kashmir with Punjab. The Second Plan provides larger resources for development of roads coming under all categories.

In addition to completing the programme of works on national highways undertaken during the Second Plan, fresh works will be taken up on 600 miles of missing links and 60 major bridges. In addition, the Second Plan envisages improvement of 17,000 miles of existing roads and widening of nearly 4,000 miles of carriageway. Programmes in the States provide for the construction of about 9,000 miles of surface roads.

Moreover, in National Extension and Community Project areas, through the local development works being done with voluntary labour provided by local population, large additions to the village road system are taking place. At this rate, the target set in the Nagpur Plan may be reached long before the time envisaged by it.

PROGRESS IN AIR TRANSPORT

In the course of the last decade, civil aviation has come to play an increasingly vital role in the transport and communication system of the country.

Brought into being in 1953, the two national air transport organisations—the Indian Airlines Corporation and the Air-India International—have taken

rapid strides forward. Today, the two Corporations operate scheduled services within and beyond the frontiers of India, linking important Indian cities and connecting India with many distant lands. During 1955 alone, for instance, Indian aircraft flew 26,000,000 miles, carrying half a million passengers and nearly 103 million pounds of cargo and mail.

Eighty-one aerodromes are controlled and operated by the Civil Aviation Department of the Government of India. Three of these aerodromes, situated at Bombay, Calcutta and Delhi, are international airports. An aerodrome at Chandigarh, the new capital of Punjab, was formally opened for traffic in February, 1956. Construction of 13 more aerodromes is expected to be completed by the end of 1957; of these, the two, at Kandla and Udaipur, are ready for use.

To provide suitably trained personnel to man these fast expanding services, the training machinery is being geared up. Researches in aero-mechanics, meteorology and other sciences with a bearing on the development of aviation, help keep these services in continuously improving condition.

HEALTH PROTECTION

Low as the standard of health in India is at present in comparison with that of the more advanced nations of the world, an appreciation of the immense problems being tackled on this front would help the results so far obtained to be viewed in a proper perspective.

With nearly 80 per cent of India's population living in the villages, the provision of adequate health protection to the rural population is by far the most urgent need of the hour. Health programmes in rural areas are, therefore, being tied up with National Extension Services.

The establishment of primary Health Units in as many development blocks as possible has been found to be a necessary step towards providing integrated preventive and curative medical services in rural areas. As against 725 Health Units set up during the First Plan, it is proposed to establish over 3,000 Health Units in the Second Plan.

Each of these Units will serve a population of 50 to 60 thousand persons by taking care of both personal and community health problems in the area. The Second Plan provides Rs. 23 crores for this important programme.

The main emphasis in all health programmes is being laid on the preventive side, viz., on the provision of pure water supply and sanitation; on the control of diseases like malaria, tuberculosis and leprosy; on health services for mothers and children; on measures for population control and family planning, on training of health personnel and on medical research.

HOUSING PROBLEM

Rising tempo of industrial and economic activity in India in the course of the last few years has brought large-scale urbanisation in its wake, creating serious housing shortage. In the rural areas a rapidly increasing population aggravated an already unhappy housing situation. A sample survey carried out at the beginning of the First Plan had revealed that more than one-third of the 54 million houses in the rural areas needed improvement and reconditioning.

Recognition of the increasing importance of the housing problem led to the creation of a separate portfolio for housing as part of the Works, Housing and Supply Ministry in 1952. The Ministry took the first step by initiating two major schemes —Subsidised Industrial Housing Scheme and Low Income Group Housing Scheme.

Owing to the pressure of development activities in more urgent fields on country's financial resources, however, the First Plan's allocation for housing was Rs. 38.5 crores only. In the Second Plan, it was found possible to provide a considerably larger sum amounting to Rs. 120 crores for this purpose.

Nearly 80,000 urban family units have already benefited from housing schemes, which together aim at meeting the housing needs of a substantial portion of the population. The attempt always is, on the one hand, to keep the cost of construction as low as possible, and on the other hand, to give decent living accommodation to individual families in houses which are durable and in surroundings which are hygienic, healthy and pleasant.

The target set for the Second Plan is 3,22,000 houses in urban areas and about 625 pilot projects for rural housing. A countrywide programme for slum clearance and of building new colonies for slum dwellers is also being pursued.

The National Building Organisation, set up in 1954 to co-ordinate building research and techniques and to discover measures for promoting quicker, cheaper and better construction and for affecting economy in the use of scarce materials and manpower, has done considerable useful work.

BROADCASTING SERVICES

Since its inception in 1927, the Radio in India has been steadily building itself up. In 1947, after partition, the All-India Radio had six stations. Today its network extends all over the country and the number of stations has gone up to 26. Listeners numbered less than a quarter of a million in 1947. Today the number of domestic licences alone has gone over the million mark. With the completion of projects under way in the Second Plan period broadcasting services will be available to an area of nearly 500,000 square miles.

Considerable care and thought have gone into the planning and presentation of programmes. There is no Indian language programmes in which are not being broadcast by one or the other station of the A.I.R. There are special programmes for various groups of listeners, such as the rural population, university students, school children, women, Defence forces and the listeners abroad.

The aim during the Second Plan is to develop the services now available for all the regional languages to as wide an area as it is possible to reach. There is a special emphasis on development of rural broadcasting and community receivers will be provided in villages with a population of 1,000 or more. Approximately 72,000 community receivers are expected to be installed.

The beginning of this year saw A.I.R. venturing into a new field. A move was initiated to put up a pilot television service in Bombay.

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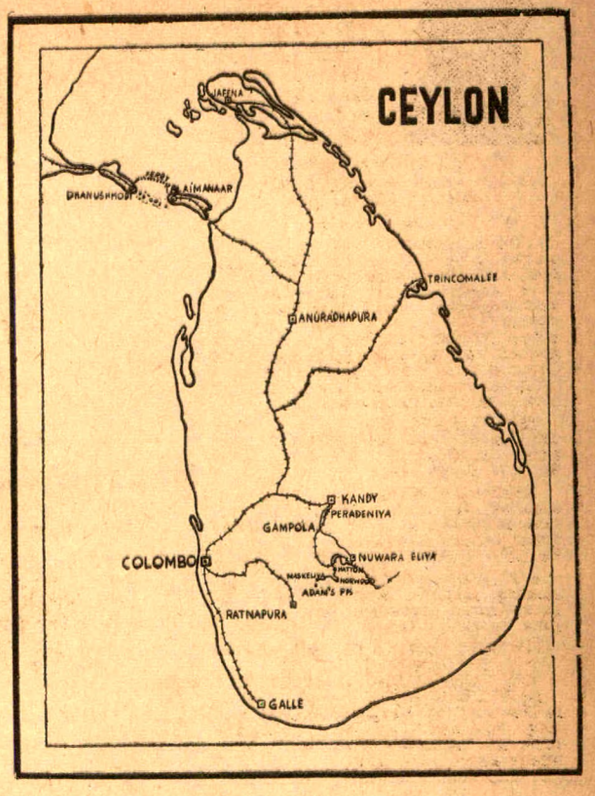
CEYLON

The Emerald ISLAND

By Dr. D. CHATTERJEE
Indian Boranic Garden, Calcutta



THE beautiful island of Ceylon with her evergreen hills and forests, her terraced rice fields, her coconut groves, her forests full of bread and jack-fruit trees, her placid jheels with water-and-arum-lilies, and her picturesque tea gardens nestling on the hills, calls the visitors from far and near. Such a wonderful diversity of scenery is indeed unique in a small country like Ceylon and such names as the Nuwara Eliya and Anuradhapura have peculiar charms for the visitors. Therefore, if you are contemplating a holiday excursion, you should give Ceylon your top priority.

The first European nation which colonised Ceylon in the early sixteenth century was the Portuguese and they were followed by the Dutch and later by the British. The chief interest of these nations was the exploitation of the raw materials such as the spices, coconut, tea, rubber, cocoa, coffee etc. and subsequent colonisation of the island. Ceylon has, however, become fully independent in 1948. The island is about 270 miles long and about 100 miles broad near the central part. Her population is about 8 millions of which 5 millions are Sinhalese, 2 millions Tamils, and 1 million comprises others. The Sinhalese are mainly Buddhists and the Tamils are mainly Hindus. The roads and railways are very well developed and communications are good. There is a high percentage of literacy (about 60 per cent) in Ceylon.

THE JOURNEY : PLACES OF INTEREST

For your visit to Ceylon, you need a passport and a tourist visa for one to three months may be easily obtained. The journey may be made by boat to Colombo from any of the Indian ports or by train from Madras to Dhanuskodi and crossing the sea by ferry and taking the train again at Talaimanar for Colombo. The author followed the latter route during his recent visit as this route provides a gradual change of scenery from India to Ceylon. The custom authorities both at Dhanuskodi and Talaimanar are very helpful and cordial. The ferry boat takes about three hours and covers a distance of about 70 miles.

The southern part of Ceylon gets more rain and is, therefore, more green and has better forests. The northern part is more sandy and dry and resembles South India in many ways including the characteristic and gregarious growth of the Palmyra Palms. The places one should visit in Ceylon are Colombo, Kandy, Peradeniya, Nuwara Eliya, Adam's peak, Anuradhapura, Trincomalee and Jaffna. If possible, a visit to Ratnapura and Galle may also be made.

COLOMBO : A GARDEN CITY

Colombo is of course the most important city of Ceylon and known for its port which is visited by ships from every country. As you reach Colombo railway station in the morning from Talaimanar, your eyes greet a number of flowering plants in pots and in full bloom on the station platforms. How

The ferry boat and train at Dhanuskodi.

much relieving are these to the eyes of a weary train passenger and what a great contrast they make with our drab and colourless stations like the Howrah or Sealdah? Colombo spreads along the sea face and the city is admirably called a garden city in view of its large number of ornamental trees and shrubs. Hotels in Colombo are good and almost all kinds of food are available. On an average, reasonable hotels or rest houses would cost Rs. 10|- to Rs. 12|- per day per person inclusive of room and food. The general standard of living in Ceylon is higher than in India and on this basis, the hotel charges are not very high. There is a network of over 100 rest houses in the island similar to the inns of England and these are particularly helpful to the tourists. The rest houses are managed by the Government.

Besides the picturesque harbour, there are a number of interesting places in or around Colombo. There is the indispensable market full of many varieties of fruits and vegetables. The banana and bread-fruits, the mango and the mangosteen, the dried fish, and greens of all kinds are available. Here and there you come across some shops dealing in indigenous medicinal plants. Imported cloth and chinawares are found to be cheaper in Colombo than in India. As a matter of fact the markets in Colombo contain almost everything to please and satisfy the most fastidious buyers.

BUDDHA'S LARGE IMAGE

There is a Buddhist temple at Kelaniya about eight miles along the Negombo road from Colombo. This temple is indeed a masterpiece of oriental architecture. This temple contains a large reclining image of Lord Buddha and its walls are adorned by exquisite fresco paintings depicting certain aspects of Buddha's life. On full moon night the temple or *dagoba* is particularly charming and perfumes of flowers and burning incense sticks fill the air with soft and mellowed fragrance.

The Colombo Town Hall with its large white dome and pillared facade draws the attention of the visitor and the view is particularly lovely from the adjoining Victoria Park. In spite of its ferneries, and colourful shrubberies and some rare trees like the Balsa, which yield the lightest timber in the world, it was felt that this park has been in a state of neglect like many of our parks in Calcutta.

THE ZOO : ARROW SYSTEM

The Colombo Zoo however, is something which Ceylon can feel proud of. It is at once clear to visitors that Mr. Wynmann who planned it and supervised its execution has done a really fine job. I was deeply impressed by my visit to the zoo. As they enter, the visitors meet a large signboard requesting them to follow the arrow if they want to see the zoo properly. By a system of smaller arrows displayed at prominent places and corners of roads and paths, the visitors are directed to every part of the zoo. This is distinctly advantageous and might be adopted by some of our Indian zoos. Some of the notices in front of animal enclosures are not only instructive but also interesting. The notice in front of the enclosure of crocodiles said, "Do not throw stones at the crocodiles. They will only move when *they wish*". The enclosure of donkeys bore the notice, "Do not throw stones and make an ass of yourself."

The Cinnamon gardens, the Museum, St. Peter's Church and Mutwal are the other places of interest in Colombo.

ENCHANTING KANDY

As you leave Colombo on your way to Kandy you pass through one of the most picturesque parts of Ceylon. The scenery changes at intervals at every bend of the hills like the colourful grass-beds in a kaleidoscope. Kandy is about 72 miles from Colombo and situated at an altitude of about 1500 feet above

the sea level. This ancient city of Sinhalese kings has an enchanting and dreamy look when viewed from the other side of the lake on which it stands. The lake has an island in the middle. The temple of Tooth or *Dalada Maligawa* is an important temple as it is believed to contain a molar tooth of Lord Buddha. On way to the temple and facing the lake, there is a small park which contains a few small flowering trees called *Tabebuia*. The flush of flowers on these trees in the month of March is so wonderful that it could beat the cherry blossoms of Europe and Japan. Many of these flowers fall on the ground and give a look of a floral carpet.

FAMOUS BOTANIC GARDEN

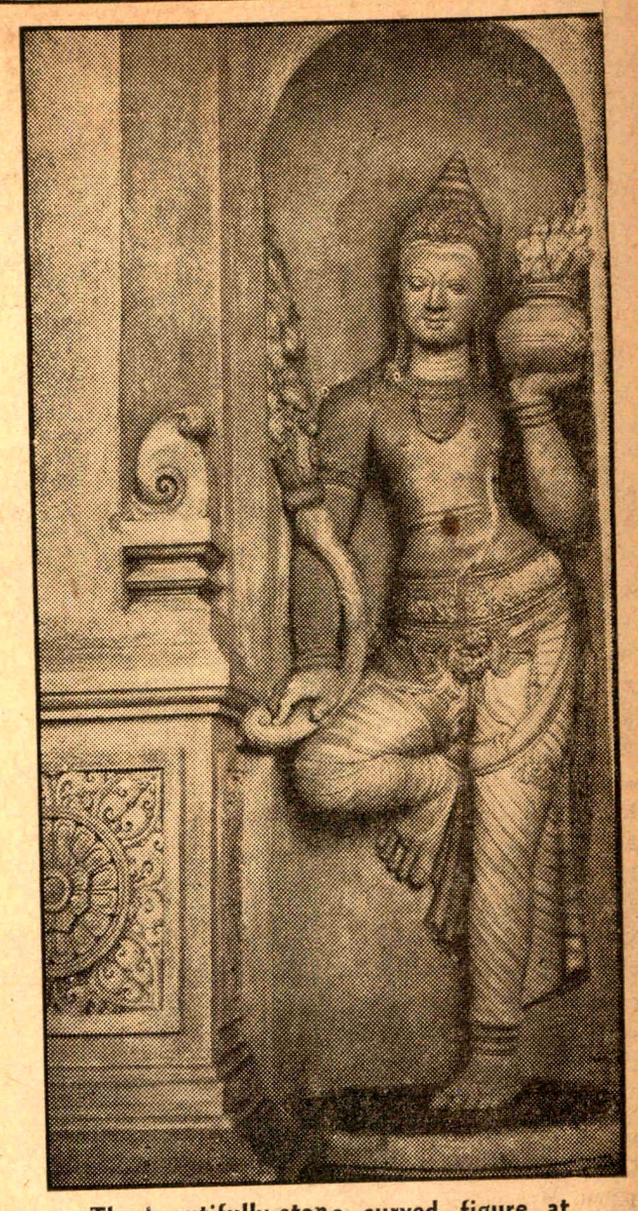
About three miles from Kandy is the little town of Peradeniya with its famous Botanic Garden. The garden is laid out on an undulating piece of land and is well known for its orchids and other ornamental plants. The early history of the garden dates back to about 1747 when it was a Royal Garden of King Kirti Shri, and from 1780 to 1798, King Rajadhi Rajasinghe resided inside the garden. There was a *vihara* and *dagoba* in the garden which were however destroyed by the British when they occupied Kandy in 1803.

CHARMING HILL STATION

From Kandy and Peradeniya you must proceed to Nuwara Eliya, one of the most charming hill stations of Ceylon. This place is about 135 miles from Colombo and at an altitude of 6200 feet has something like an English climate without the mist and fog. Some six miles away from Nuwara Eliya is the Hakgala Botanic Garden famous for its temperate plants and tree ferns. It is really very difficult to describe the great beauty of Nuwara Eliya and its surroundings. The vegetation changes, the ubiquitous coconut palms give place to Conifers and Rhododendron, the emerald green paddy fields give place to grassy downs and marshy tanks. The warm air of the coast has been replaced by the bracing climate of the hills. As a matter of fact, everything appears to be ideally placed in this area, the hills, the valleys, the rushing streams and the flowering plants. You would like the perfectly serene, calm solitude of this place and would find that Nuwara Eliya makes a deep impression on your mind. It has been said that the scenery of Nuwara Eliya "is as beautiful as at Engadine and the air as pure as at St. Moritz (Switzerland)."

ADAM'S PEAK & 'SRIPADA'

From Nuwara Eliya, there is a beautiful road going westward to Hatton and passes through the tea growing area. The tea gardens are exceedingly well-kept and appeared to me to be in much better condition than some of the good tea gardens in Darjeeling or Assam. As you proceed further south towards Norwood and Maskelya, your eyes catch the solitary high peak of Adam's peak which is Ceylon's highest mountain (7,360 feet). Like all high mountains Adam's peak has a charm of its own.



The beautifully stone curved figure at the entrance of the Kelaniya temple.

Besides its dignified grandeur, the peak is a place for pilgrimage to devotees of many religions. On the summit is a great stone on which there is an impression of a huge foot. To the Buddhists, this is the *Sri Pada* made by Lord Buddha during his third and last visit to Ceylon. To the Hindus, this is considered the foot-print of Lord Siva, and to the Muslims, this is the foot-print of Adam. When the author visited Adam's peak in the month of March, there was some particular Buddhist festival and a rush of visitors. It was very pleasant to watch thousands of devotees of all ages going up the hill singing and chanting religious hymns. At the summit there is a small temple with a brass bell which the pilgrims ring before offering flowers to the foot-print.

The actual measurement of the foot-print is 64 inches long and 30 inches wide. The actual ascent to

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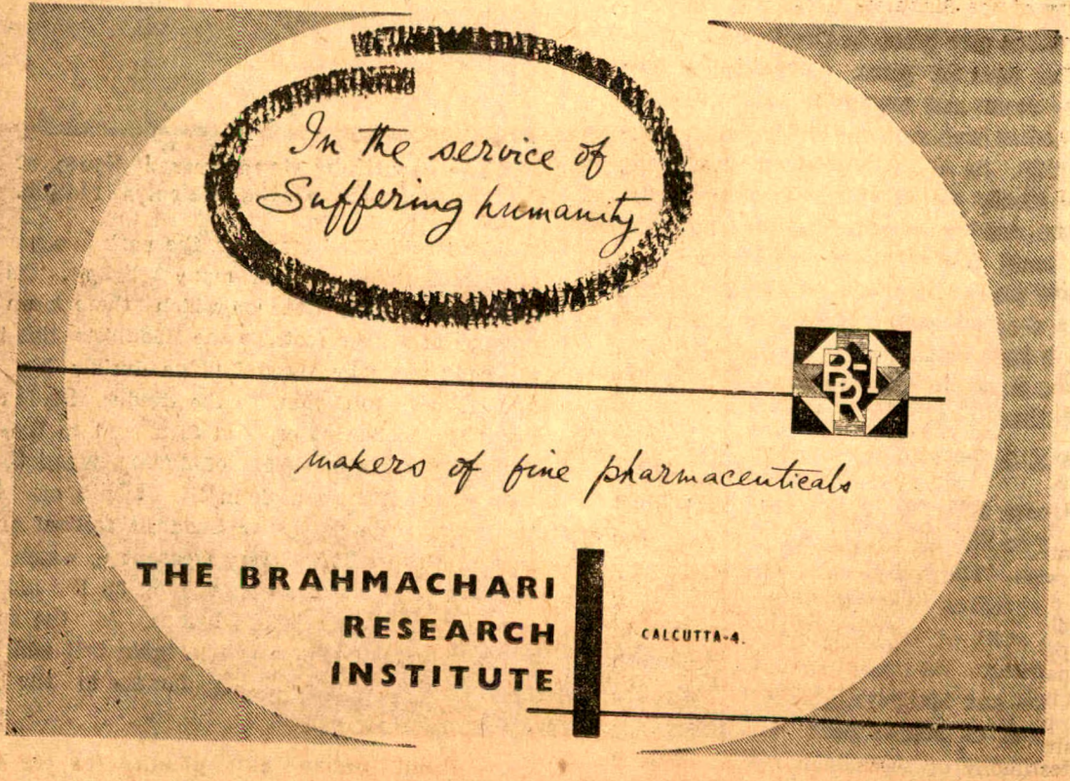

Fresco paintings depicting aspects of Lord Buddha's life on the inside wall of Kelaniya temple, near Colombo.

the top of the hill is a distance of about 3 miles from the car and bus park and the view from the top is one of the grandest in the world.

ANURADHAPURA : PAST GLORY

From Adam's peak, one should return to Kandy and proceed northward to see the remains of the buried city of Anuradhapura. This was once an important city of the Sinhalese Kings and was founded by King Pandukabhaya in 437 B.C. In its days, the city had a diameter of about eight miles. The king built the city according to a comprehensive plan and the city soon became famous and well known. The most monumental remains are the gigantic *stupas* or *dagobas* as they are called in Ceylon, which were built to enshrine the relics of Lord Buddha. The Jetavana *dagoba*, which is sometimes also called the Abhayagiri, stands out as one of the important and it is the largest *stupa* in Ceylon. This was built by King Mahasena (277-304 A.D.) and its diameter near the base is 367 feet and its present height is 251 feet. So much brick and other materials were used in the construction of this *stupa* that some experts have estimated that the materials are enough to raise 8000 houses each with a frontage of 20 feet. There is also a sacred Bodhi tree at Anuradhapura which is supposed to be very old. There were originally a number of buildings and palaces in the old city but now, some 1600 stone pillars each 12 feet long in various positions from vertical to prostrate bear testimony of these buildings of by-gone days. The famous moonstone near the ruins of a temple of Anuradhapura contains a beautifully curved design of a number of elephants arranged in concentric circles. King Devanampiya Tissa founded the small monastery of Isurununiya on the outskirt of Anuradhapura by the side of the tank Tissa Wewa. The prosperity of the town, however, gradually declined due to the successive Tamil invasions from India.

Leaving behind the ruins of Anuradhapura, the author travelled east for about 66 miles and came to Trincomalee. There is a nice natural harbour at this place and a small unit of British navy is still stationed there by some agreement with the Ceylonese Government. The sea appeared to be very calm and the distant grove of coconut palms made an interesting pattern against the evening sky of this delightful harbour. The fisherman who reached the shore with his evening catch of fish offered the same and said with a smile, "Very scheep, Sir".

There were a few more interesting places in Ceylon like the Sigiriya fortress, Polonnaruwa, Galle, Batticaloa, Jaffna and Ratnapura which could not be visited for want of time.

From Trincomalee, the author began his return journey to India. As the ferry boat left Talaimanar, the island of Ceylon slowly vanished at a distance like a phantom of delight.

Tamil Indian girls picking tea leaves in a tea garden near Adam's peak.

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TAGORE AS A Worshipper Of Truth & Beauty

By VIVEK BHATTACHARYA

GIVING a description of a writer who has a vision and far sight, Aldous Huxley writes, "We are now in a position to explain what we mean when we say that Homer is a writer who tells the *Whole Truth*. We mean that the experiences he records, correspond fairly closely with our own actual or potential experiences, and correspond with our experiences not on a single limited sector, but all along the line of our physical and spiritual being."

What Aldous Huxley wrote about Homer can perhaps equally be said about Rabindranath Tagore. Rabindranath Tagore commanded world respect, perhaps not so much because of his poems or the novels or the short stories or the plays. The fact that placed him so high in the world was his search for *Truth Eternal*. He was an explorer of *Truth* and *Beauty*. The world in general and the West in particular could not perhaps judge his poems or plays or short stories because in the majority of cases they had to be mere translations of his original works. According to a Western critic, "The West felt that it could not judge of his work—the poems in translation, at any rate, did not seem to amount to a tremendous deal—but it could feel the greatness of his mind and soul."

UPANISHADIC THOUGHTS

Tagore's search for *Truth* made him believe in the ultimate respect for and confidence in humanity. The Upanishadic thoughts which influenced him made him think in terms of internationalism. That is why the crux of the whole Tagore literature after a deep analytical study makes a reader firmly convinced of the unique place accorded to a man as a human being, *Truth* above anything else.

A few centuries ago the Vaishnava poet Chandidas sang to the glory of Man:

"Above everything else there is man
That is Truth Eternal
There is nothing nobler than man."

This *Truth* is omnipresent. It is omniscient. No nation, no country has any monopoly in this particular sphere. Tagore writes, "The best and noblest gifts of humanity cannot be the monopoly of a particular race or country: its scope may not be limited nor may it be regarded as the miser's hoard buried underground." This is definitely a thought from the Upanishadas taken by Tagore as the motto of his life.

VISVA BHARATI

Tagore tried to put this idea of international mankind to practical reality by starting a University to impart education in all important philosophies of the world. He collected around him the scholars of eminence from both the East and the West. He laid the first brick of an international university—Visva Bharati. This is perhaps the first honest attempt to give practical shape to the idea of international citizenship. Perhaps there had been many Scholars and Philosophers who had similar thoughts. Oliver Goldsmith, for instance, had long ago called himself "A citizen of the world." But

Tagore was perhaps the first to train up students to think in similar terms. The place of Visva Bharati in the annals of mankind is, therefore, of tremendous significance.

A number of learned scholars left their home universities and countries and came to India to join Tagore. Scholars came from Great Britain, from China and from Harvard. The aims of Visva Bharati clearly mirror the ideas of Tagore as an internationalist. Visva Bharati was started to study the mind of man in its realisation of different aspects of *Truth* from diverse points of view. It was to bring together, as a step towards this object, the various scattered cultures of the East, the fittest place for such endeavour being India, the heart of Asia, into which have flowed the Vedic, Buddhist, Semitic, Zoroastrian and other cultural currents originating in different parts of the Orient, from Juda to Japan; to bring to realisation the fundamental unity of the tendencies of different civilisations of Asia, thereby a full consciousness of its own spiritual purpose the obscuration of which has been the chief obstacle in the way of a true East-West co-operation, the great achievements of these being materially complementary and alike necessary for the universal, the *bhuma* in its completeness.

SATYAM & SUNDARAM

Beauty is truth and truth beauty. Throughout his life Tagore had worshipped beauty. *Gitanjali, Gitali, Gitimalya, Naibedya,* consist of poems in appreciation and adoration of *Truth.* Almost each is a prayer song. In *Chitra,* the poet sings in ecstasy to the glory of *Beauty.* Perhaps the most outstanding piece in *Chitra* is *"Urbasi". Urbasi* is not a description of any woman. The poet in the beginning of the piece says "Thou art not a mother, nor daughter nor a wife beautiful." What else can a woman be? In *Urbasi,* the poet pictures Beauty. It is not any worldly beauty. It is abstract beauty personified. According to the late Dr. Thompson, the eminent Western critic of Tagore literature, *Urbasi"* is the best piece of Tagore lyrics. Thompson writes, *"Urbasi* is perhaps the greatest lyric in the whole of Bengali literature and probably the most unalloyed and perfect worship of *Beauty* which the world's literature contains." In *Urbasi,* Tagore adores beauty. There, the appreciation of beauty is just like that of a devotee. This beauty eternal is different from that described by Browning. Browning says that he "cannot feed on beauty for the sake of beauty only." *'Urbasi'* is more or less a description of beauty like Shelley's Hymn to Intellectual Beauty where he writes:

"Spirit of Beauty, that does consecrate
With thine own hues all thou dost shine upon
Of human thought or form, where art thou gone?"

'Urbasi' can perhaps be compared with Keats' "La Belle Dame Sans Merci."

DESIRE MARS BEAUTY

Beauty is marred by desire. A serene picture of beauty is a woman. Any woman is beautiful. Amiel says, "Woman would be loved without reason, without analysis; not because she is beautiful or good, or cultivated, or gracious, or spiritual, but because she exists." That is truth. That is beauty. That is a truthful beauty.

Serene beauty is abstract. It is absolute. This beauty is beyond one's reach. Only an explorer of *Truth* runs after it. The nearer he goes *Truth,* the more the bliss eternal flows onto him. This beauty is much beyond the reach of desire. This cannot be enjoyed in the physical sense, but it can be enjoyed only in spirit untinged by selfish desire. It can only be worshipped.

According to the Boswell of Tagore, the learned scholar Probhat Kumar Mukerji, in *Urbasi,* Tagore had worshipped the Eternal woman — Goethe's *Ewige Weibliche* — whom the poets have been worshipping for ages. An ideal woman must have two requisite qualities—the *Beautiful* and the *good,* in *Urbasi* we meet the *Beautiful.*

WHEN HE WROTE URBASI

The best pieces of Rabindranath Tagore's *Truth* and *Beauty* were written perhaps in his middle age. In 1895 the *Sadhana* magazine had to be closed down. Tagore was editing this journal. Tagore himself describes in his reminiscent mood that he used to lead a mechanical life as long as he had to spend his time in a routine work. Now he was as free as a lark. The first poem he wrote after the closure of this journal was "Appeal". There he wanted to know the real serene Truth and Beauty. "I want to be the gardener in your garden Oh! Lord". Perhaps his prayer was granted. This was the period when Tagore underwent great change. Pleasure and pain in life had by that time shown him beauty in different appearances. Tagore has worshipped beauty in its different stages. That is why in the madding dances of the Nataraja and even in *Death* Tagore found a divine beauty. It was "a divine inspiration", as Tagore puts it himself. After his *"Appeal",* he wrote *"Urbasi"* and *"Adieu* to *Heaven."* And within a month he wrote *"Bijoyini".*

WHAT IS BEAUTY?

After all what is beauty? According to Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, the most important task of Beauty is to purify the heart and it is the most important duty of a good piece of literature to instil the sense of this Beauty into human mind. All poets are worshippers of Beauty, but their work varies in stages. According to some critics Beauty is realised in two different patterns, outer and inner. According to the first, poets are to describe the outer manifestation of Beauty. To the other, Beauty is indivisible. But Tagore's appreciation of Beauty is completely of a different pattern. His description does not centre round any part of the scattered horizon. He found the *Whole* Beauty in man. It is here that his conception of Beauty is happily blended with his philosophy of Truth. In his 'Religion of Man' Tagore writes.

"The infinite personality comprehends the Universe. There cannot be anything that cannot be subsumed by the human personality and this proves that the Truth of the Universe is human Truth. When our Universe is in harmony with Man, the eternal, we know it as Truth, we feel it as Beauty". That is why Tagore found Beauty in everything. Even in the *Fierce*, the Nataraja, and even in Death Tagore has appreciated Beauty because they are manifestations of Truth. In a sweet piece of poem in *Bhanu Singher Padabali*, and also in a piece in *Gitanjali* Tagore has appreciated the Beauty of Death and found Truth Eternal and has sung to its glory. He did not run after salvation. He was more interested in appreciating Beauty in this vast Universe, under the blue sky and beside the great ocean.

Tagore writes:

"I do not want to die in this beautiful world
I want to live among men".

This is one of his oft quoted poems. The thought is similar to "Salvation". There Tagore prefers to live among men than to achieve a divine salvation.

In another poem Tagore sings in ecstasy to the glory of Beauty. This was from the core of his heart:

"Oh! Beauty
Oh! tell me dear
How to adore yau".

In another poem Tagore prays to Truth and Beauty to touch him softly.

TAGORE & EINSTEIN

It is very interesting to note what Tagore said to Albert Einstein (whom he met on July 14, 1930) about Truth and Beauty. "Religion applies values to Truth, and we know Truth as good through our own harmony with it." Einstein asked Tagore whether Truth or Beauty was independent of man. Tagore most emphatically answered in the negative. Einstein agreed with Tagore. Without man there can be no Beauty, "if there would have been no human beings any more the Apollo of Belvedere would no longer be beautiful". But Einstein emphasised that there could be Truth without man also. Tagore's reply to Einstein is very interesting. Tagore said, "Truth is realised through man and the Beauty is in the ideal of perfect harmony which is in the Universal Being; Truth is perfect comprehension of the Universal Mind". Truth is hardly of any significance unless it is realised through human beings. Albert Einstein's example that the Pythagorean theorem in geometry states something that is approximately true, independent of the existence of man is perhaps correct, but it is difficult to conceive of any Truth in the absence of any human being. Perhaps the greatest Truth in the Universe is the existence of man. Tagore writes, "We attribute to Truth a superhuman objectivity; it is indispensable for us, this reality which is independent of our existence and our experience and our mind — though we cannot say what it means."

HIS MYSTIC POEMS

Tagore has composed a number of mystic poems on Nature's *Beauty*. He was a worshipper of Nature. Sometimes he got himself lost in searching eternal *Truth* in nature. In his *"Chitra"*, Tagore writes,

"How diverse are Thy beauties in the Universe,
O Thou of variant beauty!
With myriad stars in the blue Thou gleamest,
With boundless joy in the bower Thou beamest,
Earth and sky Thou tradest, I spy,
With Thy steps too soft and free!
Swift-footed maiden I salute Thee!"

It is the genuine appreciation by a connoisseur of beauty. Tagore is deeply absorbed in the sparkling beauty of the universe. He sings,

"What superb Beauty! At those delicate feet
How gently lay the Earth, motionless and still!"

He tried to explore the Invisible Hand handling the universe. He used to feel the very presence of truth and beauty before him. Tagore writes:

"Beautiful, I know, are Thy armlets
Studded with stars untold,
Matched with designs and colours,
Set with diamonds and gold,
Thy swords are charming still that
Flash in the lightning high,
Like crimson wings of Garur that
Flutter in the sun-set sky."

MAN IS BEAUTY

Tagore loved this world, because he loved Man. Tagore loved Man because he had faith in Man. He loved Man, because Man is Beauty. Tagore loved *Beauty* because *Beauty* is truth. Tagore loved truth. He loved even Death because Death is truth. Tagore says,

"Life I love dearly and to my faith:
I'm sure to like as much also Death.
A suckling, it cries off a feeding breast,
Taken to the other, is instantly at rest".

TRUTH, LOVE & BEAUTY

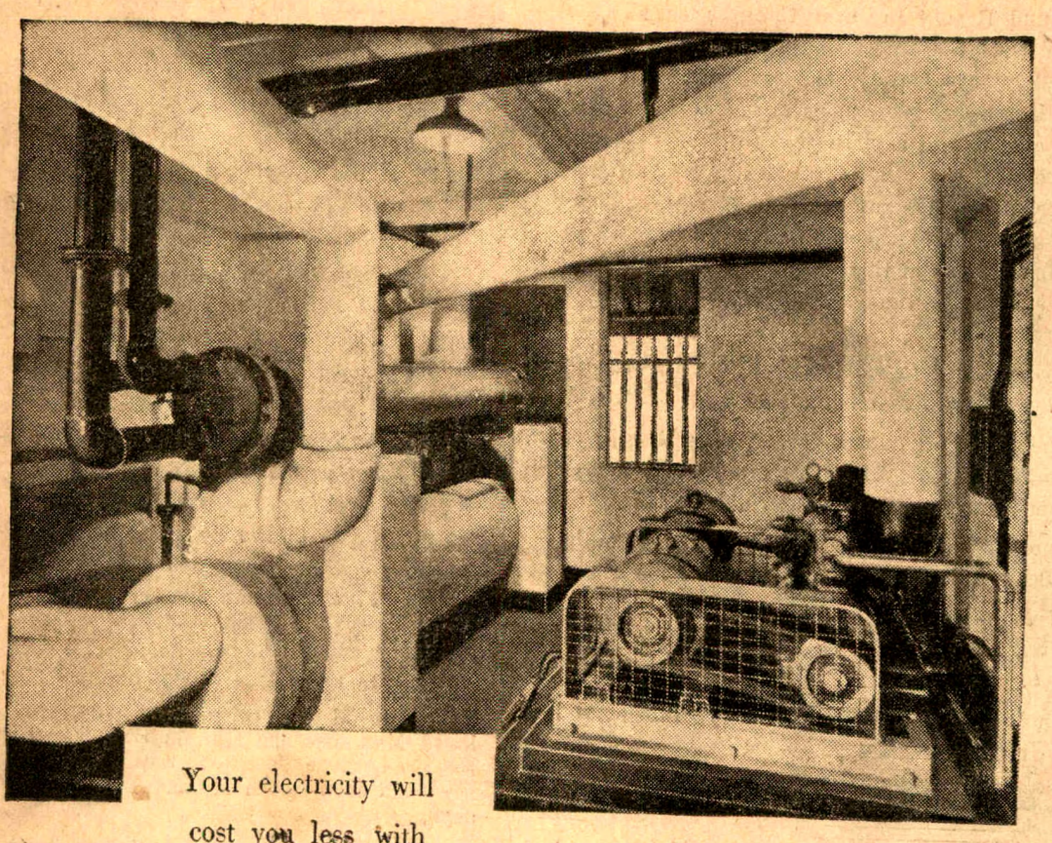
In Tagore's *Chitrangada* we find a happy blending of Truth, Love and Beauty. Just like Kalidasa's description of the "Love at the first sight" between Dushmanta and Shakuntala, Tagore gives a sweet description of the first meeting between Arjun and Chitrangada. In this dance drama *love* is the central theme. It is described as Truth and Beauty. Chitrangada is stunned at the beauty of Arjun. She says,

"Ah, whom have I seen in a gleam?
Is it Truth, reality or a dream?"

In *Gitanjali* the poet has prayed to God to light a fire of suffering in his heart. Only suffering can purify a heart, just like the goldsmith purifying gold at the furnace. This eager prayer was perhaps granted. For, later on we find Tagore giving a description of the serene touch of the beautiful. He felt the touch of *Truth*. From the core of his heart Tagore sang :

"Sanctified are my limbs,
And blessed is my soul,
My Love, O Beautiful one!"

There is hardly any description of Truth and beauty so serene, so sweet and so deeply spiritual.



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THE SANTHALS Of Hazaribagh

By P. C. ROY CHAUDHURY

THERE are 97,836 Santhals in Hazaribagh district, according to the Census of 1951. The Santhals speak the Santhali language. Many Santhals also speak the Bengali language. They usually understand some form of *Gawari Hindi* or colloquial Hindi as spoken in the district. The Santhali language has no script of its own. The Foreign Missionaries had introduced the Roman script and had published books, scriptures, collection of Santhali folk-songs, stories etc., in Santhali language but in Roman script. There has been a recent introduction of Devnagri script for publishing books in Santhali language.

SONGS AND DANCES

It is noteworthy that although there was no written script for Santhali language, human memory, as in the case of other tribes like the Mundas and the Uraons, had kept up a fund of stories, riddles, folk-songs, proverbs, idioms and sayings handed down from generation to generation. It is only within the last 40 or 50 years that either through the efforts of the Missionaries, or the research workers on anthropology or the scholars that certain collections of folk-lore have been made and published. Their folk-songs are superb. As soon as they have a little leisure, they will indulge in songs, dances and music. It appears that they snatch every opportunity of life for such festivities. Whether there are changes in the season, domestic occurrences such as marriage or birth or there are traditional offerings or sacrifices to different gods or there is home-coming of the new crops, they will indulge in their songs and dances.

The Santhals have a keen sense of humour. Some of their sayings are typical of their vitality and sense of humour. When a child is born, they will say *"Nawa pera ko hec' akana"* meaning "a new guest has come" which is an expression for the message that a child is born in the family. To express an acute sense of hunger, the Santhal will say *"Lobok' muc' ko geren' kana"* which really means "small ants are eating me up."

Hazaribagh with its picturesque forests, rivers and hills have a strange fascination for the Santhals.

The river Damodar which today lies chained up through the activities of the Damodar Valley Corporation has all along been the very heart-throbs of the life of the Santhals. The Parasnath hills are their *Marang Buru* or the sacred hill.

ORIGIN IN HAZARIBAGH

The appearance of the Santhals in Hazaribagh district can only be guessed. Regarding their original home there has been a belief according to an accepted Santhal tradition that *Hihiri*, their earliest home, was the *Pargana Ahuri* and from there they moved to *Khej Kaman* and from there to *Hara* and then to *Sasag-Bera* and then ultimately to *Chai* and *Champa*. *Chai and Champa* are recognised Parganas in the district of Hazaribagh. Col. Dalton mentions that traditionally the old fort in *Chai* was occupied by one Jaura, a Santhal Raja, who destroyed himself and his family on hearing of the approach of a Mohamedan army under Syed Ibrahim Ali alias Malik Baya, a General of Mohammad Tuglak in 1353. The Santhal tradition in Hazaribagh is that from *Chai and Champa* a portion of their community migrated to the Santhal Parganas.

This theory of the movement of the Santhals cannot be said to be authoritative, but there may be some truth in this migration. The river Damodar and the hills and forests of Hazaribagh find a very prominent place in Santhal stories, songs and traditions.

The Santhals are divided into 12 septs, 11 of which are *Hansda, Murmu, Kisku, Hembrom, Marandi, Tuddu, Baska, Besra, Pauria, Chore* and *Bedia*. The first seven of the septs are said to have descended practically from the original father and mother of the Santhals, *Pilchu Horom* and *Pilchu Burhi*, while the remaining five septs were added afterwards. The septs have certain pass-words by which they are recognised by one another. But the septs *Pauria, Chore* and *Bedia* have no pass-words of their own. It is interesting to observe that one of the pass-words of *Hansda* sept is *Tatijhari* which is an important village in Champa Pargana in Hazaribagh district. This may also be a corroboration of the theory that the original home of the Santhals was in Hazaribagh district.

The Santhals are exogamous and no Santhal can marry within his sept or the sub-septs of his sept. He can marry in any other sept including that of his mother. Regarding the sept of the mother there is a proverb amongst the Santhals that "no one heads the cow-track" signifying that the mother's sept need not be held a taboo for marriage.

FORMS OF MARRIAGE

Marriage or *Bupla* has various forms among the Santhals. Pre-marital sexual intimacy is not unknown and in cases of pregnancy the man concerned is expected to marry the girl or pay a very heavy fine to the village. Polygamy is discouraged. A second marriage is, however, permitted if the wife does not bear a child or the elder brother leaves a widow but even in such cases the second marriage must be done with the permission of the first wife. Here the supremacy of the first wife in the family is well established.

The usual marriage forms are (1) *Bupla* or *Kirin Bahu*, (2) *Ghardi Jawae*, (3) *Itut*, (4) *Sangu*, (5) *Kirin Jawae* and (6) *Nir-bolok*.

Bupla is the commonest form where marriages are performed with the consent of the parties as also their parents. The bride's price is very nominal, usually Rs. 3|-. But it is expected that there should be presents of cloth pieces to the girl's people. The price of a divorced woman or a widow is half of the standard rate as it is the tradition that the widow has to be united to the first husband in the next world and the second husband has only a sort of life interest in her.

Ghardi jawae is the form where the bridegroom becomes a part of the family of the bride at least for a period of five years. Usually, when girls are difficult to be married off for some reason or other or a deserving homeless or poor boy is found or adopted in the family, this form of marriage is contracted by giving promises of plough, bullocks, rice, etc., to the bride-groom.

Itut is a form of marriage where a young man forcibly rubs *Sindur* (vermilion) on a girl of his choice usually in the village market or at a gathering on some festive occasion. After doing this the young man runs away and waits for the visit of the girl's people to his village. *Sindur-dan* (putting the vermilion on the forehead of the girl) being an integral part of the marriage, the bride's people have got to make the best of the job and exact as much as possible from the bridegroom's people. The bride price usually becomes double. If, however, the girl still refuses to live with the man, usually, she has got to be divorced. *Itut* marriage was also used as an act of vendetta in the olden days. This form of marriage, however, has fallen into disuse.

Sanga marriage is meant for the divorced woman and the widow. The actual marriage rite is simple. The bride-groom puts in *Sindur* on a *Dimbur* flower with his left hand and then he lifts the flower with the same hand and sticks it in the bride's hair.

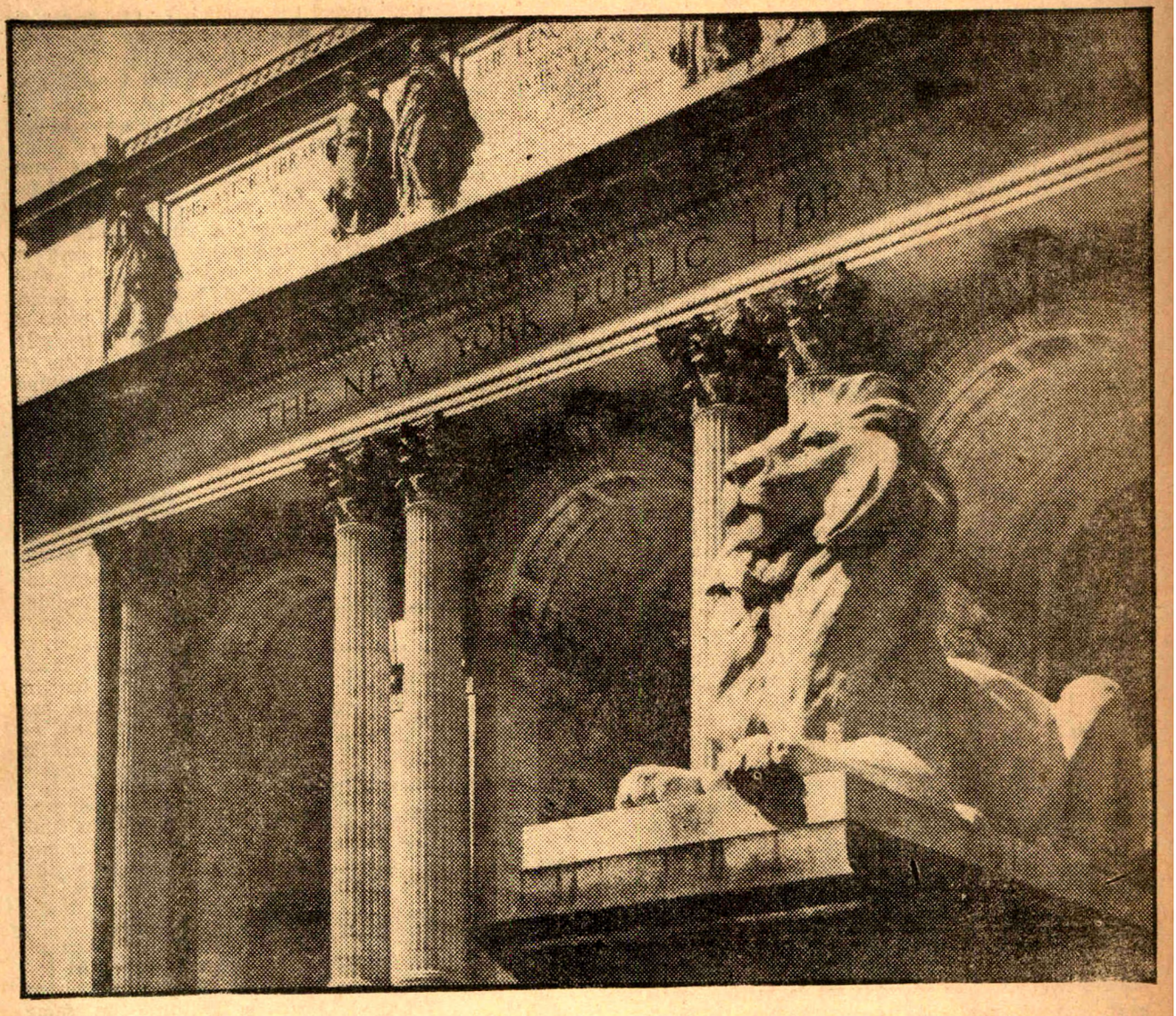
Kirin Jawae is a convenient form of marriage to meet an inconvenient situation when a girl becomes pregnant or is in love with a young man of her own sept. As inter-marriage within the same sept is a taboo another young man is procured and given cows, bullocks, paddy etc., by the young man responsible for the situation. The second young man takes upon himself the odium of the illicit act and the conference called by the village headman usually declares the marriage between the girl and the second man as binding. This social convention leads to the solidarity of the community.

Nir-bolok is a dangerous form of marriage. Here the love-lorn girl just steps into the house of the man she wants to marry and does not come away. Usually, she takes a pot of *Haria* or rice-beer and does not leave unless absolutely physically assaulted and expelled Very often the women-folk of the man burn black pepper or chillies to make the woman go or even physically assault the woman. But if the woman stands all this and could stick to the house for one or two days she will have to be considered as the legal wife of the man.

DIVORCE PERMISSIBLE

Divorce is permissible but the party not at fault has to be compensated Divorces are performed in the midst of village assemblies. The husband tears three Sal leaves in token of separation and

(Continued On Page 166)



PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN THE UNITED STATES

By BENOYENDRA SENGUPTA

The author is Superintendent, Cataloguing Division I, National Library, Calcutta. He recently visited the United States under U.S. International Educational Exchange Programme.

THERE are thousands of libraries in the United States. On a rough estimate there are 12,478 libraries in the United States not including those in elementary and secondary schools. Of these approximately seventy-five hundred are public libraries. The free, public library—publicly controlled and tax-supported—flourished in Boston and Massachusetts and legislation was adopted in other Northern States which permitted municipalities to tax themselves for the support of libraries. It is, however, interesting to note that although a high percentage of Americans are literate, few read books and even fewer obtain books they read from public libraries. About one-fourth of the adult population read a book each month and one half claim to read a book each year. About one-fourth of the adults in a community are registered borrowers in a local public library. Only about one-fourth of the books read in the community are obtained from the public library. The active borrowers from a public library—those who borrow a volume or more each month—represent ten per cent of the adult members of a community. Though public libraries are recognised as desirable in a community they are not considered indispensable or worthy of substantial support from funds obtained by taxation. As such, it has been found difficult to establish locally supported and administered public libraries in rural centres. According to estimates made in 1954, twenty-seven million people in the

United States—seventeen percent of the whole—are without local library service. A bill calling for the extension of library service to rural areas without libraries or with inadequate facilities was presented to Congress in 1955 and during November, 1955 "Know your Library Month" was celebrated in many communities across the country. During 1955, however, many new public library buildings opened and all of them contained attractive rooms and browsing areas for young people. In 1956 Congress passed the Library Services Act, which authorizes the Federal Government to grant $7,500,000 a year for five years to the States. The money will provide library services for many of the twenty-seven million Americans in rural areas who do not have access to public libraries. The States are expected to match Federal grants with appropriations of their own. They will submit proposals to the Commissioner of Education, who will decide how to use the money to expand library services in rural areas. Congress appropriated $2,050,000 for the first fiscal year.

ORGANISED INDUCEMENTS

In order to induce the majority of adults in a community to read books public librarians organise exhibitions in and outside of the library, arrange for discussion of books on radio programmes and in book lectures, publish lists of books and reviews in newspapers, magazines and elsewhere to attract the attention of potential readers. Failing to induce a sufficient percentage of adults to come to the library public librarians have recently made arrangements for carrying books to potential readers through bookmobiles and deposit stations in shopping centres and other places where people are likely to see and borrow them. Besides, films and other non-book materials are being utilized to reach those who do not read. The potentialities of educational television, motion pictures, radio and other means of communication are tremendous. They arouse in the audiences an interest in subjects which cause them to read. Public librarians also provide motives for reading. Study clubs, forums, group discussions and similar activities are regularly sponsored by libraries to arouse in the participants a desire to read.

"Children's rooms and children's librarians have been the classic success of the public library". This is the estimate of the Public Library Inquiry (1950). Standards for library work with young people have been established.

NOTABLE PUBLIC LIBRARIES

I may briefly mention some notable public libraries which I have visited in the United States.

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.—It is the first American public library. By 1954 it had more than thirty branches, ten subject departments and dozens of notable special collections.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY.—It is the business library of the world. It was established in 1895 and the Astor and Lenox holdings formed the nucleus. At present an average of 8000 people a day uses its central building at Fifth Avenue and 42nd street. The Reference Department in the three-storied Central building contains approximately three and a half million books, arranged by a classification system developed solely for this collection. The 80 branch libraries of the Circulation Department have approximately two and half million books classified according to the Dewey Decimal system. Of these 37 per cent are fiction and the rest 63 per cent are non-fiction. Thus the library with its six million books ranks as the second largest library in the United States, exceeded only by the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. The New York Public Library serves three of New York's five Boroughs and issues for home use during a year more than ten million books. The Boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens have other independent library systems. *1955-56 Statistical annual report of the Library* mentions that in the Circulation Department the number of books issued for home use by its eighty Library centres, Regional Branches, Branches, and Sub-branches and three Bookmobiles was 11,986,127.

The New York Public Library has the following divisions — Economics Division (900,000 books); Science and Technology Division (300,000 volumes and the patents of 35 countries); Art Division, the Print Room or the Picture collection; Periodicals Division (40,000 serials a year); Map Division. The Central Building bookstock has 80 miles of bookshelves.

The advertising business relies heavily on this Library specially on the 90,000 prints, 6,000,000 pictures and 35,000 art volumes and other visual materials of the New York Public Library.

A FAMILY DAY

Saturday is a Family Day at the Library. A father and his child often help each other to select books to take home. There is *Family Night in the Library* with teenagers and parents coming together to see a dance programme, to plan travel after a colour film, to debate the community's remedy for juvenile misdeeds. In one of the branches every Tuesday at two, mothers and the smallest ones share the Children's Room for an afternoon of books—tots at small tables seeing picture books with the librarians, mothers in a nearby circle hearing each other's views on current books as they keep up with the world. So, there are library sponsored courses for parent-and-child, parent-and-teenager — learning French together, learning how to sew, how to make ceramics.

All the clerical work of issuing borrowers' cards is done in a central registration office. All overdue notices are sent from that same office. Thus the librarian is released in large measure from the usual routines.

OPERATING EXPENSES

The operating expenses of $8,000,000 are paid about half from public funds and half from private endowment and gift. The Circulation Department operates on funds from the City of New York, the Reference Department is financed by the Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundation, established in 1895 and added to by many philanthropists in the succeeding period. Presiding over the whole of this composite are one Board of Trustees and one Director.

The Reference Department (Central Building) has 23 Division Chiefs and Officers, and 21 First

assistants. Its functions include research, reference, cataloguing, world-wide acquisition and public activities.

The Circulation Department (80 Branch Libraries) has 12 supervisors and officers, and 80 branch librarians. Its function includes Circulation, Reference, Cataloguing, work with children, young people, schools and adults.

The Personnel office (for recruiting, formulating personnel policies and providing staff services) has one Chief.

Besides, there is the Business Manager, who looks after contractual services, purchasing, book binding, printing, building maintenance. The Executive Officer raises funds, makes gift contacts and arranges for events. The Chief of the Public Relations Office is concerned with Press, radio, television, promotion, and public service consultation.

From the 1955-56 *Statistical Annual Report* of the New York Public Library we learn that in the Reference Department 1,009,437 readers were recorded, they consulted 2,566,891 volumes excluding thousands of volumes from open reference shelves. The number of records and visitors recorded at the Central Building was 2,947,720 (a daily average of 8,056). Expressed in terms of full-time positions, the number of employees of the Library on June 30, 1956 was 1,727 of whom 661 were paid from private funds and 1,066 were paid from public funds.

A VERY POPULAR LIBRARY

ENOCH PRATT FREE LIBRARY, Baltimore, Maryland (founded in 1882): It is a very popular library with 28 branches. The remarkable thing about this library is that the general plan arrangement of the Central library is more convenient and economical for reader and staff use, more flexible for continuing change than that of any other large library. During 1955 the circulation of books, magazines and pamphlets was 3,705,104. In 1955 two bookmobiles each with a capacity for 4,000 books loaned 262,214 books for home use. On the 31st December, 1955 the book stock for adults were 1,044,431 and for Juveniles 307,192 totalling 1,351,623. Figures of miscellaneous stock in 1955 are as follows:—Photos, pictures, prints, 389,366; maps, 48,099; slides, filmstrips, 18,251; microfilms, 31; sound recordings, 13,848 and microcards 71. Periodicals currently received during 1955 were 2,415.

Membership registration cards in force in 1955 were 130,971 (adults) and 82,904 (children), totalling 213,875. So far as professional service to readers is concerned the total requests in 1955 were 547,664 (including 137,416 in the Central Building) and Telephone quests were 52,649 (including 48,005) in the Central building. The population served by this Library is 966,119. The size of the area legally entitled to service is 91.13 square miles. The Library is open for 72 hours per week for circulation, reading and study. The Central library is open 303 days during the year.

The Annual Report for 1955 mentions: "In the Pratt Library, there were some of the events which made news: the new Telephone Reference Desk in the General Reference Department, the Children's Book Festival, the success of library edition of "To-morrow's Careers" on TV, the expanding fro of air conditioning, the highest circulation in hi tory, the Institute on Intergroup Relations, t revival of the Staff Institutes, the new downtow stop of the bookmobile."

AN EFFICIENT LIBRARY

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE DISTRICT C COLUMBIA : It is a modest but efficient publ library. The Central library is at Washington D. A library card is issued to anyone who lives, work or attends school in Washington, D. C. The sar reader's card is used to obtain books from t Bookmobile, the Central Library or any neighbou hood branch. Books are usually loaned for a fou week period and may not be renewed. Some boo are loaned for 14 days only. Books taken from t Bookmobile may be returned to the Centr Library, or any branch. The Bookmobile does n offer reference facilities. These services are ava able at the Central Library and the neighbourho branches. The total book stock at the end of 19 were 883,138 volumes of which 565,271 volun were for adults and 317,867 for children. 2,065,6 books were borrowed from the Public Library duri the year ending on June 30, 1955. Of this figu 1,201,830 volumes were lent to adults for home u and 863,845 volumes to children.

The total number of registered borrowers 1955 were 155,547 of which 114,581 were adu and 40,966 children. This figure represents 18. per cent of the population.

During 1955 local readers showed a prefere for fact rather than fiction. Many people asked library materials as a result of television, ra and motion picture productions. Commentaries the news, personal appearance of notable people a discussions of a wide variety of subjects resulted calls for additional information. T. V. programm brought a great many requests for the books which the T. V. productions were based. From t it will be seen that television instead of being threat to reading actually serves as an introduct to it. T. V. can at least be an invitation to kn ledge.

One of the new bookmobiles I saw was a t tor-trailer vehicle with a capacity for hold 4,000 volumes against the wall shelves, an is desk, a heating apparatus and an information ner.

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THE SANTHALS OF HAZARIBAGH

(Continued From Page 162)

upsets a brass pot full of water. If the wife wants to divorce for no fault on her part, her people have to return the original bride price paid along with a heavy fine. If the husband wants the divorce he will have to pay some fine and some customary dues to the woman.

Hindu traditions have a great influence on the customs of child-birth and disposal of the dead. The usual ceremony in Bihar performed on the 5th day of the birth of the child known as *Chhathi*, is also performed in a Santhal's home. Dead bodies are burnt except in cases of cholera and small pox. For such deaths the bodies are buried.

FESTIVALS THEIR VERY LIFE

Regarding their festivals much has been written before. Santhals have an abandon which is let loose during the festivals. Festivals are their very life Some of the festivals are intimately connected with their religious traditions. When the Sal trees come into flowers during the month of *Falgun* (February-March) they have their great *Baha Pooja* which has its opposite number of *Bah-Parab* amongst the Mundas of Chotanagpur. Some of the festivals like *Sohrai* and *Sankranti Pooja* are common for all the aboriginals of Chotanagpur. During all these festivals tribal or family sacrifices are held and dances and drinking accompanied with songs, flute-music and beating of the drum (*Madal*) go on for days and nights. *Sohrai* in the month of *Paush* (November-December) is called *Paush-Parban* in Bengal. It is celebrated for the home-coming of paddy, the chief crop of the year. *Sankranti Pooja* and *Shivaratri* festivals followed by the Santhals are probably borrowed from the Hindu neighbours. The *Sankranti* marks the close of the year. The *Shivaratri* is marked by fasting and worship of *Shiva* the universal God.

Their religion consists of worship of several gods. *Marang-buru* is at the head of the Santhal Pantheon while the other deities are *Thakur, Moleko* (fire God) and *Jai-era*, the deity of the grove which has its counterpart amongst the Oraons and Mundas in the smaller god that presides over the sacred grove known as *Sarna*. Each Santhal family has also two sets of gods of its own, namely, *Ora-bonga*, i.e., household god and *Abke-bonga*, i.e., great God. They have also now started worshipping Hindu deities like *Shiva, Kalimai* and *Durga*.

1855-56 INSURRECTIONS

The Santhals of Hazaribagh district have not attracted as much attention as the Santhals in the Santhal Parganas. The stock is the same and the impact of the present socio-economic forces have brought about changes to the Santhals in the two different areas. It will be recalled that the district of Santhal Parganas was created after the widespread Santhal Insurrection of 1853-55. It was realised that the normal administration was rather unsuitable to the genius of the Santhals. A set of special rules and regulations were made to suit the Santhals. The district of Santhal Parganas was created as a non-regulation district with some special laws. In spite of various touches of modernisation the special rules and regulations of Santhals still remain to a great extent. They particularly refer to the transfer or acquisition of property, mortgage, rent suits, etc.

In Hazaribagh district also there was a big Santhal Insurrection in 1855-56 which had little connection with the rise of the Santhals in the Santhal Parganas. The old records show that the administrators in Chotanagpur Division were very alert that the Santhals in Hazaribagh district during 1855-56 Insurrections did not have any contact with the Santhals elsewhere.

The Santhal rebellion in Hazaribagh district was purely agrarian. The Santhals found them faced with an alien rule which little understood them. Their best lands were grabbed by the Mahajans, (money-lenders), or the speculators and they were in perpetual indebtedness. Their tribal laws and panchayats were not regarded as sacred. They thoroughly disliked the idea of going to the courts and be tossed about by the hardened court-birds who sucked them well before they could be taken to the lawyer. All these socio-economic causes led to distrust in the administration and this dissatisfaction slowly crystallised. It is really a wonder how the unlettered Santhal Manjhis organised themselves only through a whispering campaign and they rose almost to a man in 1855-56 throughout the district of Hazaribagh.

BOWS VS GUNS

Their bows and arrows were no match for the guns of the British Army. The zamindars did not give them any help and sided with the ruler. The result was that although the Santhals had a few initial successes here and there the British guns mowed them down. They were hounded from jungle to jungle and were often sandwiched by the British forces. The Santhal villages were burnt mercilessly and their few belongings destroyed. A large number of the Santhal villagers were arrested and were given long-term imprisonment. The old records in the Hazaribagh Record Room show that even some Santhal women were out in fetters, marched and put into prison.

There was again a Santhal rise in 1857 when insurrections broke out throughout the district of Hazaribagh following the mutiny of the Ramgarh Battalion. In this case, of course, the Santhals wanted to recover their previous status if possible, by utilising the disturbed times. The Santhals gave a lot of trouble to the British Administration in 1857, which practically fell back on Bagodar on the Grand Trunk Road and carried on the remnants of administration from there for some months. The old correspondence records show that the Santhals had come up against at least one detachment and had routed them. It is clear that many of the non-Santhal village headmen had helped the Santhals. The *Digwars* and the *Ghatwars* who occupied a key position at the hill passages gave considerable help to the Santhals.

The movement was, however, put down and Hazaribagh was re-occupied within a short time.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGES

The figures of the population of the Santhals show a decline. This is probably due to the fact that many Christian Santhals are not being returned as such. Many Santhals may have been shown as Hindi-speaking or as Hindus. The figures are as follows :—

1915	..	..	93,059
1931	..	..	1,29,103
1941	..	..	1,45,762
1951	..	..	97,836

With all the onslaughts of modernism the set-up of Santhal village life is still almost the same as it was centuries before, although signs of disinte-

(Continued On Page 175)

THE 'MIND' UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

By DR. SIVATOSH MOOKERJEE, M.Sc., Ph.D. (Edin)

NOBODY can doubt the existence of mind. But seldom, anybody will find agreement about the stuff it is made of, and the manner it works. At least to some, who try to determine its status by ignoring its all-relations to body, the analysis of mind will appear to be a wilful paradox. Some of the old philosophers were skittish about it and talked only about 'pure mind' and nothing else, which is as absurd as pure gold. However, we cannot afford to be too much philosophic at the risk of regarding the mental phenomenon as something of an intangible reality which cannot and will not be grasped by our intelligence. In spite of the unceasing interest in the mental phenomenon for a long time, there has been endless misconceptions on the subject. Only recently, older misconceptions have been whittled away and the true status of mind is emerging out. Evidently, such new attempts to study the mind will help to discard the elusive attitude of a metaphysicist and to avoid the apparent distinction between the operation of mind and the working of the body which suffers from a fallacy of round-square theory.

'MIND' A FUNCTION OF BRAIN

Indeed, the mental phenomenon is now considered as an extension of body function, responsible by an organ inside us. The real mysteries of mind thus lie hidden in the delicate working of the organ of brain. Whitehead made a statement amounting to that all difficulties with the body-mind phenomenon arose resulting into a host of speculations like panallatism and interactionism etc because Descartes, the first of the modern western philosophers, made an artificial cleavage of mind and matter in which mind was conceived of as an entity. Once this assumption was accepted then there arose the necessity to show the relationship of mind and matter But today, more than at any time we are becoming more and more aware of the real fact that 'mind' is not an entity and it is a function of brain. Hence it is a process of the brain in which the external reality is reflected as thoughts.

ELEMENTS OF 'MIND'

There are special elements in the body which are responsible for maintaining the consciousness in our being. Not the entire body, but a localized region is the seat of thought. This is the brain of the individual. It acts as a 'switch-board' of control for all our feeling and thinking. The working of the 'switch-board' is to govern among other things, five important senses of vision, hearing, smell, taste and touch. Thereby we become alive to our surroundings and consciously we work, look and hear. This act of aliveness to a situation is due to the presence of a co-ordinating system in us which we call the act of mind-mentation. When we harbour a desire we do it sleep and sex also prevail here. The senses of pain, pressure, heat and cold are understood in the organ of mind.

The most important point is that there are localised functions of the brain. Specific centres work for particular type of feeling and sensation. They are centres of hearing, smell, etc. When we hear, the particular area of hearing in the brain is activated, the other regions may or may not be secondarily influenced. Through the integration of the various centres in the brain, by the presence of association-fibres, the phenomenon of mind works; we behave as an organised whole.

The appearance of these centres of the brain under the microscope is interesting. It is a complicated mass of neurons—the brain. There are about 10,000,000,000 neurons present in the brain which co-ordinate and sift the many diverse messages. Mainly speaking, there are two layers of materials in the brain — grey matter and white matter. The cells of the grey matter are vital; responses to stimulations originate in them. The white matter of the brain consists of fibres and is responsible for the co-ordinating activity. The grey matter is in close relation with the white matter. The covering of the grey matter is called the cerebral cortex. The white matter is a region in between the one grey matter to another. The grey matter is composed of cell bodies and surrounding dentrite; axon from the white matter finds its way into the grey matter and branches and thus forms synaptic contacts. The integration takes place in the networks of the grey matter. Among the different regions of the brain, the superior or proximal region, which fills the greater part of the cranial cavity is known as the cerebrum. All the higher activities of thought-process are governed by the cerebrum. The anteriormost region of the cerebrum is called the pre-frontal lobe. In fact, the pre-frontal is responsible for all the creative works of life — writing, organizing and abstract thinking. The lower region of the brain is known as hypothalamus. It is advanced that this region of the brain controls the baser instincts of life of which anger, hatred, rage are the products. Emotions result in activation of centres in brain but the cortical control modifies and makes less impulsive.

Recently, it has been shown that almost in the central part of the brain, there is a special region called the reticular formation where all the sensory nerves stem in this reticulum. This area is about the size of the small finger but it is the centre of wakefulness. In the working of mind, it is vital, because it exerts control over the other regions of the brain.

And also it helps to perceive the important and unimportant stimulations to brain and awake the cerebrum. It may also be involved in mental disorders.

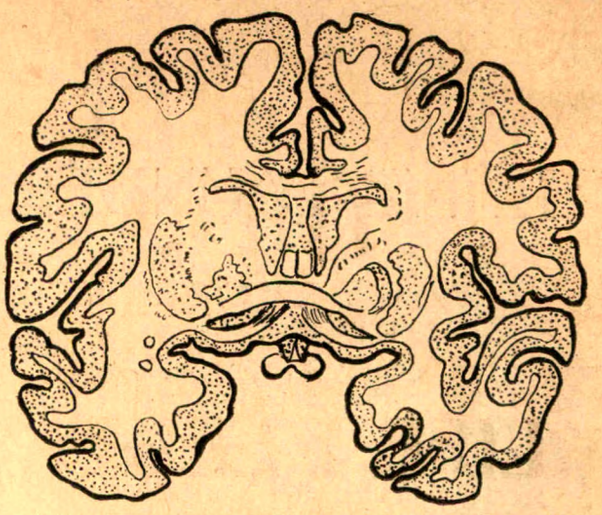
MNEMIC WIRES

The brain is the abode of mentation but the remotest corners of the body are also connected with the brain by means of mnemic wires. For the mental occurrence, the rest of the body is internally connected with the head office. A little pin prick on the tip of the toe is almost immediately communicated to the brain which feels and instantaneously directs the muscles to retract the leg. These networks of mnemic wires are present for conducting the impulses from the brain to the different parts of the body or vice versa. A single sensory nerve cell conducts impulse all the way from a sense organ to brain and spinal cord. Similarly, the motor nerve cell is responsible to carry the impulse all the way from the brain and spinal cord to the muscles.

The brain continues posteriorly as the spinal cord. From the brain proper twelve pairs of nerves have originated to connect the different regions with it. The nerves innervate facial regions. They supply the eye to transmit the stimuli of light and shade to the optic region of the brain. Similarly, there has been supply to the ear, nose, throat regions. Another nerve originates from the brain and runs down to connect the stomach, heart of the individual to the brain. There are also thirtyone pairs of nerves that are given out from the spinal cord to supply the regions below the head. The nerves from the brain and spinal cord are known as the central nervous system which controls the voluntary function of our body. However, there is another set of nervous system in our body which is called the sympathetic nervous system. It is a part of the autonomic nervous system. The autonomic nervous system lies on either side of the spinal cord as a chain of nerve ganglia. The autonomic nervous system controls the dilatation of iris, the contraction of the blood vessels, and the accelerations of the heart beats of our body. These movements are involuntary. The natural role of autonomic nerves is opposite to that of the central nervous system. The other part of the autonomic nervous system is the para-sympathetic nervous system. The activity of mind is determined by the balancing effects of the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system.

CHEMISTRY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

In the last few years, new approaches have been suggested which may lead to an understanding of consciousness. Both the brain and the nervous system consist of innumerable nerve cells or neurons. Each neuron is a special type of cell for the conduction of impulses through it. The neuron has the central body with nucleus. It has protoplasmic outgrowths as fibres coming out from it. There are two types of fibres—a single axon and there are either one or more dentrites in a neuron. These fibre strings may be short or long extending to a few feet. The reason of having such long thread-like fibres is to form the neural pathway to conduct messages of sensations from one region to another region of the body. The thickness of a nerve determines the number of such fibres. It is really a bundle of fibres. The dentrite of one neuron makes a functional contact with the axon of another for relaying the impulse. These contacts are known as synapses. Largest number of synapses are present in our brain



The appearance of the part of the organ of mind under microscope—the cerebrum. It consists of grey matter and white matter with innumerable synaptic neurons.

and that is why so efficient and free communication between the different brain cells is possible.

Generally, stimulations arise in the dentrite of a neuron and pass on to the axon. The dentrites are as if the gate of entrance of stimuli into a nerve cell and axon is the door of exit. The stimulations pass on through the nerve like a bullet from a machine gun—one sensation followed by another in a close succession. The time of gap between the two shots is the time of restoration which is unbelievably trifle but necessary. This succession of stimulations is called the 'firing' of the neuron. Whatever sensation we perceive, either by reading a piece of good literature or hearing a piece of good music, or looking at a good picture, in fact that involves volleys of sensation, originating at the receptor source and is almost immediately carried to the brain. In some fibres like Vagus fibres to the heart discharge sensation continuously with varying frequencies but the fibres to the gland send impulses as long as the gland is to secrete.

It has been shown that stimulation of nerves involves specific electro-chemical changes in an invisible realm. After an impulse has passed through, the neuron consumes oxygen and expends a small energy. The speed of sensation varies — it is about 100 yards per second. Whenever there is act of nervous stimulation, a chemical substance like acetylcholine is secreted by the neuron which has an excitatory effect upon the transmission of nerve impulses. But adrenalin and related compounds inhibit transmission of nerve impulse across a synapse. In the depth of our being, whether we become conscious or not, consciousness depends on the hostilities of two allied chemicals, namely acetylcholine and adrenalin. The opposing actions and the balance of these two chemicals determine whether a stimulation should pass and affect the brain or not.

Scientists have also been able to demonstrate that neurons contain some granular inclusions within them — Nissl's granules. These granules appear to be the fuel for the nerve cells. In each act of stimulation, the granules are utilised by the neuron and

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THE LIFE I LEAD AT HOME

Uday Shankar and his wife Amala

By UDAY SHANKAR

IMPRESSIONABLE young men are usually found to take a keen interest in the details of the every-day life of an artiste serving a popular art like the cinema, the stage or dancing. A girl may like to know all the intimate details of the routine of a popular female artiste just as a college student would try to keep all the up-to-the-minute information of the male film stars, their daily habits and practices, their likes and dislikes. The young men of the country have indeed gone so far as to start putting on dress designed in the style of those worn by actors in some particular picture, whereas girls have carefully tried not to be outdone in their own sartorial zeal in this respect. They do their best not only to imitate the beauty-culture formulae of the actresses, but also try to imitate their voice and copy their intonations and accents.

When I ventured to unveil my own domestic life before my young readers I could in all humility visualise their taking the same interest as they usually would in the case of other artistes of the screen. But the truth is I do not belong to the screen and I do not know if my readers would be disappointed to learn that my present life is not a life of cosmetic and romance. It is the quietly flowing life of a Bengalee who is steadily advancing in years. I may be young in spirit, but I am doubtless gradually growing in age. After crossing the stormy and rough sea of youth I now stand cool and collected on the shore of mellow age When I look back upon the flood-tides and billows of the sea I crossed I am reminded of my days of desperate struggles, my varied trials and tribulations.

SATISFIED WITH THE PRESENT

Why then, you may ask me, this uninteresting history of a weary traveller's course of life which may leave the youth cold? The answer is very simple. It is not with the hope of affording you any keen pleasure, nor to present you with a dull and drab account which no more corresponds to life. It is just to please myself in a mood of passive reminiscence. I am pleased with what I am. And what I am must be all that remains of what I was. I am really satisfied with the present condition of my life which gives me more time to think and to try to create something. Life for me now is not one of struggle and sailing along the rough sea of life but one of deep and cool thinking of the life beyond.

An artiste creates to give pleasure to others, but sometimes he (or she) creates for his own self too for the joy to be shared by himself. If perchance anybody else partakes of it, well, of course, he has nothing to worry about. In the same way my own life history pleases me. It is not for the sake of creating any esoteric pleasures for others.

PETTICOAT GOVT.'S HOME DEPT.

When I turn to put in print my life history, it seems an account of an average Bengalee gentleman of a middle-class family. I do not exactly mean that after my early morning tea I take a bag and go to

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THE 'MIND' UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

(Continued From Page 168)

at the end of a day, Nissl's granules disappear from the neuron, fatigue descends on the being. A night's rest helps the neuron to load the Nissl's granules to be ready for the next day's innumerable 'firing' of the nerves.

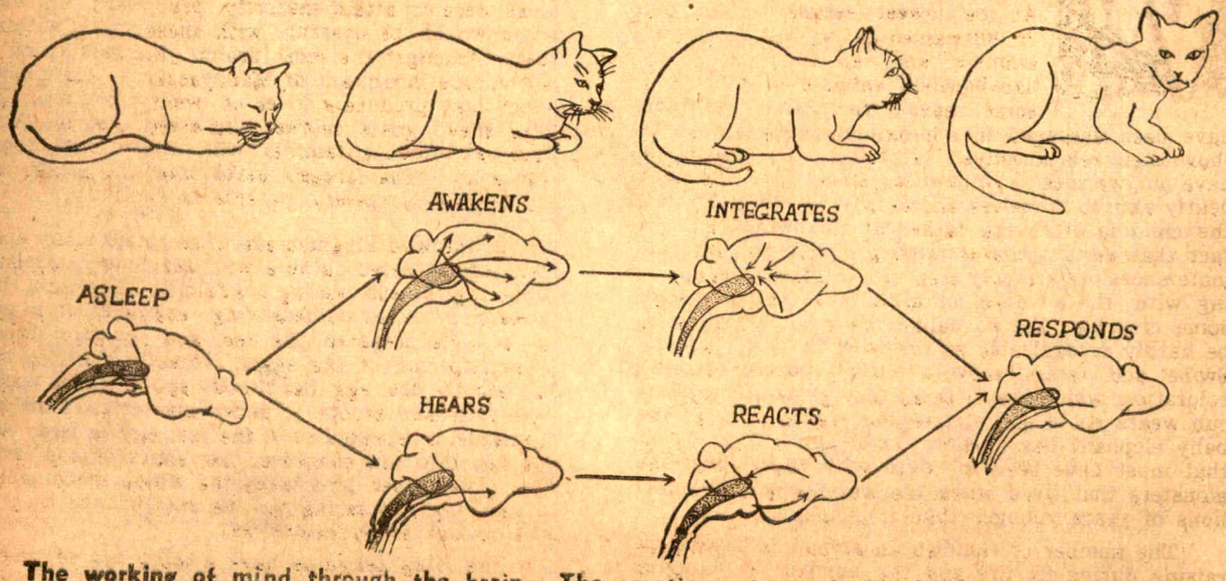
THE DEVIL'S WORKSHOP

To some, the brain may appear as a temple of wisdom and to others, it is nothing more than a devil's workshop. This begs a question whether an in-between of these two extreme views is possible or not. Because a saint, under extreme emotional provocation, can become more than a devil. And a devil can behave in a most saintly way by a complete mastery of his emotional instability. Thus it becomes a very important fact that matters in the mind that dwell in us exercise control over the entire self. But even in an ordinary sober man, a little change in the composition of his blood will take away his mind. The sensitiveness of mind to lack of oxygen and deficiency of sugar, will cut off the nerve impulses that prompt movements of muscles. Mind is soon blotted out and if such conditions continue, death prevails. If the blood is deprived of calcium, coma sets in. More water content in the blood results in mania and dizziness. Acidification of blood makes mind blank. More of sugar in the blood results in double vision and thickening of speech. Mind may equally be upset by the lack of regular elimination of the waste products of the food. Nicotin in small quantity steps up blood flow and increases the pulse rate. The whole body is stimulated. Alcohol in small dosage and coffee also stimulate nerves of the brain. The activity of adrenal glands in the body is one of the prime movers which work as the emotional gear.

It is on us to regard the conscious awareness as mind or not. The conscious awareness is due to stimulations of nerves. Nerve endings innervate extensively to the remotest corners of the body which conduct sensation from sense organ to brain and nerve cord and from brain and nerve cord to muscles and glands. The whole process is an action of perfect integration. Skin alone contains many cutaneus receptors. There are million pain points, half million pressure points, 150,000 cold points, 16000 heat points. Each hair of the body is communicated to a sensory fibre. Finger tips, palm and lips also contain many sense organs. All these multitudes of vital points of sense organs are marvellously co-ordinated by the master apparatus—the brain. In conjunction with the receptor organs we are aware of what we are doing in response to the stimulus. Howéver, there are certain ranges of nervous co-ordinations that occur in our body which are voluntary and those happen quite unconsciously. These are called reflex actions. Bright light automatically makes to shut the iris of the eye. When fingers are put into hot water, almost immediately the hand is retracted and for doing such an act no mental sanction seems to be necessary. In our body system, there has been a habitual formation of various reflexes which are conditional in some respects. It is claimed that the highest intellectual thinking biologically means refined muscular control. Our delicate emotions are not our tears and laughters but the hidden reflexes of how we react unconsciously to things and unknowingly change our voice or make our atypical facial expressions.

Poetically T. S. Elliot once said — "My words echo thus, in your mind"—which is also biologically intriguingly true. Known words are symbols which set reactions through our eyes to brain. They are signals of meaning. We may retain them. Receptiveness means memory.

The mental phenomenon can thus be analysed on a few facets — first, stimulation to the seat of consciousness; secondly, muscular contractions or secretions of glands at the dictate of the head office. The third facet, perhaps the most important, is the conduction of the messages which are electrochemical in nature already discussed. It is best to conclude with Llewellyn Powys's statement that mind is a 'Amphisbaena' — a two-headed serpent, two sides of the medallion, the matter and mind. Those, who are impatient to crystallise the mind, and observe it under microscope, can very well try to do with the cells of the seat of consciousness and will eventually find large dead protein molecules, the basic fabric of all life. And those, who are apt to analyse the mind in other form, will purview the mind phenomenon as a quivering of electro-chemical impulses, the neuro-stimulations, recorded by an electrode. The 'Mind' is not an unsubstantial thing, it is a reflection of the brain-matter.

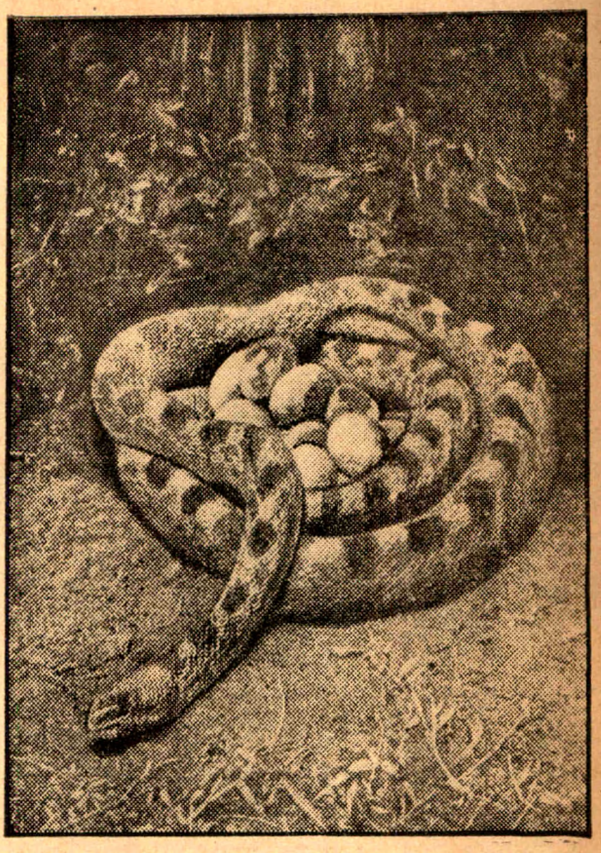


The working of mind through the brain. The reactions of sound stimuli in the awakening of sleeping cat. First the stimulations (shown by arrows) reach the reticular activiting system from where signals are given to other parts of the brain for the final response.

Family Life IN THE WILD

By U. C. CHOPRA

Interest in animal life is never an idle curiosity, and it may prove more absorbing in itself, more delightful, more significant for increasing our knowledge of life and its true values, and more involved in obscurity, prejudice and rule-of-thumb ideas than any other interest that could be named. It is calculated to modify Man's pride in himself as the incarnation of the highest intelligence or the finest physical product of the animal world. Especially, it is likely to extend his sympathy to all lowly things that share the life of the globe with him.



The Python coils round her eggs and incubates them for three whole months.

WE live in a very beautiful world and we have an immense amount to learn and to do research before we can solve the secrets of animal life. At the lowest estimate there are 25,000 named and known backboned animals, and ten times as many backboneless animals; and there is some reason for pride that they have been arranged in approximate order so as to show their relationships. Naturally, the mammals have our warmest sympathies, since they are most nearly akin to ourselves and as with our own species, the child is often the father of the man. It is a fact that certain characteristics of the parents' remote ancestors are only seen in the infant, disappearing with the advance of maturity. The young of some creatures are so unlike the adult stage as to be hardly recognizable as the child of their parents. Swine and tapirs show a lurid "jumper-pattern" coloration, which they lose as they grow up; the lion cub wears spots and stripes that vanish, whilst the baby elephant has a short trunk and a harry coat that must have been in vogue with the elephantine monsters that lived when the world was many millions of years younger than it is today.

The number of families an animal is capable of raising during its life and the number of young is largely determined in the case of mammals by their size. A mouse may breed at six weeks, but an elephant is not marriageable until at least twenty-five years old. The latter may continue to breed until sixty, but the hardiest mouse is *passe* in a very few years. Thus the spiny mouse of Egypt may produce a family of about a dozen every three weeks, and it has been calculated that if every one of these creatures were to attain maturity, practically the whole world would be overrun with these mice within a year. Amongst the most prolific animals is an insectivorous inhabitant of Madagascar — the tenrec, which may produce a litter of twenty or more. The dogs, sheep, goats, zebras, wild asses, deer and antelopes—all produce families with almost monotonous regularity. The largest herbivores, the giraffe and hippo, make successful parents in captivity.

In the wild kingdom are to be found many specimens of feathered fathers who assiduously assist in preparing for and rearing the family. The male rhea, or ostrich, is an outstanding example of a good father. He prepares the nest and becomes broody in anticipation of the eggs. Directly the hen rhea has laid the first egg, her broody spouse takes possession of it and scoops it under his wing. This performance is repeated until the last egg is laid, when the hen bird has completed her share of the family life. The father bird takes the whole responsibility of hatching and caring for the chicks until they are able to look after themselves.

The King penguins have a more united method of rearing a family, both parents helping to incubate the eggs. These birds retain an upright position and hold the eggs, of which there are seldom more than two, on their broad webbed feet cuddled against

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The eggs of Crocodile on rotting vegetable matter. The crocodile only guards them until the infant Crocodiles chip the shell.

their feathered stomachs. The male penguin is always in close attendance upon his lady, who, if she is tired of nursing the eggs, or perhaps hungry, gives a loud braying cry. At once her consort rushes to her side and pressing against her receives the eggs which she jerks off her feet on to his. When the penguin chicks are hatched the parents share the duties of nursery, the male penguin becoming nurse in the absence of the mother bird.

Parrots have a sensible plan for the management of their nursery. The male parent takes charge in the day time sitting upon the eggs from dawn to dusk, when the hen bird returns to the nest to take night duty.

The male hornbill is both nurse and jailer, for in order to protect his wife and babies from tree-climbing marauders, he pushes his lady into a hollow tree through a convenient opening which he at once seals up with mud and leaves, using his enormous bill as a trowel. Only a tiny aperture is left through which the captive bird is fed. In this prison home the mother hornbill is expected to lay her eggs and rear the chicks, dependent for food on the good offices of her spouse.

The birth of a Crocodile.

THE PERFECT FATHERS

The male catfish has an unusual manner of housing and caring for his young. In close attendance upon the expectant mother, he waits for the eggs, taking them into his mouth as soon as laid, which at the time becomes highly distended. With the spawn held in his closed jaws the catfish father foregoes all food until the eggs are hatched and the baby fish released from their strange cradle. Even then, the devoted father will for sometime follow his offspring in their search for food, protecting them from the many enemies of their watery world.

The sea-horse, or Hippocampus to give him his correct name, is well equipped for the part of nurse, nature having provided him with a kangaroo-like abdominal pocket as a nursery for the eggs and subsequent progeny. Into this pocket the female sea-horse drops the eggs and thereafter takes no interest in the welfare of the family. The male sea-horse nurses the eggs in the pouch until the babies are hatched and strong enough to wriggle out of their nursery. Like the catfish father, the male hippocampus follows and guards his nurslings until satisfied that they are able to look after themselves.

The accepted reptilian method of hatching the eggs is merely to bury them in the sand or rotting vegetable matter, and then to hope for the best. The crocodile and python are, however, two outstanding exceptions. The former whilst burying her eggs in the sand, jealously guards them until the infant crocodiles chip the shell; the latter coils round her eggs and subjects them to incubation for three whole months. Her length and girth reach such remarkable dimensions that she can gather in her coils actually her entire progeny. But a brooding tortoise or turtle could never cover her chicks.

Infant reptiles have to shift for themselves at a tender age. Mothers may defend the newly hatched against the onslaughts of a hungry adversary. Parental care, however, soon comes to an end as the youngsters begin to wander from her side and fend for themselves.

The family affairs of an East African Perch, who protects her thirty odd eggs by carrying them about in her mouth, often engage the attention of the Aquarium lovers. The eggs of the mouth-breeder, as this fish is called, hatch in from ten days to a fortnight, but for sometime after the young fish have been released, they are, in the event of danger, hastily gathered up into the parental cheeks.

Apart from its strange nursing habits, the fish's behaviour is of interest, since it exemplifies one of Nature's unswerving laws, namely, that the smaller the family the greater the amount of solicitude expended upon it — a law which goes to maintain a tolerable balance of the numerous and widely divergent species populating the earth.

The infantile deathrate is an important factor in the limitation of the family, and were it not so the earth would be hopelessly overcrowded. The child of self-sacrificing parents makes good where a score of uncared for infants go to the wall. In the fish world sticklebacks, butter fish, seahorses, bowfins, catfish and many others, apart from the mouth-breeder, content themselves with a small number of eggs and work themselves into physical wrecks in their efforts to guard and feed their offspring. In certain cases they die of exhaustion as soon as their not too numerous families have been safely shepherded through their early days.

At the other end of the scale are a number of creatures ill adapted for parenthood. The most striking contrast to the mouth breeder is the sun fish, who lays 300,000,000 eggs, and it is questionable whether more than a dozen fish hatch out and survive to attain the parental weight of ten stone or more. Many other fish think in millions when it comes to

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THE LIFE I LEAD AT HOME

(Continued From Page 169)

the market to purchase fish, ghee, spices and vegetables, and after a quick lunch at 10 run for the first bus at the stand for office. And while going out for the office take the tiffin box and another small box containing 'pan' and stand with folded hands for hardly a second before the picture of Goddess

Shankar's little daughter is seen playing with a Chinese girl while her father was busy signing autographs to students during his recent China tour.

Kali and then run. (If perchance anybody happens to sneeze let all the curses be upon him!) Then come back home at about 6 p.m., take tea, go accompanied by my wife either to enjoy a picture or visit a friend's house or play cards with friends. And, finally, come back home late at night and after meals fall asleep and start snoring.

Far from all these. I do not remember if I have ever gone marketing. That task falls to my wife. I am a part and parcel of my Home Department although under a Petticoat Government. And there the administration is run by somebody else, who does not permit me to meddle with or waste my time over these matters. They are managed efficiently by the head of that Government who, by the way, happens to be my wife. Another thing. I do not know if ever I learnt to play cards, nor do I know whether my wife is versed in that art. Though I have an office, I do not hurry for it. My studio is my office and, believe me, I am always punctual without being in a hurry. To me unpunctuality is a crime.

THE MIDDLE-CLASS FAMILY

I am sure you can now realise what I mean by the life of an average Bengalee gentleman of a middle-class family. Believe me, it is a wonderful life. Do not think for a moment that I am an aristocrat or a rich man. Far from that. An average Bengalee gentleman's life is a happy serene life. There is a cry for money in every family, whether rich or poor. But happiness lies in a middle-class family, with the head of the family being surrounded by a devoted and sweet wife and pretty little children who share the joys and sorrows equally with the *'Karta'* (head) of the house. In times of hardship the wife and the children smilingly shoulder his responsibilities and help him in the struggle. Even in that life of struggle and travail there is domestic peace and tranquillity. The happiness of the home depends solely on the mistress of the house, and I am sure every middle-class Bengalee family possesses this source of happiness. Middle-class families may oftentimes feel depressed and may not have enough wherewithals of life but theirs are the happy homes. Sometimes people belonging to this stratum of society are obliged to give up the idea of enjoying certain items of comforts or having a few pieces of clothing or some clothes for the 'Puja' festival and some other minor luxuries. The father is happy in the midst of such an atmosphere of voluntary sacrifice on the part of his near and dear ones. This is the peculiar feature of a middle-class family in India and I am not only proud to belong to that modestly privileged class but am absolutely content with it.

INTELLIGENTSIA & THEIR CONTRIBUTION

I should not be misunderstood for speaking so highly of the middle-class family. In our country almost every family can be said to belong to that class, be it lower-middle or middle-middle. There is quite a negligible number of people who belong to the richer class, and that also you can count on your finger-tips. The poorer class is gradually coming, if it has already not come, into the category of the middle-class. The middle-class produces the intelligentsia, and our land has produced all the big men, the giants of the society, whether in politics, science, education, legal profession, or the like. In the present age, it is they who have brought the land to the same level with the other civilised countries of the world. If I praise the middle-class in this particular respect of having a happy domestic life, the other classes, if they claim themselves as not belonging to the middle-class, should not take exception. Because, in general, I suppose, in our country, it is characteristic of every family to help the head of the family in the struggle for existence. I am afraid this may sound a little strange to the Western conception of the art of living.

TWO HELPERS: THE DAY'S ROUTINE

My life is the life of a toiling and struggling, thinking and working man who ponders and acts and feels satisfied on seeing the results of his work. My life never was or is a life of failure or frustra-

tion. The very simple reason is that I have confidence in myself and faith in my Creator's divine dispensation.

I get up very early in the morning and begin to think and plan before getting down to work. My only two constant companions and helpers in this business are my wife and packets of cigarettes of a special brand. I am sorry, I cannot disclose the name of manufacturers obviously for two reasons. I can embarrass neither the manufacturer nor my publisher.

I do not want to give details about my meals and time of work. I take food as others do and relish it as much as I can. Most of the time I suffer from a lack of good appetite. My work begins early in the morning. Sometimes I compose and think while I am talking. After giving training to my fellow artistes and students for a while, I take a hearty lunch and sleep for a couple of hours. This routine is changed according to the type and need of a particular work. But anyway, I must give full eight hours of training to my people before dinner. After dinner and before retirement for the night a good drive for a number of miles concludes my day's routine.

CLEANLINESS & HYGIENIC HABITS

I cannot, I confess, tolerate dirty habits or dust and filth in the house. I also abhor fleas. I often take pleasure in helping people to do some petty work. I help my son in repairing his cycle, or my daughter in dressing up her dolls or mending them if they are 'injured.' Very often I have to lend my helping hand to some small mechanical engineering feats.

Let me narrate here a few instances of how my friends were taken aback by my cleanliness and hygienic habits. Once a friend of mine came to my Madras house and was staying with us. His coats, shirts, trousers and other articles of dress were all scattered here and there. One day when he was out I fixed up a rack in the room allotted to him and put everything on the hanger. When the gentleman came back and entered the room he could not find his clothes anywhere either on the chairs, tables or the cot. Even then he was not aware of the existence of a new rack in the room! So he became a bit suspicious and had not even the courage to ask anybody in the house about his clothes. All of a sudden his eyes fell on the wall where the rack was hung up and naturally he felt a little awkward for having so carelessly scattered all his things in the room. Later on my wife disclosed that it was I who was responsible for re-arranging the scattered materials in a tidy way. He became all the more sorry for it. It was not to put my friend to an awkward position that I arranged his clothes, but it was because I could not stand untidiness that I did it and, secondly, because I wished my younger brothers to learn a lesson from it.

"SEE WHAT HE IS DOING"

Here is another instance. Bare-bodied and with a short nicker on I was once clearing the drain of my house with a bamboo pole, as it was choked with filth. Just then I heard a knock at the door. Usually I am shy to face people, especially outsiders, and I normally feel reluctant to talk with unknown persons. But, believe me, I am not shy on the stage. On hearing the knock I asked my wife to go and see who was knocking. I could hear that she was talking to somebody in English for a long time. Then I heard the sound of footsteps, of my wife's slippers and of heavy shoes of somebody with a manly gait. I had heard the sounds from the place where I was engaged in drain-cleaning work. My wife told the stranger: "Just see what he is doing." I got cross and felt a bit nervous. I turned back and saw just in front of me a tall, well-tailored smiling American gentleman with a note book and pencil in his hands, and just imagine me, almost in my birth-day suits, with a short nicker on and with a bamboo pole in hand, besmeared with mud and muck all over my body! I cast a reproachful glance at my wife and a piteous look on the foreign visitor. My wife too had a naughty smile on her lips. She then introduced me to the American stranger and said that he was the reporter of a well-known American newspaper and wanted to know all about my family life.

THE SANTHALS OF HAZARIBAGH

(Continued From Page 166)

gration are quite visible. The *Manjhi* or the village headman is the social head of the villagers. He is the link between the zamindar and later their administrator. He is aided by an assistant known as the *Yogmanjhi*. There is one *Ojha* in every village, who is the religious head. The *Ojha* gives his services for propitiating the evil spirits. The *Manjhi*, the village secular head, and *Ojha*, the religious head, have their counterparts in Mahto and Pahan of the Oraons and Mundas in Chotanagpur. The *Manjhi* has naturally been more of a casualty with the Courts, abolition of Zamindari, Gram Panchayats, etc., and has no longer that influence on his folk.

The socio-economic condition of the Santhals was very poor excepting in the case of the Christian Santhals. The Mahajans and the land grabbing speculators had taken full advantage of the simplicity and thriftlessness of the Santhals. Then came the earlier industrialists, mine-owners, forest contractors, and the like. The Santhals gave their life blood for all these groups throughout the 19th century and a part of the earlier 20th century without getting much benefit for their own. They perpetually remained in debt. It is only recently that serious steps have been taken to improve the condition of the Santhals. The Money Lenders' Act has been amended, the Tenancy Laws have been changed and grain *Golas* have been set up. Ceiling interests have been curbed by the changes in the Money Lenders' Act. A non-Santhal cannot now straightway buy the Santhal's land. Grain *Golas* loan out seed paddy on easy terms. Special schools, hostels, health measures, Gram Panchayats are some of the recent innovations since 1947 which are expected to do much good to the Santhals.

FAMILY LIFE IN THE WILD

(Continued From Page 173)

launching the family into the world. Thus it has been estimated that a ling may contain 60,000,000 eggs, a cod or conger 10,000,000 and a halibut 6,000,000.

Most frogs and toads lay large egg masses and only a very small percentage of the emerging tadpoles survive the attacks of fish and predacious insects. A few, however, lay only a small number of eggs, and these, in such cases, are protected by the parents. The female of the pipa toad and of a Brazilian tree frog carry them in cells upon the back. The father midwife toad twines the egg masses about his legs, whilst the male of Darwin's frog of the Argentine swallows the eggs and bears the infant froglets in a special extension of the vocal sac.

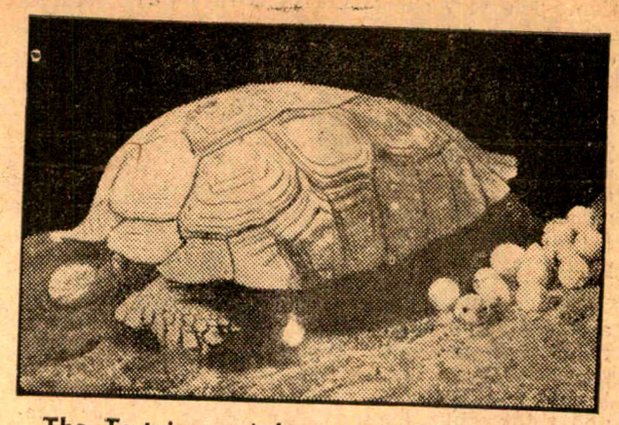
The two extremes may be seen in almost every branch of the animal kingdom. Amongst the invertebrates some snails produce but a dozen young which may be retained in the safety of the parental shell until they are of an appreciable size. Oysters and limpets, on the other hand, discharge their millions of young into the sea, there to win through if they can. Probably fewer than one in a million achieve this end.

CARRYING THE YOUNG

The habit of carrying the young has its votaries in all branches of the mammalian world. Cats and bears habitually carry their infants when they are weak and helpless in the mouth. The "Pram" finds its most perfect development amongst the pouched animals, or marsupials, as represented by the kangaroos, opossums, etc. Some of the latter have such large families that the pouch is soon quite inadequate to accommodate them and the babies are then marshalled on the parental back, keeping their seats by strap-hanging from the mother's tail. The Australian Teddy bear or Koala has suppressed the pouch and instead carries her baby pick-a-back until it is almost as large as herself.

Many birds habitually carry their fledglings in the hollow between their shoulder blades. Bats often

The male Hornbill at the nest.



The Tortoise and her eggs. The brooding tortoise never covers her clutch.

carry a weight of family far exceeding their own, since the young bat is not able to "win its wings" until several months old.

PARENTAL LOVE

The length of time for which an animal may hold itself responsible for the family well-being varies. Elephants are believed to cling to the maternal apronstrings until well over twenty years of age. Monkeys may take six or seven years to mature, whilst young lions and wolves often cultivate the society of the "old folk" long after they have attained to adult stature. Young rodents, on the other hand, are often literally kicked out of the parental nest when only a few weeks old, since they are by then not fitted to steal their own meals, but to take up family cares.

But it is very difficult to generalize upon the theme of parental love. The scorpion, a lowly creature, evinces remarkable solicitude. One Zoo scorpion mother carried her brood of twenty or more upon her back for several weeks and when a child fell off or wandered far afield, it was tenderly picked up in one of mother's formidable claws and reinstated amongst its more dutiful nursery companions.

Most mammals soon forget their young, should these die prematurely, or are easily consoled by a substitute. Monkeys usually forget their bereavement once the corpse has been removed. Not always, however, they retain dead infants for many months, only permitting them to be withdrawn long after they have withered into a mummified condition.

OFFSPRING'S EDUCATION

Most mammals give some thought at least to their offspring's education, and do not, as is so often imagined leave it to 'instinct' or mere chance. Young cats of all kinds—whether lions or domestic tabbies—get their first lessons in hunting by playing with the restless tip of the maternal tail. The infant mountain sheep and goats on the terraces never fail to excite the wonder of visitors by the extraordinary agility with which they negotiate the most difficult jump and cliff-edge expeditions. But their very first lessons in mountaineering are taken on the parental back. Young ibex, indeed, when only a few days old, will climb, greatly daring, to the dizzy height of the parental horns.

Education, is equally apparent in birds. Young hawks and eagles learn to catch dead food dropped through the air. Many birds, such as the cormorant and pelican, feed their young on predigested food, the nestling withdrawing fragments from the parental gullet in a manner that might suggest to the uninitiated that the parent was actually eating her own young.

THE PANTHER

By AUGUSTUS SOMERVILLE

When you become intimate with the Panther through this brilliant article you know precisely what it is like. Panthers become Man-eaters just as frequently as tigers and when they succumb to this liking for human flesh they exceed the ferocity, cunning and boldness of the tiger in every way. Also related here is the story, which is true in every detail, of a grim encounter between a Shikari and the Panther,—so very exciting and enjoyable that one can hardly afford to forget it.

PANTHER is a word of Greek and Latin derivation, meaning "all animals." Originally it was applied to all predatory animals but at the present time it is recognised as the customary name for the Leopard in India.

Fossil remains of panthers, similar in every respect to the animals found in this country today, have been discovered in the cave deposits of the Pleistocene Age in Spain, France, Germany and England, but at present the Panther survives in Europe only in the Russian Province of Kuban, north of the Caucasus.

It is difficult to say whether the panther migrated to India before the tiger. That it probably established itself in Peninsular India before the tiger is suggested by its prevalence in the island of Ceylon, where tigers are not found. The theory is that the panther by virtue of its earlier occupation entered Ceylon by way of the land-bridge that once connected the mainland with the island. This passage, it is presumed, was destroyed before the tiger entered the peninsula.

A typical panther from the Indian Peninsula is a sleek short haired animal with a bright fulvous coat marked with small, close-set rosettes. Panthers

in dense evergreen forests are generally richer in colouring than those found in dry open country.

Among abnormal phases of colour, black is the commonest, although in bright light the rosettes are clearly discernible. The eyes are occasionally a curious blue. A black panther is not a distinct species. Black and normal coloured cubs may be produced by the same parent. The abnormal colour is due, in excessive amounts, to a pigment called melanin which darkens the hair and other parts of the body.

VARIATION IN SIZE

There is a marked variation in the size of panthers. Dunbar Brander gives the average dimensions of a forest panther as 7 ft. 5 ins., and its weight at about 150 pounds. Magnificent specimens of this size are now practically extinct. The average size of a male Indian Panther is about 6 ft. 8 ins., but care should be taken, when measuring, to record the length of the body separately from the tail, as this last member varies in length in different animals and often a poor specimen, when measured between pegs, gives a very erroneous impression of its size.

During the mating period the panther is probably the most noisy of all wild beasts. Their courtship is accompanied by boisterous demonstrations, by gamboling and chasing through the undergrowth and by snarling and roaring. During this period they are strangely indifferent to the presence of spectators and if undisturbed will continue their mating, often in the open and in full view of any passer-by. The period of gestation is approximately 12 weeks. Two to four cubs are usually produced. The mother chooses a cave, the hollow trunk of a tree, an overhanging rock or a porcupine's den for the shelter of her litter. During this period she is remarkably ferocious and will attack and kill, man or animal, venturing near her hide-out. Panthers, like tigers, breed all the year round, so that the fixing of any closed season for the shooting of these animals owing to their being in cub, is extremely difficult.

A controversial point and one of much interest among shikaris is the exact nature of the call of the panther. I have heard these animals call on numerous occasions. The commonest or hunting call consists of a succession of deep intakes of air and a hoarse barking cough, with a short interval between each effort. This is the call that is frequently referred to as the "sawing call" because of its resemblance to the sound made by a coarse toothed saw being drawn through a thin plank of wood. A deep low threatening growl is the preliminary warning of a charge by a wounded or angry beast, to be followed by a loud roar when the animal actually springs. A panther will purr softly and contentedly when on a "kill," but when disturbed will give vent to a sharp "whoof" as he rushes off.

METHOD IN KILLING

When hunting the panther is far in advance of his heavier cousin the tiger. Although he adopts the same method in killing, his preliminary approach is a thing of beauty. Possessed of keen eyesight and an acute sense of hearing, the panther will frequently select some elevated position, a large rock or an overhanging branch, from which to watch the movements of the animal he has selected for his meal. Once the animal comes within striking distance he leaves his perch and moving through the undergrowth with consummate skill, he awaits its approach. Then with a terrifying roar he springs on its back, bearing it to the ground and in a moment shifts his hold to the neck. Both the tiger and the panther kill by strangulation and the breaking of the victim's neck may or may not follow as a result of this seizure, but so desperate is this initial grip that frequently the larger blood vessels in the neck are punctured, resulting in the loss of a large quantity of blood and this has given rise to the ridiculous belief that the panther and the tiger suck the blood of its victim.

The panther usually commences his meal at the stomach or in the region of the breast bone, but in the case of the larger species the meal is frequently commenced between the buttocks as in the case of the tiger. This peculiarity is an indication to the sportsman of the probable size of the panther.

Like the tiger, the panther at the conclusion of his meal will endeavour to hide the remains. This he does under bushes in secluded nullahs, but has one peculiarity. If a good hiding place is not available, the panther will carry off the remains and place them in the fork of a suitable tree.

MAN—ARCH ENEMY

Panthers become Man-eaters just as frequently as tigers and when they succumb to this liking for human flesh they exceed the ferocity, cunning and boldness of the tiger in every way. There is a reason for this. The panther's ability to live under conditions where no tiger could possibly exist brings him into freer and more intimate touch with man. Living on the outskirts of villages, particularly in the vicinity of forest areas, the panther preys mainly on domestic animals, cattle, sheep, goats and ponies. His favourite diet is of course the village dog. For this panther's food problem is simplified. There is seldom any competition from his own species but there always exists one enemy whom he is unable to circumvent,—man. Close association with this arch enemy robs him after a time of his inherent fear of man, and as long as he confines himself to domestic animals he seldom comes into direct conflict with this queer two-legged creature. But inevitably there comes a day when he is suddenly surprised in the actual killing of a calf or a goat. Resenting the intrusion or more probably furious at the interruption of his meal, the panther springs on the man and with a single blow hurls him unconscious to the ground. He retreats immediately, frightened by the cries of his victim or the shouts of the villagers, but he has learnt an important lesson. Man is more helpless than the village goat in resisting his attack. Thereafter he becomes a menace to the village. His confidence in himself grows. He attacks men, women and children with impunity, often strolling through the main street of the village in broad daylight, amused at the consternation his presence causes, till there comes that eventful day when retribution, in the shape of the Hunter, arrives. And thereby hangs a tale.

AWFUL EXPERIENCE

When I first met John Upshon, P.W.I. of Betnoti, I was unaware of the awful experience he had had with one of these village panthers or grass leopards as we contemptuously call them, when constant association and familiarity with this species has robbed them of their more fearsome aspects. The story he told me, which is true in every detail, I give in his own words.

"It was on the 24th April 1955," he said, "that the events I am about to narrate occurred. I remember the date well. It was my first wedding anniversary and we had arranged to have a few friends over and have a pleasant social evening. Imagine then my feelings when one of my trolleymen, named Lassoo, arrived at the Bungalow early that morning to inform me that a panther had killed a goat in the

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The Guardian

By MONOJ BOSE

SHE had written to her people at home that she would stay back in her hostel during the puja vacation and wouldn't come home, for her examination was due immediately after the college reopened...and all that. But on the day of the *Shasthi* when the *shanai* was being played on in a distant Puja pandal Pritilata's heart longed for home. The hostel was empty. In the dormitory on the first floor there were only three other girls,—Juthi, Anima and Asha. Of course there were about eight others in the ground floor dormitory but they were all second-year girls and not so intimate with her.

Priti came to Juthi's room with a sad look on her face and asked, "Can't put my mind to work. What am I to do, Juthi?"

"Studies not for me too. I think I'd better pack up and go home," Juthi replied.

Priti felt encouraged. She walked straight into the Superintendent's room and announced her decision.

Superintendent Kamala Sen frowned and asked, "But with whom are you going?"

"I'm going to my uncle's first," replied Priti. "My aunt and all are going home. We shall all go together."

A distant uncle of hers was an advocate. His wife was a friend of Kamala Sen.

So permission was granted.

But Priti had the least idea of going to her uncle. Her aunt was not going home, of course. It was just a lie, a ruse to obtain the Superintendent's permission to leave the hostel.

Priti drove straight to the Sealdah station. This was not the first time that she was travelling by train alone but what she saw in the station made her heart turn into cold ice.

The aperture at the booking counter was just five inches square and more than fifty hands had been shoved in. Behind the hands not less than two hundred people were wrestling, jostling and elbow-

ing one another in a desperate effort to reach the counter. On the other side of the netting the booking clerk was counting the change and passing tickets on in a leisurely manner. At a distance a policeman was quietly contemplating this thrilling situation and occasionally asking the people to take their turn calmly.

If things went on like this, Pritilata thought, she could never hope to reach the counter before *Bijoya Dashami*, the last day of the Puja.

She approached an elderly person and asked, "Would you please care to buy me a ticket for Jessore?"

He helplessly surveyed the battlefield and replied, "If those people do not choose to oblige us, I don't know how I can manage to reach the counter. I have been waiting for more than four hours."

"A ticket for Jessore?" said a voice from behind. "I am also going to Jessore. I shall get a ticket for you also."

Pritilata turned round and saw a rather shortish young man. With one hand he was holding a cork head-dress, properly wrapped, the kind of which is used ceremonially in Bengali marriage. In the other hand there was a suitcase on which his name, Abinash Chandra Bagchi, was painted in bold letters. Behind him was a porter carrying a large trunk and a basket filled with all sorts of things of various sizes. The porter was perspiring.

Abinash looked at Priti and smiled. "Give me the money, if you please," he said, "One rupee and seven annas and half. I am travelling by third class. You'll have to do the same, I think. Would you mind? Well, Gandhiji used to travel by third class. I don't see why we should travel like *nababs*".

He had his luggage put down in one corner and then counted the price of two tickets. "Thank God," he said, "that I met you. I was wondering how to keep an eye on the porter so that he doesn't disappear with my belongings and manage to get a ticket at the same time. Please wait here and look after the things. Hold this *topar* also, yes, more carefully if you please so that it doesn't get crushed in this crowd."

He tightened his dhoti and got ready for battle. He reminded her about the *topar* again and then—well, one just couldn't imagine unless one saw it with one's own eyes for he was such a small man—Abinash took a high jump over the heads of a number of men and grabbed the railings of the counter. His legs never reached the ground but dangled in the air. After he procured the tickets he led himself loose in the crowd. The crowd jostled and pushed and he was squeezed out into the open.

'Is the *topar* all right," was the first thing that he asked. He took it from her hand and gave it a thorough scrutiny. Then he asked her to follow him, making his way through the crowd with his elbows.

A battle was raging on the platform in front of the carriage as well. People with sleeves rolled up were mounting guard at the door determined not to let even a needle pass through. Priti and her companion walked up as far as the engine and saw the same thing everywhere. In one of the compartments a bald-headed oldish man was at the door. Four or five younger men were vigorously debating over something on the bench nearby. Three of them had glasses on and their shirt buttons were across the shoulder instead of the front. So it appeared that they were college students. Abinash stopped, turned to Priti and said, "I'm your guardian for the next four hours. Do you agree?

Priti shook her head. In this situation it could not be helped. Abinash stood before the door and started pleading "Listen please, will you kindly let us in? Wouldn't bother if it were just myself but it's only because of her...."

The bald-headed self-appointed sentry seemed deaf.

"Please, sir", Abinash went on, "let us in".

The young men stopped their discussion and turned their attention towards Priti and her companion. One of them put his head out through the window.

"Yes, did you say anything?"

Abinash saw a ray of hope.

"Just two of us," he said. "Please ask that gentleman to make way for us."

"There's no room," said the young man. "They have arranged for another special train. There won't be any crowd in that."

Abinash pleaded in a feeble voice, "But this is the one we must take. We have to."

A few more inquisitive faces appeared at the windows. Abinash laughed and showed the newly bought *topar*, the ceremonial head-dress of the bridegroom.

It worked like magic. Four or five people rushed at the bald-headed man at the door and thundered, "Move over this side. Let them in."

The bald-headed man made a last attempt. "There isn't enough room. Where will they sit?" he asked.

"You can offer your seat. A lady cannot travel standing all the way. What sort of a fellow are you?"

They all pulled him by his hand. The bald-headed man had reserved a sizeable portion of the bench with durree, pillow and other bundles. Those were forcibly removed and room was made for the newcomers. The bald-headed man looked helplessly at others but no word of sympathy was coming from any quarter. One person even remarked, "Say what you will, I think you were in the wrong. After all—it's a marriage date. She is overdue for marriage and cannot be kept in her father's home any longer. Must consider all that."

"Perhaps you havn't had the misfortune of having to worry about a grown up daughter's marriage".

Priti of course heard all this discussion. She blushed, more out of anger than anything else. Yet she could not be angry. One had to admire Abinash's resourcefulness. The poor fellow was still perspiring and pulling their luggage in. All that done, he dropped on the seat beside Priti and then asked, "How much time is left for the train to leave?"

The young men were more than eager to oblige them. One of them glanced at his watch and replied, "Seven and half minutes."

Abinash started fanning himself with the free end of his dhoti. It was very hot inside. Priti's face also was in sweat. Abinash glanced at her a couple of times and then asked the young men, "Has anyone a fan to spare?"

Everyone looked this way and that. A fan was spotted in the hand of a person at the far end of the compartment. He was dozing and fanning himself occasionally.

The fan was snatched out of his hand.

The owner of the fan opened his eyes and sat up straight.

"Give that fan".

"Why?"

"A lady—don't you see?"

The man had seen how helpless the bald-headed man at the door had been before these younger de-

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The ATONEMENT

Rabindranath Tagore

Translated by
SHEILA CHATTERJEE

Written in 1894 when Bengal was passing through a period of transition. Conservative Hindu society was then strongly opposed to a growing tendency on the part of educated young people towards excessive and unbalanced westernization and used to excommunicate those who had been to Europe, though they would be received back into the social fold after performing formal 'Prayaschitta' or atonement for the sin of going abroad and living amongst non-Hindus who took food and drink forbidden by the Hindu scriptures.

BETWEEN heaven and earth there is an undefined lawless land where king Trishanku floats about, where day dreams are freely cultivated. That continent surrounded by castles in the air is known as "Might-have-been". Blessed are those that have achieved immortality by great deeds. So are those with limited capacities who help to carry out the daily tasks of ordinary people's ordinary routine; but those who through mistakes of fortune are placed in between the two have no way out. They might have been some one big but it is for that very reason that it is more impossible for them than for anyone else ever to become anybody.

Our Anathbandhu was an unfortunate young man suspended in that middle region. All believed that if he so desired he could have succeeded in every thing. But neither did he have such desires at any time nor was he successful in any sphere, and still everyone's belief in him remained unchanged. All said, he would stand first in his examination, but he did not sit any more for examinations. All believed, if he began working he would easily get the topmost post of any department; he did not accept any job at all. For ordinary people he had special contempt because they were quite commonplace: for uncommon people he had not the slightest respect as he believed that he could become more uncommon than they if only he had so desired.

All of Anathbandhu's fame, power, happiness wealth and prosperity was locked up in the safety vault of the *not-impossible* which transcends time and place. In the world of reality Fate had allotted him only a rich father-in-law and a good-natured wife. His wife's name was Bindhyabasini.

Anathbandhu had not approved of his wife's name nor did he consider the wife herself worthy of him in looks or accomplishments. But in Bindhyabasini's heart there was no end of pride in her good fortune in having such a husband. She had not the

slightest doubt that her husband was superior in every way to all the husbands of all other women nor did her husband have any doubt in this matter, while general opinion was also in favour of this idea.

Bindhyabasini was always afraid lest this pride in her husband should suffer in any way. If she could have placed this husband on the topmost peak of the sky-piercing unshakable mountain of the reverence of her heart and kept him at a distance from all the unkind glances of the foolish mortal world then with undisturbed heart she could have dedicated her life to the worship of her husband. But in this physical world it is not possible to hold aloft the revered one by adoration alone and such people were not rare as thought that even Anathbandhu was not the ideal man. Bindhyabasini had to suffer much unhappiness for this.

When Anathbandhu used to go to college he stayed in his father-in-law's house. The time for the examination came, he did not appear in it and left college next year.

On account of this, Bindhyabasini felt very small before every one At night she said softly to Anathbandhu, "It would have been better to sit for the exam."

Smiling disdainfully, Anathbandhu said, "Does one sprout an extra pair of hands and become divine by just appearing in an exam? Hasn't even our Kedar passed his exam?'

Bindhyabasini felt comforted. What addition to Anathbandhu's glory would it mean to appear in that examination in which so many cows and asses of the land were coming out successful?

Her neighbour Kamala came joyously to inform Bindi, the friend of her childhood that her brother Ramesh passed his examination this year and won a scholarship. Hearing this, Bindhyabasini thought without reason that this joy of Kamala was not pure, there was some hidden tilt at her husband in it. Therefore instead of expressing pleasure at her friend's joy she became unnecessarily aggressive and said in a somewhat quarrelsome voice that the L.A. did not count as an examination at all, so much so that in the colleges in England there was no examination below the B. A. Needless to say Bindhyabasini had gathered all these pieces of information and arguments from her husband.

Kamala was at first a bit bewildered at this unkindness from her very best friend on coming to give her a piece of good news. But she too was a person belonging to the female species. So within a moment she divined the inner thoughts of Bindhyabasini and a drop of venom collected at once at the tip of her tongue as well at the insult to her brother. She said, "Dear, we have neither been to England nor married a sahib husband. From where shall we get so much news? I am an ignorant woman, but this much I understand that Bengali boys have to appear in the L. A. examination in college; that too every one is not able to do." Saying these words in an extremely innocent, sweet and friendly way Kamala came away. Bindhya, unwilling to quarrel, listened without answering, and going to her room began to cry silently.

Within a short time another incident took place. A rich distant relative who lived far away came for a while to Calcutta and put up at Bindhyabasini's father's house. On that account there was much preparation in the house of her father, Rajkumar Babu. To show a special welcome to the newly arrived guests, the honoured son-in-law was asked to vacate the large outer hall which he used to occupy and take refuge for a few days in the maternal uncle's room.

At this incident Anathbandhu overflowed with hurt pride. Firstly, he went to his wife, abused her father before her and made her weep, thus revenging himself on his father-in-law. Then he was about to display his injured pride by such forceful ways as hunger strikes and so on. Bindhyabasini was terribly embarrassed at this. She understood from the self-respect that was natural with her that nothing could be more shamefully humiliating to oneself than to display resentment in public in the present situation. Begging at his feet, crying and imploring, she appeased her husband somehow with great difficulty.

Bindhya was not unreasonable. She did not blame her father and mother in any way for this; she understood that the incident was insignificant and natural. But at the same time she felt that because her husband lived in his father-in-law's house he was being deprived of the honour due to a relative.

From that day on she began to say every day to her husband, "Take me to your family home. I will not stay here any longer."

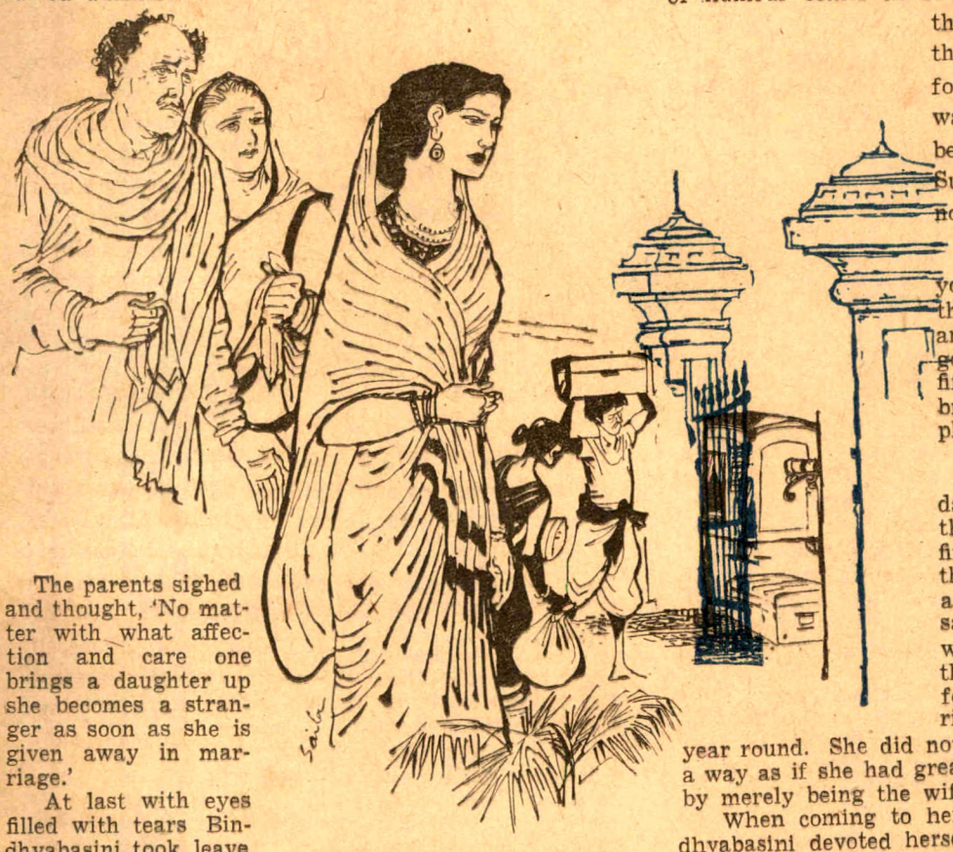
Anathbandhu had plenty of pride in his heart but no sense of self-respect. He did not desire in any case to return to the poverty of his own home. Then showing some firmness, his wife said, "If you don't go, then I will go alone."

Displeased at heart, Anathbandhu began preparations to take his wife to his thatched mud cottage in a remote tiny village away from Calcutta. At the time of their departure Rajkumar Babu and his wife begged their daughter to stay on for some time more at her father's house. Sitting in silence with

serious face and bowed head, the daughter intimated without words, 'No, that was not possible.'

Seeing this sudden strong determination of hers, the parents suspected that perhaps unconsciously she had been hurt in some way. Rajkumar Babu asked her with a painful heart, "Mother, has any unintentional behaviour of ours hurt you?"

Looking sorrowfully at her father's face, Bindhyabasini said, "Not even for a moment. My days here were spent with you in much happiness and love." Saying this she began to sob but her resolution remained unshaken.



The parents sighed and thought, 'No matter with what affection and care one brings a daughter up she becomes a stranger as soon as she is given away in marriage.'

At last with eyes filled with tears Bindhyabasini took leave of every one and got into the palanquin forsaking her father's house surrounded by affection which she had known from birth and also her companions and friends.

Parents sighed and thought : No matter with what affection and care one brings a daughter up she becomes a stranger as soon as she is given away in marriage.

II

There is a vast difference between a rich man's house in Calcutta and a middle class home in a village. But Bindhyabasini did not show dissatisfaction even for a day either in manner or conduct. Cheerfully she began to assist her mother-in-law in household work. Knowing of their poverty her father had sent a maid with the daughter at his own expense. As soon as she reached her husband's home, Bindhyabasini sent the maid away. Even the fear that the maid from a rich man's house might at heart wrinkle her nose every moment in distaste at seeing the poverty of her father-in-law's home seemed unbearable to her.

Through love her mother-in-law used to try to make Bindhya desist from any strenuous work but Bindhya joined diligently in all work with a cheerful face, showing no signs of tiredness, and conquered her mother-in-law's heart, while the women of the village were charmed by her good qualities.

But the result of this was not entirely satisfactory because the laws of the world are not the simple precepts composed in chaste language to be found in a primer of ethics. The Devil with his cruel sense of humour comes in between and playing with all the threads of ethics tangles them up in a mess. Therefore good actions do not always produce for the time being absolutely good results. Suddenly trouble starts from nowhere.

Anathbandhu had two younger and two elder brothers. The household was run and the two younger brothers got their schooling with some fifty rupees which the eldest brother earned, working at a place away from his village.

Needless to say, these days it is impossible to add to the prosperity of a home with fifty rupees a month, but even this amount was sufficient to add to the pride of Shyamasankari, the eldest brother's wife. The husband worked the whole year round, therefore the wife had earned the right of resting the whole year round. She did not work, but behaved in such a way as if she had greatly obliged the entire family by merely being the wife of her earning husband.

When coming to her father-in-law's house Bindhyabasini devoted herself to household duties day and night like a guardian goddess of the home, some one seemed to begin squeezing tightly Shyamasankari's mean heart. It is difficult to comprehened its reason. Perhaps the eldest daughter-in-law thought that the second daughter-in-law, the daughter of a wealthy home, did the lowly household work only for show and to humiliate her before other people. Whatever the reason, the wife of one who earned fifty rupees a month could not in any case tolerate the daughter of a rich family. She spotted signs of unbearable pride in her gentle humility.

Now Anathbandhu established a library after coming to the village. Collecting some ten to twenty school boys he became President of meetings and began to send telegrams to newspapers. He amazed the village people by even becoming special correspondent of some English newspapers. But he did not bring a pice to the hard up household; on the contrary there began much needless expenditure.

Bindhyabasini continually begged him to take up some sort of a job. He paid no heed. He said to his wife that there were jobs suitable for him but the British Government through partiality employed important Britishers to such posts. No Bengali had a chance, however highly qualified he might be.

Shyamasankari went on constantly showering venomous words on her brother-in-law and second sister-in-law both openly and in private. Flaunting

her own poverty with pride she began to say, "We are poor people. How can we support the rich man's daughter and rich man's son-in-law? They were quite happy there without any discomfort. Will it be possible for them to bear so much hardship here with only rice and dal for food?"

Mother-in-law was afraid of the eldest daughter-in-law. She did not dare say anything in support of the weaker party. The second daughter-in-law too went on eating dal and rice provided by the salary of fifty rupees a month, together with the hot seasoning of the provider's wife's tongue and digested them all in silence.

In the meantime coming home on leave for a few days the eldest brother began to hear from his wife many strong rousing lectures. At last when this obstruction to sleep began to become more and more serious every night he called Anathbandhu one day and said to him gently with affection, "You ought to look for a job. How shall I alone support the household?"

Hissing like a snake that has been trod upon, Anathbandhu cried out, "For only two fistfuls of uneatable coarse rice twice a day it is unbearable to stand such insults." At once he decided to leave for his father-in-law's house with his wife.

But the wife did not agree to this at all. According to her, a younger brother had a family right to the meals provided by the elder brother as also to the abuse from the sister-in-law but it was very shameful to live on one's father-in-law. Bindhyabasini could remain in her father-in-law's house like a poor destitute with bowed head but in her father's house she wished to walk with her head held high, preserving her self-respect.

At this time in the village Entrance School the post of the third master fell vacant. Anathbandhu's eldest brother and wife both pressed him to accept this job. But the result was unsatisfactory, the very opposite of what was expected. That his own brother and legally married wife could consider him suitable for such an insignificant job gave rise to his wounded vanity which was insurmountable in his heart, and his distaste for everything which concerned the household grew fourfold as compared with before.

Then the eldest brother holding his hands, pleading and apologizing, appeased him with much effort. All believed it was best not to say anything to him again. If he anyhow only continued to stay on at home the family would be fortunate.

His leave over, the eldest brother went back where he worked. With pent up fury Shyamasankari made her face round and remained with it turned into a big ugly wheel. Anathbandhu came to Bindhyabasini and said, "These days it is not possible to get any decent job unless one has been to England. I have decided to go to England. Get some money out of your father on some pretext."

His mere resolve to go to England struck Bindhyabasini like lightning. On top of this she could not even imagine how she could go to her father to beg for money. In trying to imagine it she almost died in shame.

Pride prevented Anathbandhu from himself asking his father-in-law for money, but he could not understand why the daughter should not extract money from her father by means of guile or pressure. Anath created many angry scenes over this and miserable Bindhyabasini had to weep a lot.

In this manner some days went by in domestic want and unhappiness. At last the Pujas which take place in the autumn drew near. Rajkumar Babu sent carriages etc. with much pomp and show to welcome back the daughter and son-in-law. After a year the daughter re-entered her father's home with her husband. This time the son-in-law received a much more ostentatious welcome than that offered to the rich relative which had seemed so intolerable to him.

These days it is not possible to get any decent job unless one has been to England. I have decided to go to England .....

Bindhyabasini too, with her head uncovered after many days, swayed day and night in the waves of the Puja festivities and the affection of her own relations.

Today is Shashthi. The Saptami Puja would begin tomorrow. There was no end to hurry and noise. Every room in the house was packed tight with relations, distant and near.

That night Bindhyabasini went to bed very exhausted. This was not the room in which she used to sleep before. This time with special welcome mother had offered her own room to the son-in-law. Bindhya did not know even when Ananthbandhu came to bed. She was then fast asleep.

From very early dawn the Sanai began to play. But tired Bindhyabasini did not awake. Kamal and Bhuban, two friends, tried fruitlessly to listen with their ears at the bedroom door, then laughed out aloud in fun. Then Bindhya hurriedly awoke and saw that her husband had left some time, she did not know when. Ashamed, she quickly got out of bed and saw that her mother's iron safe was open and her father's cash box which used to be kept in it was also not there.

Then she remembered that the previous evening there had been much excitement in the house over the loss of the bunch of her mother's keys. There was no doubt that some thief had stolen those keys and done this. Then suddenly she was terrified, what if that thief had hurt her husband in some way? Her heart throbbed with anxiety. In trying to search for him under the bed she found a letter at the foot of the bed, pressed under the bunch of her mother's keys.

The letter was written in her husband's handwriting. Opening and reading it she learnt that her husband had collected the passage money to England with the help of a certain friend of his. Now finding no other way of defraying his expenses there, last night he had stolen his father-in-law's money, gone down to the inner garden by the wooden staircase

(Continued on Page 190)

Tiri Chowdhury

By PARASURAM

KARUNAMOY DUTTA GUPTA was an outstanding person. From the position of a Munsiff, by degrees he rose to the rank of a District Judge. Thereafter he became a Judge of the High Court. It was Easter Holiday. He was having his early tea in his private chamber at home and was reading the newspaper. At that time a girl appeared there and made her obeisance to him.

She was a blonde of sixteen or seventeen years, chick and dinky. As Justice Dutta Gupta cast a glance at her, she said—"You know my grandfather, Priyanath Chowdhury, the Solicitor, of the firm of Chowdhury and Sons. My name is Tiri."

Karunamoy said, "Oh, you are the granddaughter of Priyanath Babu, daughter of our Somnath? Be seated on that chair. Well, why is your name Tiri?"

——The fact of the matter is that my maternal uncle is a Professor of mathematics and I am the third in the line of children. So he assigned to me the name of Tritiya. But it is cumbersome. I have pruned it down to Tiri.

——Well done. Now tell me what you want?

——Sir, my grandmother has fallen into great anxiety. She is totally broken down. She can't take her meal properly neither can she sleep. Kindly save her.

——What's the matter? If it turns on worldly affair then your grandfather and your father can tackle it.

——Not worldly but it relates to the heart.

——What's that?

——It is an affair of the heart.

——Then call a heart specialist. I can have nothing to do with it.

——Certainly you can do it, Sir. Please give me permission. I shall bring my grandmother before you to-day evening.

——Yes, you may bring her. But it is necessary that I should have some inkling of the matter beforehand.

——It is confidential. My grandmother will unfold it. Please don't be troubled about it. You are simply to assure my grandma that everything will be all right. She is rather hard of hearing. I shall pass on promptings to you according to necessity and whisper directions.

Karunamoy said in laughter, "Oh, you yourself will manage your grandmother and I am to remain a mere dumb witness?"

——Yes, Sir. Grandma will not pay any heed to what I say but she will be confident if it comes out of your mouth. She holds you in great esteem. She avers that the Judges of the High Court are Incarnations of Justice and that it is through the prestige of the High Court that grandfather and father are earning their livelihood.

——Bravo, your grandmother has said it well. Won't your father or grandfather come?

——No, No, No. If they come, everything will end in smoke. Please do not smile, Sir. It is not what you are guessing at. Her anxiety is not for me. I have no personal stake in this matter.

——Well, bring her here to-day evening.

At even-tide Tiri came along with her grandmother at Karunamoy's house. After exchange of greetings, Tiri apologised, "This is my grandmother Srimati Kanaklata Chowdhurani, the life's partner of Priyanath Chowdhury, the Solicitor. And this gentleman is the Honourable Mr. Justice Sri Karunamoy Dutta Gupta. Grandma, I have done

the formality of introduction. Now you speak out your mind to him."

Kanaklata said in an intimidating tone, "Why should I go to tell him? I am an old matron. Is it not shameful? Why have I brought you here? Say whatever you have got to say."

Tiri replied, "Well, I am telling it. Hear me please, your Lordship—" Karunamoy said, "Home is not the place for Lordship business."

——Well, Sir. Please listen to me. You have seen my grandfather. Seventy-five winters have

Oh my lord, don't you know that? The people say that the Dakinis, Joginis and Sakchunnis — all inmates of the nether world — have their quivers full of temptations and witchcraft.

rolled on him but still he is well-favoured. Now please look at my grandmother. Is she not buxom and debonair? She might be shrivelled up under the weight of sixty-seven years just like an ancient pitcher.

Though Kanaklata was a bit hard of hearing, she could pick up words relating to herself. Said she — "Stop. Who tells you to trot out all these things?"

Tiri went on—"All these are vital. Please hear me. Sir, what follows next. Fifty-five years ago, when my grandfather was in his twentieth year, his marriage was proposed with a girl of the name of Prabhabati Ghose. Prabhabati was a very presentable girl of some twelve or thirteen years. A single look at her at once fascinated my grandfather. But my great grandfather, to wit, the father of my grandfather was a vulture in monetary affair——"

Karunamoy said, "You mean greedy?"

——No, Sir, vulture of money, as covetous as a vulture. He pitched the demand for the dowry to five thousand rupees. The father of Prabhabati was a poor school teacher. Where can he get it? The prospective settlement broke down. Out of anguish of heart, my grandfather recanted the verse from Hem Chandra for some days:

"Oh, social custom, wicked to the core
You have made the hapless suffer more."

Thereafter he was married to my grandmother, Kanaklata. He was not a loser. He realised rupees six thousand as dowry. He lost one belle but brought in another.

Karunamoy interrogated, "What happened to the previous girl?"

——You mean my might-have-been grandmother Prabhabati? She has remained a maid. She gave herself a good education, worked as a teacher in many places, went to America where she obtained the degree of Doctor of Education and at last became the Principal in Women's College at Patiala. Recently she has come to Calcutta after retirement. One day she emerged suddenly in the Solicitor's firm of Chowdhury and Sons. What was the matter? It was — she wanted to purchase a small house at Alipore. She wanted to show the relevant documents of the house to my grandfather. Grandpa was exceedingly glad to know all about her — you would better understand it, it is all a question of "old flame." Thereafter the visits of Prabhabati Ghose to our house were very frequent. And my grandmother burst forth in a sudden blaze just as it would happen if acid is applied to Potassium Chloride and sugar.

——What is that like? All we hear is ignition with oil and brinjal.

——It is more terrible than that. Don't you know it, Sir? It was demonstrated by my second brother one day. He stole away a quantity of Potassium Chloride from his college. He mixed a quantity of sugar with it and wrapped up the mixture in a piece of cloth. As soon as he applied acid to it, it blazed up outright.

——How is Prabhabati to look at?

——Age has not staled her exceeding beauty.

Kanaklata shouted, "A *Sakchunni*, a veritable *Sakchunni!*"

Karunamoy replied smilingly, "Then, where can be your anxiety?"

——Oh my Lord, don't you know that? The people say that the *Dakinis, Joginis* and *Sakchunnis* — all the inmates of the nether world — have their quivers full of temptations and witchcraft. They make sheep of men. And the grandfather of Tiri is quite a numskull. It is only through luck that he earns money. Otherwise, has he any wits about him? Fie! Fie! Do reason with him and save him from the clutches of that witch.

Tiri said in whisper, "Sir, grandfather is not at all blameworthy. He merely behaved like a gentleman with Prabhabati. But the grandma is of the old

school, malicious to the very core. Please just tell her that everything will become normal."

Karunamoy said, "Please don't brood over, Madam. Everything will be all right."

Tiri rejoined—"Even in the space of a week."

Karunamoy said, "Please rest assured, I will straighten out the matter in a week."

Tiri joined, "Do you hear, grandma? Let us go home. Do take hearty meal at night. To-morrow, I shall come to him again and be further informed. Your court is closed, I presume, Sir. Then I see you to-morrow morning. Let us now depart."

On the next morning when Tiri announced herself, Karunamoy said, "You are a dangerous girl. On your word, I gave your grandmother assurance but what am I to do next? I had no good sleep last night. I have delivered judgment easily in many a big title suit. I have not faltered in passing sentence of death by hanging. But I never got into such an intractable trash. How can I propose to say to your grandfather, Priyanath Babu — well, Priyanath Babu, please do not harass your foolish wife. Please don't give Prabhabati any quarter?"

Tiri replied—"You need not exert yourself in the least, Sir, you are to remain as a mere dumb witness. Yesterday you had the version of one side. Please listen to-day to the version of the other side."

—Who is the other side? Your grandma?

—Oh, yes. Please listen what I have discovered after elaborate delving into the matter. Before her marriage with my grandfather, grandmother had a good proposal of marriage with Gourgopal Mittra, the son of Haru Mittra of Baghbazar. Gourgopal is now an Alderman. Undoubtedly my grandfather is a handsome person but Gourgopal is super-handsome, the living image of Cupid. When he was nineteen or twenty years of age, he once secretly made eyes at my grandma and at once fell in love with that nose-pendant wearing tot of a girl of twelve years of age. She had just completed her Bodhodoy-primer. That was the go of the day. His father, Haru Mittra, also took fancy to the girl and agreed to give his son in marriage at a dowry of six thousand rupees. Everything was in shape. Just at that time Gourgopal had another proposal. It was with the daughter of Bipin Dutta of Bowbazar. She was the only child of her parents, heiress-at-law of their vast property. Haru Mittra retreated and ate up his words. My great grandfather was vulturelike in money matter but Haru Mittra was altogether a maimed-eared ungrateful flying bat, a skinner, an abominable niggard-to-the-pice. He disavowed my grandmother and settled the marriage of his son with that hag of a girl, the daughter of Bipin Dutta. Gourgopal was docile like Ram Chandra, not self-willed like the young men of to-day. Stung with pangs of love, he too, took to reciting verses from Hem Chandra—

"Again the moon in the sky
Rises resplendent and why ?"

Thereafter on an auspicious day dressed up to the nines with the hired velvety costume of easer and chapkan looking like a distinguished guy in assumed glory and seated on shoulder-borne throne, Gourgopal started in a procession, illumined with acetylene gas and accompanied with the music of drum and pipe, to the house of Bipin Dutta and married

I am the third child of my parents. So my name is Tiri.

that ugly heiress of vast fortune. Some days after, grandma was married to my grandfather.

Karunamoy said, "Capital yarn. What do you want to do now?"

——I shall call on that Gourgopal Babu to-day afternoon. Then I shall decide my course and let you know about it. Let me go to-day, Sir.

Gourgopal Mittra was seated in his big parlour in the afternoon reclining on a big pillow on the *farash* on the floor and was having pulls at his hubble-bubble reading the *Chaitanya Bhagabat* at the same time. Just at that time Tiri made her appearance, bowed down and took the dust of her feet.

Gourgopal asked, "Who are you, my sister? I fail to recognise you.

——Sir, my name is Tiri.

——Why Three of the card game? Ace or Queen would have been more befitting.

——I am the third child of my parents. So my name is Tiri. Perhaps you have heard the name of my grandfather—Priyanath Chowdhury, the solicitor—He will be your contemporary.

———Oh, you are the granddaughter of Priyanath Chowdhury? I have no personal talk with him but four years ago, he acted as an attorney for the opposite side in my case. He is a very hard nut.

——Did you win that case?

——No, my sister, I lost it. I sustained a loss of nearly two lacs of rupees.

——Then I face a difficulty. It is quite natural that you should have some grudge on the granddaughter of Priyanath Chowdhury as you lost your case.

——Oh, no, no. Who can dare to be angry with you! Now tell me what you want.

Tiri lowered her head and said wringing her hands, "Sir, there exists an intimate relationship

between you and me. You are my about-to-become-but-slipped-away grandfather.

Gourgopal replied, "I can't follow you, my sister. Tell me plainly."

——Grandpa, I would ask you to resurrect the memory of fifty-five years ago. There was a girl yclept Kanaklata. Do you remember her ?

——Kanaklata ? Who is she again? Tiri said in reply, "What is it, grandpa? Have you blotted her out from your mind in the meantime?

"Woe to the heart,
all your garnerings dear
Are left, as time passes,
on wayside in rear!"

Looking once at a shining girl of twelve, you loved her furiously. Even your marriage with that girl was settled but at last your father upset it. Don't you remember anything?

——Yes, yes, I recollect it. Yes, her name was Kanaklata. Ah, it is an antediluvian story—during the regime of Lord Elgin or Lord Curzon. What has happened to Kanaklata, yes?

——It is she who is my grandma. Just look at me and see if there is some similarity in my look with that girl whom you saw fifty-five years ago. Had you not been so devoted to your father and if you displayed some petulant humour, then your marriage with Kanaklata would have been an accomplished affair and you would have been my grandfather.

——Oh! how fantastic it would have been! Luckless as I am, I just failed to be your grandfather. But where is the impediment now? By count, I have got three grandsons. Of course, they are not as comely as you are. Why don't you marry one of them? Shall I call them up?

——Keep it in suspense for the present, grandpa. I shall pass the B.A. Examination, then the Master of Arts degree, then I shall go to England. The thought of family life will come afterwards. You must have read Shakespeare! Now I am "in maiden meditation fancy-free." If one of your grandsons remain a bachelor after six years, please tell him to see me.

——By your command, Tiri Debi Chowdhurani. You have not told me as yet about your mission?

——Grandpa, don't you feel the urge to see how Kanaklata has grown in age from a mere tiny girl?

——So long I had no recollection about her. But to-day after seeing you I feel a bit ticklish to see her. How wonderfully has Hem Banerjee written—

"Like the snow-flake scattered
our early longings are shattered
As the gale of scorched life blows
hard and strong."

But your grandmother won't recognise me. It is true I saw her secretly but she never saw me.

——That does not matter. My birthday falls on the coming Saturday. You must come to our house accompanied with the grandma here. I want to see her once.

——That can't be arranged, my dear. She is not here. Two years ago she went to heaven and has a lot of domestic chores there—she has got to keep everything shipshape. She has no reliance in servants though they be of the heaven. She will arrange that I may at once get my slippers, scented oil, hot water for bath, cooked fine rice, soup of magur fish, sugared curd, smashed betel leaf and ready-made tobacco as soon as I reach that place.

——That goddess will have all the chores in the heaven! Then what can I do! Please come alone. The invitation card will be sent to-morrow.

Tiri bowed down and took leave and returned home after calling on Justice Karunamoy Dutta Gupta and Dr. Prabhabati Ghose.

The circle of Tiri's friends is wide and extensive —Ira, Dhira, Mira, Jhunu, Benu, Renu, Ulloola, Kalloola, Hilloola and a legion—quite a conglomerated group. Tiri expostulated with them, "Do you know that I was born at 12 o'clock at night—just in the nick of the zero hour? So it is difficult to say on which side my birthday falls, the day previous or the day after. Henceforth I propose to keep two birthdays. In the coming Saturday afternoon, only the old people, male and female, will have their tea, on the Sunday following, all of you must come and have a riotous time of it and gulp down as much as you can. Do you understand me?" All her friends drawled out in chorus—"come we must, duck, come we must."

On the Saturday afternoon, Justice Karunamoy Dutta Gupta, Alderman Gourgopal Mittra and Dr. Prabhabati Ghose came to the house of Priyanath Chowdhury to keep the invitation. There were no outsiders. The people of the household were Tiri's grand-parents and parents and Tiri herself.

When the welcoming of the honourable guests, their mutual introduction and the praises for the presents were over, Tiri whispered to Karunamoy, "This time your address, Sir."

Karunamoy went on, "We have all assembled here on this occasion of the birthday of our blessed Tiri. This is not an insignificant party. Men have no other alternative but to accept the decree of the Divine Providence but there are some who like to indulge in imaginative speculation about Providence. Let me handle some illustrations. If Dasaratha instead of acting as a hen-pecked husband, flew into a rage and administered a slap on the cheek of Kaikeyi, we would then have a different version of the Ramayana. If Santanu in his dotage did not fall into love with a fisherwoman, then Bhisma would have been the King of the Kurus. Perhaps there would have been no battle of Kurukshetra. If Edward VIII was not self-willed and married according to the choice of the Prime Minister and the Arch-Bishop then he would not have to give up his throne. Our Tiri does not quarrel with Providence but adds something to the way of Providence and thereby wants to extend the circle of her relationship. Therefore she has managed to bring together her might-have-been grand-parents. Her real grand-parents are already at home. Her imaginative grandfather honourable Alderman Gourgopal Babu and her imaginative grandmother, her ladyship, Dr. Prabhabati Ghose have kindly graced this ceremony. Tiri is as much thankful for the get-together of her dear ones as we are in our happiness."

Kanaklata opined aside to Tiri, "Who has brought here that old man and that old lady ?"

Tiri replied, "Gourgopal and Prabhabati? I don't know it. Perhaps Justice Dutta Gupta has told my father. Grandma, how beautiful your slipped-away groom Gourgopal Babu looks! Oh, had you been

Our Tiri does not quarrel with Providence but adds something to the way of Providence & thereby wants to extend the circle of her relationship.

married to him, my father would have been more fair-complexioned and I, a ravishing beauty swelling with all the brimful loveliness of blossoming youthfulness."

Kanaklata replied, "Away, you saucy girl. Have you not the least restraint on your tongue?"

——But thank God that grandpa was not married to Prabhabati. In that case, my face would have been of the Chinese pattern. Grandma, you are the winner. Fifty-five years ago Prabhabati lost the chance of a groom but in spite of all her passes, she has not yet been able to secure another. But you managed to get one in the space of a month though your learning extends to the primary stage of Bodhodoy. Dearie, don't cast such sidelong oglings at Gourgopal Babu. What will grandpa think of you?

Kanaklata shouted in a rage, "No, I have not renewed any glances! What a wicked girl you are! Oh my teacher-sister Prabha, can't you cane this Tiri into shape? She is creating a hell with me."

Prabhabati said, "Tiri, don't harass your grandma, come to me."

Prabhabati and Gourgopal were seated side by side. Tiri caught a chair and brought it by their side and seated herself. Said she, "No further harassment is necessary. Grandma has cooled down. But the main purpose still remains unfulfilled. Please don't think amiss—I am indulging in a soliloquy—Priyanath missed his chance of marriage with Prabhabati. So let it be Gourgopal also missed his chance of marriage with Kanaklata. Let that be as it is. But under the decree of God of Love, Priyanath at last married Kanaklata. In this posture of affairs, what is the duty of the perennial maid Prabhabati and the new bachelor Gourgopal? What is the divine hint?"

Prabhabati replied—"The divine hint is that you should be severely caned."

Gourgopal said—"Flee to my house, sister. None will apply cane to you."

Tiri burst forth—"Woe to me! Your attention is not enchained to the writing on the wall? It is the pre-destined course of God of Love, can't you guess it? No, you don't nourish any semblance of romance in your heart. Both of you are deadened in mind and spirit— stratified into hard stone inwardly and outwardly—altogether Pakur Stone. I must thank God that the marriages of my grandfather and my grandmother did not take place with you otherwise my old grandfather would have beatings of the cane now and the old grandmother would have to slave birth after birth to pound the betel leaf."

Kanaklata said to Karunamoy—"Can you tell me, Sir, what Tiri is saying to them with such gesticulations?"

——Perhaps, intimidating.

——Fie, fie, the girl is altogether devoid of sense. Gentle people have come to our house and there are threats on them! Her grandfather has spoilt her by indulgence. Please give her good scoldings She does not care anybody in the house.

(Translated By Satyendra Mohun Mookerjee)

THE ATONEMENT

(Continued from Page 184)

attached to the veranda and run away climbing over the wall. The ship had sailed today early in the morning.

Reading the letter Bindhyabasini's blood turned to water. She sat down there clutching a bed post. Inside her body within her ears was a sound as of crickets droning in a silent night of death. On top of all this, from the nearby yard, from the houses of neighbours and distant mansions many Sanais began to play in various tunes. Entire Bengal had then become wild with joy.

The autumn sunlight tinted with festive laughter playfully entered into the bedroom. Seeing the door closed up till this late hour on a festival day Bhuban and Kamal banged their fists loudly on the door joking and laughing uproariously. Getting no answer even then they became scared and began to shout "Bindi", "Bindi", at the top of their voices.

In a broken choked voice Bindhyabasini said, "I am coming. You both go away now."

They went and called her mother fearing that their friend was ill. Mother came and asked, "Bindu, what has happened, mother? Why is the door still closed?"

Rajkumar Babu became extremely angry. Mother began to cry, the daughter began to cry, while from all sides of Calcutta joyful music was playing in various tunes.

Checking her overwhelming tears, Bindhya said, "Just bring father along with you for a little while."

Becoming very scared, mother at once brought Rajkumar Babu and came to the door. Bindhya opened the door and admitting them, quickly closed it again.

Then Bindhya fell on the floor and clutching her father's feet cried in grief which tore her heart to pieces, "Father, forgive me. I have stolen money from your safe."

Amazed they sat down on the bed. Bindhya said she had done this to send her husband to England.

Her father asked, "Why did you not ask us for it?"

Bindhyabasini said, "Lest you might oppose his going to England."

Rajkumar Babu became extremely angry. Mother began to cry, the daughter began to cry, while from all sides of Calcutta joyful music played in various tunes.

That Bindhya who had never been able to beg money from her father, who as a wife could give up her life to hide from her closest relative the slightest dishonour of her husband, found today in the midst of the festive crowd her pride as a wife, her dignity of a daughter, her self-respect, all ground to powder and trailing like dust at the feet of the liked and the disliked, the known and the unknown. Anathbandhu had stolen money overnight with his wife's help and fled to England after plotting from before and conspiring to steal the keys. There was a tremendous scandal over this in a house full of relatives. Standing near the door, Bhuban, Kamal, many other relations, neighbours, servants and maids had overheard everything. Seeing the anxious master and mistress enter the son-in-law's closed room all had gathered eagerly with curiosity and fear.

Bindhyabasini did not show her face to any one. Locking the door from inside she lay on her bed without food. No one felt any sympathy at that grief of hers. All were astounded at the wicked cunning of the scheming woman. All thought, Bindhya's true nature had not been exposed so long due to want of opportunity. The Puja ceremonials were completed somehow in the cheerless house.

III

Bindhya returned to her father-in-law's house b o w e d down with insult and depression. There a closer relationship was established between the widowed mother-in-law grieving for her absent son and the wife yearning for her husband. Both drew close to each other and in the shade of silent sorrow, with deep endurance they continued to carry out minutest household tasks with their own hands. As the mother-in-law came closer to her, the father and mother became proportionately distant. Bindhya felt in her heart, "Mother-in-law is poor. I also am poor. We are tied by the same bond of suffering. Father and mother are rich, their condition is far removed from ours." Bindhya who was already distant from them because of her poverty had fallen even farther beneath them by taking upon herself the blame for the theft. Who knows whether the tie of affection can bear such a heavy load of difference!

On going to England Anathbandhu used to write to his wife regularly at first. But gradually the letters became scarce and an undercurrent of neglect unconsciously showed in them. Many English girls superior to his unlettered hardworking wife in every way, in education and intelligence, looks and qualifications, used to appreciate Anathbandhu as capable, intelligent and handsome. In these circumstances it was not at all surprising that Anathbandhu should consider his own veiled dark-skinned wife, who wore only a single garment, in no way suitable for him. But still when he was in want of money he did not hesitate to cable for it to this

helpless Bengali girl. And it was this Bengali girl who began to send him money by selling all her jewellery, keeping only a pair of glass bangles on her wrists. All her valuable jewellery was in her father's house, for there was no suitable place in the village for safe custody. One by one Bindhya had all those pieces of jewellery brought on the pretext of going to invitations at the homes of her husband's relations. In the end selling out the bangles on her wrists, her silver chooris, Banarasi saris and even her shawls, she begged her husband with much entreaty to return home, smudging every line of her letter with splashed tears.

The husband returned as a barrister with hair cut short, chin clean-shaven, dressed in coat and trousers, and put up at a hotel. It was impossible to stay at his father's home—firstly there was no suitable accommodation there, and secondly the impecunious householders living in the villages become quite helpless if they lose their caste. His father-in-law's people were staunch conservative Hindus. They too could not give shelter to an outcaste.

Due to want of money he had soon to give up the hotel for a flat. He was not willing to bring his wife there. After returning from England he had gone to meet his wife and mother twice or thrice only by day. He had not seen them after that.

The two grieving women had this one solace that Anathbandhu was in his own motherland at a place near his relations. Together with that there was unlimited pride in their hearts at Anathbandhu's extraordinary feat of becoming a barrister. Bindhyabasini began to look down on herself as a wife unworthy of her famous husband. At the same time she felt proud of her husband more intensely because she believed herself not up to him. She became ill with sorrow and swollen with pride. She hated unorthodox ways, yet seeing her husband she said to herself, "These days many people become sahibs, but it suits no one as much as him. He seems to be exactly an English sahib. It is impossible to recognise that he is a Bengali."

When it gradually became impossible for him to defray the expenses of housekeeping, Anathbandhu decided in the bitterness of his mind that there was no appreciation of merit in accursed India, and his colleagues were secretly placing obstructions on the way to his success out of jealousy. When the proportion of vegetarian courses on his dinner plates began to exceed that of non-vegetarian ones, the honoured position held so long by roast chicken was almost about to be monopolised by fried prawns and the smartness of his clothes and glow of his clean-shaven face gradually became dull, when the harp of his life tuned to B sharp of the higher octave gradually descended to a plaintive F sharp, at that time a terrible mishap in the family of Rajkumar Babu brought about a change in the perilous ways of Anathbandhu's life. While returning one day by boat from his maternal uncle's house situated on the bank of the river Ganga, Rajkumar Babu's only son, Harakumar lost his life through drowning together with his wife and infant son as the result of a collision with a steamer. After this accident there was no one left in Rajkumar Babu's family except his daughter Bindhyabasini.

After the terrible grief had been somewhat assuaged, Rajkumar Babu went to Anathbandhu and requested him, "Son, you will have to come back to the fold of your caste after ritual atonement. I have no one left except you."

Anathbandhu agreed to this with enthusiasm. He thought he could avenge himself by this means on those Indian barristers who lounged about in the bar library and did not show sufficient respect for his extraordinary merit.

Rajkumar Babu took counsel with the Brahman priests. They said that if Anathbandhu had not eaten beef it would be possible to take him back into Hindu society.

Though the flesh of the above-mentioned forbidden quadruped was included in the list of the favourite articles of his food while abroad, still he did not feel the slighest hesitation in denying it. He said to his close friends. 'If society deliberately wants to hear lies, then I see no harm in obliging it with but a single word from my lips. It is the custom of our present society to purify the tongue which has tested cow's meat with two repulsive things, cowdung and lies. I do want to circumvent that rule".

An auspicious day was chosen for the atonement ceremony for his being taken back into Hindu society. In the meantime not only did Anathbandhu put on dhoti and chaddar but by argument and advice he continued to blacken the face of the anglicised society while whitewashing that of the orthodox Hindu society. All those who heard him became pleased.

Bindhyabasini's tender heart moistened with the nectar of love began overflowing continually with pride and joy. She thought, "Whoever returns from England becomes an entirely English sahib. It is difficult to make him out as a Bengali. But my husband has returned absolutely unchanged. On the contrary his respect for the Hindu religion is greater than it was before."

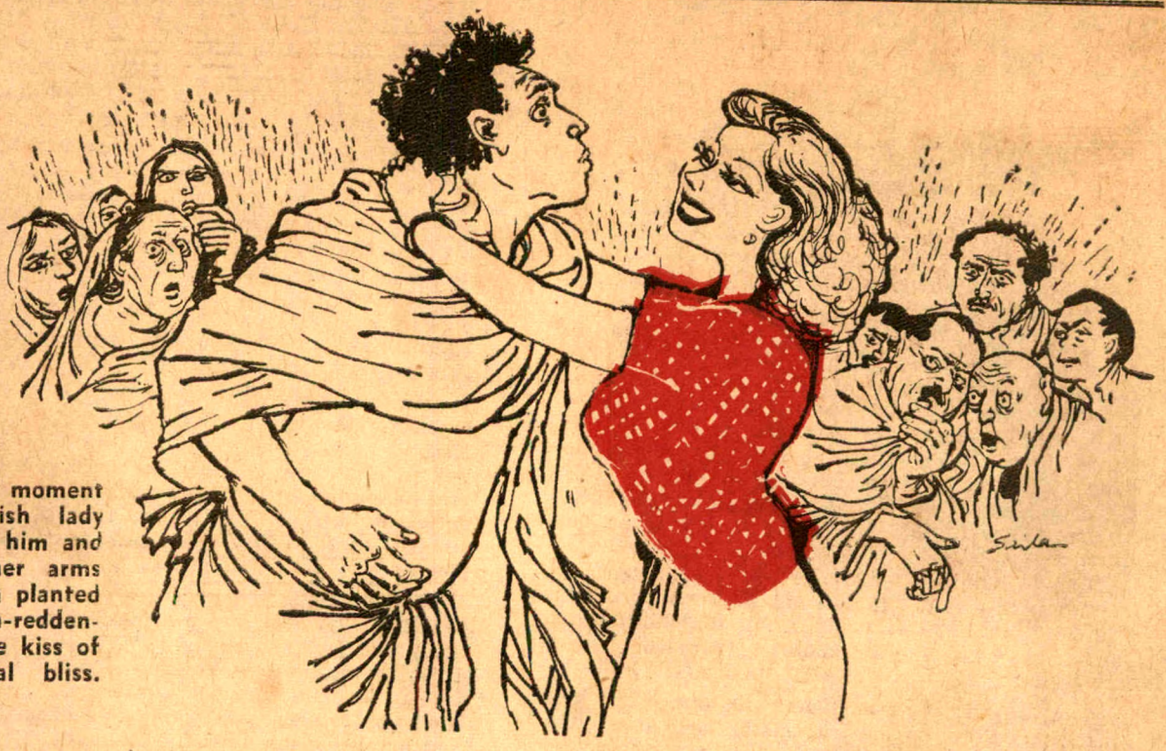
On the date fixed beforehand Rajkumar Babu's house was filled with Brahman pandits. There was no stinting in the spending of money. Due arrangements were made for their feeding and the giving of presents of honour.

There was no end of elaborate show in the women's quarters either. The rooms and the yards looked storm-tossed in looking after and serving food to all the invited relatives. In the midst of that terrible shouting and rush of work, smiling Bindhyabasini floated about happily like a light cloud wafted by the morning breeze and coloured by the autumn sunlight. Her husband was the hero of the entire celebrations today, as if today the whole of Bengal had turned into a single stage and raising the drop curtain Anathbandhu alone was being displayed before the amazed eyes of the world audience. It was not as if atonement were an acknowledgement of guilt, it seemed to be rather a condescension. Anath conferred glory on Hindu society by re-entering its fold after coming back from England. And the rays of that glory reflected from the entire country in a myriad rays cast a wonderful glow on Bindhyabasini's loving happy face. All the sufferings of her insignificant life, the insults which she had put up with till now were wiped away and today she climbed up to the seat of glory with head held high in her father's house crowded with people, in the presence of all relatives. Her husband's greatness had raised the unworthy wife to a place of honour before the entire world.

The ceremony was over. Anathbandhu had been received back into his caste. The invited relatives and Brahmans had eaten with him to their satisfaction, all seated together.

The relations called for the son-in-law from the women's quarters. The son-in-law with a smiling pleased face and a mind quite at ease, went leisurely while chewing pan towards the women's quarters, with his chaddar trailing on the floor.

After the feast, preparations were being made for giving the Brahmans their presents and meanwhile they were displaying the extent of [illegible]warn-



And in a moment the English lady darted to him and flinging her arms about him planted on his pan-reddened lips the kiss of a conjugal bliss.

ing by means of frenzied arguments in the meeting hall. Rajkumar Babu, the master of the house tried to rest for a moment. So he sat there in the hall crowded with warring pandits and listened to a discussion on the Smritis, when the durwan came and placing a card in the hand of the master said, "A European memsahib has come."

Rajkumar Babu became astonished. Next moment on glancing at the card he saw that there was written in English—'Mrs. Anathbandhu Sircar,' that is Anathbandhu Sircar's wife.

Staring at it for a long time Rajkumar Babu could not gather at all the meaning of these few simple words. Just then the English lady freshly arrived from England, with pink cheeks, copper hair, blue eyes and fair like the froth of milk, herself walked into the meeting hall with the light-footed gait of a deer, and standing there began to scrutinise every one's face. But she could not find her dear known face. On suddenly seeing the memsahib all discussion on the Samhitas was stopped and the meeting hall fell into a deep silence like that of a burning ghat where dead bodies are cremated.

At this time Anathbandhu, with chaddar trailing on the floor, and slow leisured walk again reentered the stage. And in a moment the English lady darted to him and flinging her arms about him planted on his pan-reddened lips the kiss of conjugal bliss.

That day in the meeting hall the discussion on the Samhitas could not be raised any more.

Agrahayan 1301.

Trishanku —A mythological king who was sent to heaven in his human body by the sage Viswamitra through his spiritual power but was hurled down therefrom by Indra, king of the gods, with the result that he has remained suspended in space between heaven and earth ever since.

L.A —(Licentiate in Arts) equivalent to Intermediate Examination in Arts which undergraduates had to take 2 years after entering a University and two years before graduation.

English newspapers —Not papers published in England but those in the English language published in India.

'Mother' —Daughters nieces, daughters-in-law etc. are often addressed as 'Mother' through affection. Similarly a son, son-in-law or a nephew is addressed as 'father'.

'Entrance' school —Secondary schools preparing students for the Entrance or Matriculation Examination of a University (now replaced by School Final).

Head uncovered —Girls covered their heads while in their father-in-law's house or village. They went uncovered when staying with their parents.

Autumn time Pujas —The Durga Puja, the greatest Hindu festival in Bengal celebrated in September-October. There are family reunions wherever possible and the giving of clothes etc. to relations as well as general feasting, with a lot of music.

Shasthi —(lit. the sixth)—the day before the Pujas proper commence.

Saptami —(lit. the seventh)—the day when the three-day long worship of the goddess Durga commences.
From the seventh day of the light fortnight in autumn.

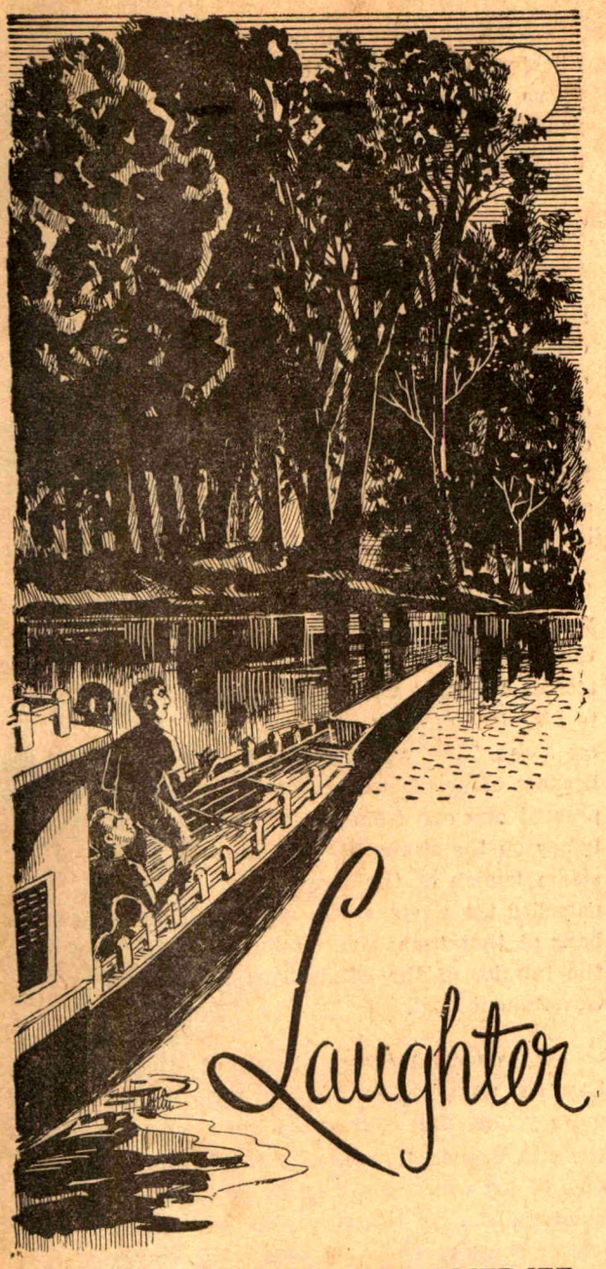
Sanai (or Sehnai) —Indian flute playing traditional music on festive occasions.

Villagers losing their caste —Formerly an orthodox Hindu would be outcasted if he associated intimately with a non-Hindu or some one of unorthodox habits, especially one who had been to Europe.

Pandit —People learned in Sanskrit and especially in the Hindu scriptures.

Smritis —Traditional codes of conduct and law as prescribed by different lawgivers like Manu and Parasara.

Samhitas —The same as Smritis (also collections of writings).



Laughter

By BIBHUTI BHUSAN BANERJEE

THERE was no one else in the station waiting room, within or outside. The Bearer too could not be found in spite of repeated calling. So giving up the hope of getting any tea, the few friends forming our party pulled up the rugs and lay down on the easy chair.

Though it was in the latter part of Magh, the cold was more intense than that in the month of Paush in Bengal. Ramen said, "Look here, you fellows do what you like, but I won't be able to pass the night without some tea. You wait. Let me see what can be done."

As soon as the door was opened a blast of bitingly cold wind from the west flew in like an arrow and we shouted out in protest. Ramen had by then gone away. On going to shut the open door I found that there was a thick mist outside. Prithwish was the philosopher of our party. He had been lying so long covered from head to foot with a rug. Suddenly uncovering his face he said solemnly, "Look here, but I have an uncanny sensation. Can you tell me why?"

I said, "What sort of uncanny sensation? As in the presence of ghosts or some such thing?"

Throwing the rug away he sat up in the easy chair. Looking round all sides he said, "That I don't know exactly, but some sort of a—"

We all had by then again sat up erect. Salil said, "It is not impossible, I know of a case. No one could stay after ten at night in the waiting room of a station like this. Not only that, once a gentleman got down from a late night train and spent the night in that station waiting room. Seeing that he did not get up though it was morning all went to wake him and found him lying unconscious. Then he was brought back to consciousness with much difficulty. He told everyone that towards the end of night an Englishman came and woke him up. Then suddenly taking a razor out of his pocket he dug it into his own throat and began to draw it so hard that at the uncomfortable scraping sound of living flesh being cut his entire body tingled with horror. As he was about to shout for people he found no one anywhere. There was not even a trace of the Englishman in that room. He did not know what happened after that. In the bathroom of the waiting room of that station once a young English engineer had for some reason committed suicide by cutting his throat with a razor just like that. Things had been like that since then."

We all looked in the direction of our bathroom. By the side of forests on desolate hills on the "Loop" line, on the other side of the railway line there were only the Station Master's quarters and the cabin of the watchman at the level crossing. Outside the waiting room just beyond the station compound was a tiny shop selling *pan*, cigarettes and tea. During day time and even a little after dusk we had seen the shopkeeper, but after that there was no sign of him. He had gone away shutting down the shop.

Before the story could become really interesting, suddenly the door opened. Ramen entered smiling, with a porter who carried on a bell-metal *thali* some eight cups filled with tea. As soon as he came in he

said, "Don't you see, where there is a will there is a way? Didn't I say I would arrange for tea at any cost? I happened to come to know the Station Master. His home too is in our district. He said, 'Oh sure! You are respectable people and Bengalis. It is my good fortune that you should ask for tea.' He would not listen to any protests, he had tea made in his own quarters and sent it along."

Before Ramen had finished speaking, a gentleman came in pushing the door open. Ramen jumped up almost like a spring doll and said, "Oh! Mitter Mosay, welcome, welcome." Then looking towards us he said, "This is Haridas Babu, the Station Master here.....Come in, sit down."

By then Haridas Babu had seated himself on the armless cane chair before the table with his folded hands raised high like Garuda, in response to our greetings. His age was not less than fortyfive. He was of medium build, the hair by his ears was getting quite grey. His face was clean shaven. He had a really healthy body, thanks to the good food and climate of the Western provinces.

I asked, "How long have you been here, Mitter Mosay?"

"Sir, it will be a year and a half in February next. There is much hardship, Mosay. No fish can be had at all. One can't see a Bengali's face. So I was very happy when I heard that you all had come today. As soon as the gentleman over there raised the topic of tea I said, 'That is quite simple. When my quarters are quite near by, then is it any trouble at all?'.....Well, how far will you all be going?"

"We have set out for Delhi by bicycles. You see, we have come from the other side of the river. Crossing it here and following the road to Bhagalpur, we want to get on to the Grand Trunk Road. Exactly when will we get the train to Bhagalpur tomorrow morning?"

Then after much talk, the answers to many inquisitive questions about our tour and the exchange of a lot of necessary information about the above mentioned train the conversation began to slow down. Nobody was inclined to sleep. Especially just after taking hot tea all were feeling refreshed, the languor and drowsiness having left.

It was to poke up and relight the almost burnt out wick of conversation that I said suddenly, "Well, Mosay, I hope there are no ghosts in the bathroom of this waiting room, are there?" Directly after this question we reverted to Salil's story about the bathroom of that unknown station and of the young English engineer. Again we had a burst of laughter and some pretended to show such fear as if they entertained feelings of fear regarding the bathroom of this station, as well.

Ramen said, "All stuff and nonsense!"

Haridas Babu had not spoken for a long while. Flicking the ash from the fourth cigarette presented by us he yawned and sat up erect. He said, "Maybe you will laugh, but now I am going to tell you of a personal experience from my own life. Please listen."

Then lighting his fifth cigarette he narrated the following strange story:

It was long ago. Though not much grown up, still I was then not under twelve or thirteen years old. One of my paternal uncles worked in the forest department and was at that time in the Morrelganj outpost of Khulna. Once, on what occasion I do not clearly remember now, I went with every one of my home to this uncle. Uncle was then in his lodgings at Khulna. We stayed there a long time. When a long stay was proposed I joined a local school there.

That time we went to Khulna just after the Pujas. After I had attended school for a few months the summer holidays began and lasted for over a month. I begged uncle to be allowed to go with him to his place of work at Morrelganj. Uncle did take me along. That was the time for the renewal of the licences of people who collected honey and wax. To prevent any one from deceitfully collecting wax and honey on the strength of old licences, the boats and steam launch of the forest department constantly patrolled the rivers, creeks and canals of the Sundarbans at that time. Many a time did I go touring in the interior of the Sundarbans with uncle in this Government boat.

A wonderful dream picture of these Sundarbans has remained engraved on my mind. Then I was quite young, only thirteen. I had gone there from the city. I cannot express to you in words the message of joy which the exquisite wild beauty of the Sundarbans used to convey to my hungry eager boyish heart each day of that whole month. I have never been to that place again, but though it is long ago still whenever I remember the Sundarbans —specially the picture of the Sundarbans on a moonlit night, the sloping banks of the narrow canals covered with jungles of *Sathi*, rows of *Gab* trees with newly sprouted leaves and wild *Gole* trees, the lapping of the incoming tide at the mouths of the creeks,—even at this age my mind longs with pain for something lost.

I clearly remember the incident of that day. That part of the Sundarbans was being then surveyed. A big launch of that Department used to be anchored in the middle of the main stream. That day at noon we had been invited to the launch. Four

or five Amins, one Kanungo and a clerk, all Bengalis, in all some seven or eight people were in the launch. The meal was very heavy, afterwards there was some singing and instrumental music as well. Late in the afternoon we took leave of them and moved out in our houseboat.

Gradually night fell. The moon rose. The tops of the forests on both sides of the canal with their new growth of leaves were glistening in the moonlight, one or two strange cries of night birds were reaching one's ears from the distance, the leaning branches of the *Gole* trees submerged during the tide began gradually to come out of the water with the ebb tide. For fear of depredations of tigers there were always two sepoys with guns in our boat. They began their cooking on a bucket stove at the other end of the houseboat.

The night was very warm and rather stuffy. Not a leaf was stirring. There was an air of silent sullenness all around. It was impossible to stay inside the cabin. Though it would have been delightful to sleep on such summer nights on the decking on the roof of the cabin, it was not possible to remain there lest a tiger might jump down from the dense forests on either side of the narrow canal.

Sitting inside the cabin, uncle and Binode Babu were playing chess. All the small windows of the cabin were open. I sat reading near by.

They went on playing till past ten at night. The sepoys finished their cooking.

Uncle was deeply concentrating on checking a difficult move, I was reading the Akhyan-Manjari in the dim light. With self-satisfaction at cornering his opponent, Binode Babu sat reclined against a bolster, gazing through the small windows at the fast flow of water of the ebb tide. The shadow of tall trees had fallen on the water.

Then something happened.

Inside the dense forests in front, from far away arose a loud clear harsh sound of raucous laughter—Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-.....

Though it was exactly like a human voice, the sound seemed inhuman and unnatural. Before we could think what it was, once again the laughter arose like that and then once more. The sound of the laughter was so loud and piercing that it seemed the forest trees were trembling, the ground vibrating, the boat swaying.

The sepoys hastily left their meal and came running. Uncle, Binode Babu and I, we all came out of the cabin. The trees stood still as on a painted picture. There was no breeze, not a leaf was stirring. Before us the moon of a moonlit night was gliding down behind the screen of forest trees.

Binode Babu said, "What is it, Mosay, Ram Babu? What is the matter?"

The boatmen were very much scared. They stood in a ring under the mast of the boat staring fixedly at the forests.

We were about to enter the cabin, when again the sound of that laughter arose—Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-.....

The sound was so cruel and agonising that there was goose flesh on all of us. Covering both ears the boatmen cried out, "Allah! Allah!" Uncle and Binode Babu stared at each other's face inside the cabin. Uncle said, "Well Mosay, is it a hyaena?" But from his face and the tone of his voice I felt he did not believe his own words. Then there was consultation as to whether the boat could be removed from there or not. But the pull of the ebb tide was so strong that it was quite impossible to make such a big houseboat travel up the main stream against the current of the ebb tide so late at night. So we had perforce to spend the night there. All remained awake. No one could sleep that night.

Towards the end of the night I heard that sound once more. The forest was then silent. The moon had set, leaving the river, the sky and the forests all equally steeped in darkness. My eyes were drooping with sleep when from the dense forests filled with darkness that peal of hideous laughter arose again. In the moonless black darkness at the end of night it seemed so inhuman and diabolical that though I was but a boy in age my blood turned to ice realising the true nature of that laughter.

In the morning letting the houseboat float up with the flow tide we returned to the steam launch at midday. There hearing everything some amongst the senior serangs and sailors said that they had heard that voice before also, but because the place was inside very dense forests people hardly ever went that way. We heard, if one went deep into the interior of that forest traces could be seen there of ancient buildings. The presence of the old Bakul trees arranged in a row in the midst of the jungle seemed to show that at one time there had been human habitation there.

However that might be, even today after all this time whenever I remember that incident I think I had heard that day the exultant demoniac laughter of some accursed disembodied soul circling about the deserted ruins of a city in the darkness of deep night. So whenever I recall that burst of laughter, even today after all these years my entire body begins to shudder.

(Translated by Sheila Chatterjee)
With the kind permission of Shrimati Rama Banerjee

Magh —Middle of January to middle of February.

Paush —Middle of December to middle of January.

"Loop" line —The Sahibganj loop line of the Eastern Railway (old E.I.R.) which leaves the main line at Khana Junction above Burdwan and passing through Santiniketan, Sahibganj and Bhagalpur rejoins it at Kiul near Mokameh, making a long detour.

Mosay —From 'Mahasay' = Sir or mister.

Sathi —A jungle tree with edible roots, somewhat like arrowroot.

Amin —Surveyor.

Kanungo —Fairly senior revenue officer of the Settlement Department who supervises the work of Amins.

Akhyan-Manjari—'Sheaf of stories', name of a Bengali textbook for young children by Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar.

Serang —Head of the crew of an inland steamer or launch.

ISSUED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

INDIA AND THE ARAB WORLD

(Continued From Page 18)

and adopted Islam and became merged into the population. But they translated Sanskrit medical treatises like the compendium of Charaka (known to the Arabs as *Sanaq)* from Sanskrit into Arabic. The Arabs, however, had first received the elements of their medical science from the Greeks, and that is why they call that system of medicine, which was adopted by them, the *Yunani* i.e. Ionian or Greek system. And this Yunani system of the Arabs was very much extended by the Indian contributions. One Indian medicament, for example *triphala,* consisting of three fruits with medical qualities, *(Haritaki, Amalaka* and *Vibhitaka,* all Indian fruits) was taken over by the Arabs in their medicine and was called *tirfal.*

'ARABIAN NIGHTS' & INDIAN STORIES

Apart from the Koran, which of course has its special importance for Muslims, for the rest of humanity the greatest and most human book in the Arabic language, which has become a classic for the whole world, is the collection of romantic and other stories known as "The Arabian Nights" (*Kitab Alf Layla wa Layla,* i.e. "The Book of a Thousand Nights and One Night"). This book took nearly 800 years to receive its present shape, from about A.D. 800 to A.D. 1600, and it started with a collection of romantic stories which the Iranians had learnt from India ; and the Arabs then took these stories up, and began adding to them and extending them. The Indian stories were found in romantic works in Indian Sanskrit and Prakrit like the *Dasakumara-Charita* and the *Brihat-Katha* as well as the *Katha-Sarit-Sagara.* Arab writers began to add other materials to these original romantic stories, and introduced a large number of stories connected with the Caliphs of Baghdad and of Arab life in Baghdad, Damascus and Egypt. The works finally came to represent Arab-Islamic culture as a whole, and gave a most wonderful expression to the life of a whole people in the Arabic-speaking Muslim lands of Iraq, Arabia, Syria and Egypt—through several centuries. It is comparable in its extent and its wide sweep, covering almost the whole of life, to the Hebrew *Bible* and the Sanskrit *Mahabharata.* In other matters also, Sanskrit and Indian literary ideas penetrated the Arab mind, largely through the intermediacy of early Iranian translations. The story of the *Mahabharata* was rendered from a vernacular version in either Old Sindhi or Old Western Punjabi, and was introduced to the Arabs. In this version, it is interesting to note that the names of the *Mahabharata* characters were based not on Sanskrit forms of these names, but rather on vernacular or Prakrit forms. Thus the name *Yudhishthira* occurs in the Arabic version as *Jhtl,* i.e. *Juhitthila; Arjuna* occurs as *Ajwn,* i.e. *Ajjuna; Pandu* occurs as *Fnn* i.e. *Fannu* for *Pannu; Kunti* as *Qndy* i.e. *Kundi;* and *Nakula* as *Nwl* i.e. *Newala.* This *Mahabharata* story in Arabic somehow became confined to manuscripts and did not become popular in the Arab world. But another great Indian classic, namely 'the *Pancha-tantra'* became a very famous book in the Arab and Islamic world. In the *Pancha-tantra,* we have the story of the two bullocks *Karataka* and *Damanaka,* and the work from these names came to be known to the Iranians as 'the Book of *Kalalag* and *Damanag.'* It was then translated into Arabic as the Book of *Kalilah* and *Dimnah,* and became a great classic in Arabic, and was later translated into Western languages, and was further expanded into various books in Arabic and Persian.

SYNTHESIS IN INDIA

In this way, India has influenced the Arab world in the domains of mystic perception, philosophy, science and literature. The Arab world on the other hand exerted its influence through Islam, which was brought into India first by Arab merchants and then by the Arab conquerors of Sindh, and subsequently by the Iranians and the Turks of Central Asia, who had adopted Islam. Islam came into India as an uncompromising monotheistic faith, and at first there was no understanding of Indian thought and religion by the militant propagandists of Islam in India. Hindu life and thought were very much jeopardised by the onslaught of Islam. But ultimately on the soil of India, through the work of the Sufi saints and sages who understood and appreciated the point of view of Indian mysticism and philosophy, a sort of understanding and compromise between the Indian spirit and the spirit of the Arab world as enshrined in the orthodox Islam of the Koran and as subsequently modified by Sufism, came to be established. This led to a great cultural synthesis in India itself, and as a result of this we have in the 17th century not only a Brahman Sufi Poet like Chandar-Bhan of Lahore, but also a Muslim Sufi of the greatest liberality and hospitality of mind, Prince Dara Shikoh. Akbar had already ordered the translation of the *Mahabharata* and other Indian classics into Persian ; and inspired by the same liberal spirit, Prince Dara Shikoh had brought about a translation of the principal *Upanishads* into Persian. This Persian version of the *Upanishads* was rendered into Latin towards the end of the 18th century by the French Orientalist Anquetil Duperron, and in this way the *Upanishads,* through this Latin version, were introduced into Europe, and they profoundly impressed the German Philosopher Schopenhauer.

TAGORE, GANDHI, & ARAB WORLD

In modern times, the influence of Indian thought upon the Arab mind has started through literature once again. Rabindranath Tagore, through Arabic versions of his works has become, as in many other countries, quite an important source of influence on certain aspects of present-day Arabic literature, though this influence is not so very widespread. The thought of Mahatma Gandhi is also slowly making its way. With more and more translations of Indian works into Arabic, the impact of India on the mind of the Arab peoples will be once again apparent. A very eminent literary man of Beirut in Lebanon, Mr. Wadi' al-Bistani, who belongs to the very distinguished literary family of the Bistanis in Lebanon, has translated (from English versions) the *Shakuntala* of Kalidasa and also the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana,* and these translations have been acquired from the author by the Indian Ministry of Education. Under the auspices of the Government of India, a Journal in Arabic is published—the *Thakafat al-Hind* —giving articles in Arabic on aspects of Indian history and culture; and this may ultimately bring the message of Indian thought and culture to the Arab world.

Indo-Arabian cultural contacts were not a one-way traffic only, and in return for what the Arabs received from India, as it has been mentioned above, certain contributions from the Arab side also came to India. Formerly Arabia used to send some of her commodities to India, and notably one among these was dates from Arabia, which were known in India

(Continued On Page 202)

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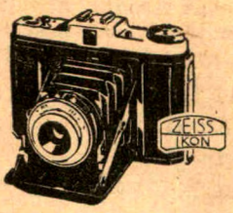

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HISTORIC FORTS OF UTTAR PRADESH

(Continued From Page 20)

three important gateways with high flanking towers. One overlooked the Ganga to the east and one the Yamuna to the south, while the chief portal on the city side was faced by a wide moat and a heavy outwork like that of Agra fort. It is worthy of note that the fort of Allahabad was the chief strategic spearhead to the expanding eastern frontier of the Mughal Empire, for in those days Allahabad commanded the direct approach to the Subah of Bengal, and, as such, it was fitting that the city should have been provided with a strong and defensible fort of its own.

ASOKA PILLAR

Unfortunately, much of the original roofed area inside the fort has disappeared in modern times, and the interior now is bereft of its former glory and architectural interest. Of the old remains, the famous Asokan pillar standing opposite the main entrance still testifies to the fact that Allahabad had once been incorporated in the ancient empire of Magadha. On this pillar is engraved a poetic tribute to the glories of Samudra Gupta, the Emperor of Magadha, who has been styled the Indian Napoleon. Of equal interest is the famous Patalpuri temple, another ancient relic of Prayag, which is one of the oldest pre-Muslim buildings in Utfar Pradesh. It stands near the northern wall of the arsenal in the vicinity of the river gate. It is now underground, evidently as a consequence of the construction of the fort, which necessitated the elevation of the inner level. Before the fort was constructed, the temple must have stood on high ground, and it was close to it that stood the celebrated Akshya Vat or undying fig tree from which pious devotees used to fling themselves down into the Kamya Kup (wish-fulfilling well) below, or merely suspended themselves by hooks in order to seek salvation. This practice was stopped by Akbar once for all.

PRETTY BARADARI

But the most picturesque relic of Akbar's time is, of course, the pretty Baradari or pavilion which served as the Mughal Governor's residence. Its chief attraction lies in the artistic arrangement of pillars and in the successful combination of the horizontal and peristylar forms of construction. The elaboration of its design and its elegant decorations are symptomatic of the growing might and prosperity of Akbar's empire.

When the fort of Allahabad came under British control, it was transformed into a modern stronghold after the school of Vauban, a task which was completed in 1838 or thereabouts to the detriment of the fort's original beauty and interest. The old towers were pruned down, and the ramparts were obscured by turfed and sloping glacis. On the riverside the battlements were removed. The upper storeys of the main gate were dismantled with the result that the carved stone work and frescoes in the interior were sacrificed. Even the old palace was converted into an arsenal. New and ungainly modern barracks were put up which have only served to mar the pristine appearance of the fort more glaringly.

CHUNAR FORT

The celebrated fort of Chunar, standing on the bank of the Ganga at a distance of 21 miles from Mirzapur and 19 miles from Varanasi, is another historic fort of Uttar Pradesh. The supposed resemblance of the fort to a cyclopean footstep, with the toes and ball of the foot hanging on the river and the heel on the landside has, so the tradition runs, given Chunar its designation, which is compounded of the Sanskrit words — *Charan Adri* — or footstep hill. Legend adds that it is the footstep of some giant of the Dwapar Yuga, who, while he was on his way from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, set his foot upon the ridge for rest and imprinted thereon his gigantic footmark. The fort commanded the highway to Bengal, and was thus the key to that province. Its possession was, therefore, vital to a medieval ruler who claimed mastery of the eastern provinces. That it frequently changed hands and successively passed from Sher Shah to Humayun, and then to Akbar indicates its chequered history in the Mughal period.

The fort of Chunar marks an ancient site, and crowns the summit and sides of a large and lofty sandstone ridge, an outlier of the Vindhyan Range, jutting out into the Ganga and deflecting the river to the north. It stretches practically north and south, 800 yards long, 133 to 300 broad and 80 to 175 ft. above the level of the surrounding plain, the total circuit measuring about 3,400 yards. The view of the fort from the river is indeed charming and memorable. Successive walls and towers have imparted a massive solidity to the fort. The rocky height is enclosed on every side by a steep escarpment flanked, wherever the curves permitted it, with stately towers and bastions of various dimensions. On the top of the rock there is an old palace—a central dome supported by many arched chambers wherein there are still traces of painting and carving. On one side of this stands a towering edifice which used to be the residence of the Mughal governors.

The quaintest relic of this place is the shrine of the saint Bhartri Nath, where lies a big slab of black basalt. On this stone, according to legend, God rests for nine hours every day, repairing for the three other hours to Varanasi. So it was popularly believed that Chunar could never be surprised by an enemy except between the morning hours, six and nine. Adjacent to this spot, there is the palace where Rajas of Varanasi had all the marriages of the family celebrated.

FORT OF JHANSI

No account of the famous forts of Uttar Pradesh would be complete without reference to the renowned fort of Jhansi. It vividly recalls the poignant saga of Rani Lakshmi Bai's heroic stand against the Bri-

tish forces during the days of the Great Rebellion of 1857. The matchless valour of the warlike queen is now a matter of recorded history. But, imagination requires little stimulus, save the sombre shadows of the fort's grim walls to conjure up the bravery, the patriotism and the grandeur of her fight for liberty and honour.

Towering bold and definite on a bald granite rock and overlooking the city nestling underneath, the fort of Jhansi was of great strategic importance in the days of the Company, for it commanded the road leading from Hindustan to the Deccan. Its encircling wall follows the configuration of the hillock, and, barring the southern end, it runs generally on a level but little higher than the ground at the base. In appearance, the fort is a rough square, with a short extension of similar shape near the chief portal on the left. One has to approach it by an ascending path from the south side, which goes straight up to the main gateway and thence into the inner citadel. The walls are embattled at the summit and reinforced at intervals by massive bastions.

At the present moment there is little of special interest inside the fort. On the sloping rock towards the east stands a small shrine where Rani Lakshmi Bai used to come for daily worship. On a lower level than the fort towards the west lies a garden, and below it there is an excellent old well. Close to it there is the small temple dedicated to Shiva.

THE HEROIC RANI

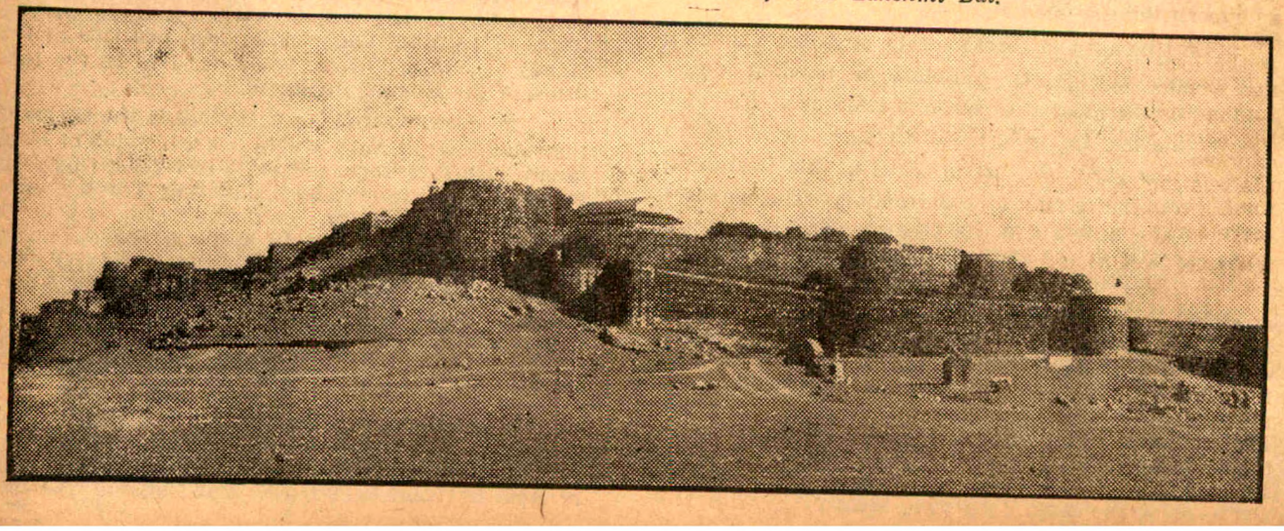
In Jhansi lived Rani Lakshmi Bai, the widowed queen of the Maratha Prince of Jhansi, tall in figure, handsome in appearance, martial in bearing, youthful, intrepid, ambitious and unyielding, who had been deeply offended by the unjust confiscation of her adopted son's estate under the Doctrine of Lapse. The mutiny of the sepoys in 1857 inspired her with the hope of wreaking her vengeance, and she came out of her seclusion to lead the rebels. Her troops made an attack on the fort in June, 1857. The enterprise at once succeeded, and the British defenders had to surrender themselves and their arms. The frightful massacre of Europeans that followed the initial triumph of the rebel forces, was an outburst of fury and madness which it was impossible for the queen to control. In any case, her own complicity in this dark deed is not provided by any trustworthy evidence.

The Rani's victory proved short-lived, for in March, 1858, the British Commander, Sir Hugh Rose, laid siege to the fort with a large army and augmented resources. The Rani offered brave resistance which was of no avail in the end. She fought like a common trooper, and supervised the batteries in person. Robed in military apparels, a red blouse, trousers and a white turban on the head, she moved from post to post and inspired her troops by her presence and patriotic appeals. The defence was heroic, but the rebel army at last, being outnumbered and outgeneralled, broke under superior pressure. In the hour of defeat, it fought with determined fury and invincible courage, neither soliciting, nor giving quarter. While retreating they struck back doggedly with swords in both hands, until they were killed. Indeed, never had the rebels covered themselves with greater glory than at the fort of Jhansi under the inspiring leadership of the Rani.

BRAVEST MILITARY LEADER

The tragic end may be briefly summed up. When all hope was lost, the Rani jumped in the darkness of night from a window in the turret, mounted her favourite horse and rode away with a speed which amazed even her followers. Her soldierly death later at the battle of Gwalior forms an unforgettable chapter in the annals of the Great Rebellion.

Of her, it was justly said by the enemy commander, Sir Hugh Rose, that she was "the bravest and best military leader of the rebels." The citizens of Free India cannot forget that the fort of Jhansi stands eternally consecrated to the deathless memory of the Indian Joan of Arc, Rani Lakshmi Bai.



LOST HORIZONS

(Continued From Page 12)

way of peace of mind and joy of heart, where men and women by corporate effort can build up a life of self-sufficiency provided they do not crave for impossible standards of living. Let us fix our eyes upon the eternal values of life and strive to attain them and all we desire of temporal worth will follow. It is moral and spiritual qualities that have lifted men above the animal, and it is only through a higher moral and spiritual quality that nations, nay humanity can survive. If prayer and aspiration are the golden chains that bind man to the divine, it is only through *shraddha* that men will be bound to each other in true humanity.

POWER OF LOVE

If through loss of *shraddha* Indian life is being disrupted, nothing has so much vulgarised and debased our heart as the western and modern conception of love which is a mere mask for sexual attraction and sexual passions. Yet nothing perhaps has so much power of refining the being and ennobling it as love. It is not for nothing that the Vaishnava has taken the Madhur Rasa as that which brings the devotee nearest to the deity, for it is an all absorbing passion whose very basis is a total surrender and a total sacrifice. Whether within or without the marriage pale love has always been shown as a sacred passion having in it the power of transformation into something higher and nobler both for the one experiencing the emotion and the one who receives it. Sahajiya Chandidas describing the love of Rajakini says:

The love of Rajakini is purified gold
In it there is no trace of desire.

What debases the modern conception of love and marriage in the West is the introduction of desire, by which I do not mean the physical culmination which may or may not be there, but demand of whatever nature it may be. Love must be free of this demand to be worthy of the name, must be self-sufficient in its giving, in its surrender and sacrifice. It is true that in India it is the woman who has been made the upholder of this ideal of love, but does that make it less beautiful or desirable? Will it be any solution if this high ideal is lowered and the Hindu home where the wife has made of herself the altar in which the sacrificial hearthfire is lit, where her love has been the cementing force, be broken? Of course, the surrender and sacrifice must be made in freedom, the woman being free to do so. But to deny an ideal which is higher and call it a superstition is scarcely fair. Love, whether it be the love of the parent for the child, (usually it is the love of the mother for her child), or of man and woman, or the devotee for the deity must be a total surrender and a total sacrifice. Its nature is the same whatever be the relation in which it is expressed. Its nature does not change even when the relation is not personal as the love of the patriot for his country or man for his brother men. In love there can be no desire or demand.

INDIAN WOMANHOOD

It is true this high conception of love is not attainable by the masses of men and women and so in ancient India there were many types of marriage which were all legally recognised though not given the same social and religious status. India has always exacted high attainments in the conduct of her men and women (though perhaps more so of their women — as the woman is the real centre of the home, and has always been regarded as the conserving force in society) if they desire to win the admiration of the common man. It is the *sannyasi* who is the symbol of a total sacrifice, even the sacrifice of his egoistical consciousness which is the most difficult for man to surrender, who in India received a higher position than kings and potentates. And because the masses of India are still true to the Indian ideal, Mahatma Gandhi, "that half naked fakir of India," looked upon with contempt by the West, won the reverence of the masses who were prepared at his call to sacrifice their all. The Hindu woman was the symbol of the universal mother. She was the Mother, she was Devi (goddess) because Hindu society exacted from her high standards of living. It is true these had become *samskaras,* or habits of thought and action, which had lost much of the spirit behind, but even thus they are more beautiful than the pursuit of pleasure by the modern woman, her exacting demands, her inability to sacrifice herself for others. And above all there is an entire vulgarising of Indian womanhood, luckily still only confined to the rich, in which the Indian woman is aping her western sister in making herself seductive to men in her dress, make-up and manners. The modesty which was her charm, awakening in men reverence and not lust is gone. Soon our cinemas, specially the Hollywood variety imitated by Bombay, will make of our women, vamps instead of goddesses. The rapidity with which the cinema is becoming popular both with the classes and masses, will lead to a total annihilation of those lofty ideals which our village yatras and other popular forms of rural entertainment and education, humble though they were, had kept alive.

INDIA'S ANCIENT IDEALS

I plead for these ancient ideals of India, not because I am conservative, but because these ideals are higher than the ways of thought and life which we are importing from the West. Sri Aurobindo, who had drunk deep of western culture, whose intellect, whose patriotism cannot be questioned, based his demand for swaraj on the right of India to live by its own energies *according to its own nature and ideals.* He rejected the right of aliens *"to force upon us a civilization inferior to our own."* In spite of the splendid material progress of the West, its great scientific findings, why is life in the West so unsatisfying, so restless, showing an unhappy mind? Where is the fulfilment in a mind always wanting? Why are men afraid that the atom bomb will lead to the extinction of life itself? Would it be wrong if we say that it is due to the West having lost touch with the very fundamentals of life, the *shraddha* for human life itself. Beneath garb of superior fitness, and material splendour lurks the most primitive instincts desiring satisfaction. Like the Rakshasa the West cries out,

"Glory and greatness, the joy of life,
Strength, pride, victorious force, whatever man
Desires, whatever the wild beast enjoys
Bodies of women and lives of men —
I claim to be my kingdom. I have force
My title to substantiate."

Is this too to be the cry of India? India who even when her men & women lived in hovels, dressed in rags and toiled and starved, had never forgotten

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PROBLEM OF PRODUCTIVITY

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square deal. In the present set-up of our country it will be found that the public sector is becoming a vast field of employment and the Government of India has become the largest single employer in the land with millions of people on its pay roll. A scrutiny may show that dissatisfaction is wide-spread amongst Government employees in lower grades, whose total emoluments and living conditions have no relationship at all to the present daily requirements. This is regrettably more pronounced among school teachers and similar others on whom the development of our community is dependent. If we fail to train up our boys from childhood with vision and imagination by enthusiastic and energetic trainers, however much we may expect, the boys, when they grow up, would not be able to conceive of the need for higher productivity vis-a-vis the cause of nation and the country. It is to be noted that potential talents and exceptional gifts for any technical or technological, or even scientific jobs are distributed more or less uniformly throughout all sections of the population. The problem is to discover these talents to foster their fullest development, and to inspire them to work for their countries in particular and mankind in general. This has to be tackled from physical as also moral angles. It is the duty of the State, the intelligentsia and the rich to offer opportunities in such a way as every boy or girl of the soil may find a chance to discover his (or her) specialities or capabilities. If this duty is performed with all sincerity there would not be any difficulty in increasing our productivity, not only in the field of manufacture of commodity goods, but in all spheres including production of the most essential raw material of any country—useful and effective man-power.

LOST HORIZONS

(Continued from Previous Page)

the divine whisperings at her ear, the promise made to her of human regeneration,

"Lo, I come and behind me knowledge
descends with thunder,
Filling the spaces Strength, the
angel, bears in his bosom
Joy to thy arms. Thou shalt look on
her face like a child's or a blossom,
Innocent, free as Eden of old, not
afraid of her playing,
When thy desires I have seized and
devoured like a lioness preying".

SEEDS OF SALVATION

It is not to the forms of our ancient Hindu civilization which have become thread-bare and outworn that we must look for inspiration, but those age-old ideals, which are still unattained by man, but which call for attainment and in which alone lie the seeds of India's and the world's salvation. It is only when man has learnt the lesson of true *shraddha*, which is no mere respect but something deeper and more ultimate containing in it the seed of sacrifice that true equality, call it democracy, socialist communism, what you will, can arise, that nations will be able to live in peace and brotherhood.

It is only when the human heart learns to truly love without demand or desire that it will know joy unshadowed by pain. It is only when man has

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INDIA AND THE ARAB WORLD

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as *Pinda-Kharjura*, because these dates came in a compact mass in baskets by ships from Arabia to India. The Arabs thought that the *tamarind* was a kind of Indian date, and their name for it was *Tamar-Hind* i.e. "the date of India", and this word has passed on to Europe. We used to get Arab horses in the ancient days also. It was only after the Arabs became a world-power through their religion Islam that India began to be influenced directly as well as indirectly. There is no doubt that the feeling of democracy in Islam and the sense of brotherhood among Muslims were helpful in bringing out renewed reform movements within the Hindu society, which were directed against the inequalities of the caste-system, after Islam was established in India by the Arabs and then particularly by the Turks and Iranians. Sufism, as the finished expression of later Islamic thought and spiritualism, also came to India, to influence mediaeval Hindu mysticism also. Arabic is the sacred language of Islam and the language of Science for Islamic peoples; and the Arabic language through Persian (which adopted Arabic words on a very large scale) influenced the mediaeval and modern languages of India. Arabic words came to the Indian speeches through Persian, and in some cases directly from the Arabic. Certain forms of Indian speech relied entirely upon Arabic and Persian for their words of higher culture, like Urdu and Sindhi. In mediaeval times, just as the Hindus taught the Arabs, they also learnt from the Arabs; and mediaeval Hindu Astronomy also borrowed certain elements from the Astronomy of the Arabs (Tajiks) and other Muslim peoples, e.g., the Turks of Central Asia. In the material Arts and Crafts, there was a very large-scale influence from the Arabs through the Turks and Iranians. The art of fire-arms came to India, with Arabic words like *banduk* (Musket), *barud* (Gun-powder), etc.

In this way, it can be seen that these two great worlds of Asia, namely, the World of India and the Arab World, have for centuries been in close contact with each other, and there was a lot of give-and-take in matters of thought and material culture between them. As a symbol of this cultural interchange between the Arab World on the one hand and the Indian World on the other, we can mention the name of the great scholar, philosopher and mathematician of Central Asia, the Iranian Albiruni, who near about a thousand years ago wrote his immortal work in Arabic, interpreting Indian civilisation to the Arab and Arabic reading world, the *Tahqiq al-Hind* or "Statements about India, i.e. Indica".

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learnt the lesson of the total sacrifice of his egoism that the life divine will flower on earth and there will dawn the superior wisdom in which there is no ignorance and division. The admiration and imitation of the West which is like a mist shrouding our life must dissipate before those lost horizons of light which have always lighted our vision can appear and lead us to our goal. In politics, in our social institutions, in our education, in every act of living we must never lose sight of these horizons on which our wise ones fixed their gaze.

THE PANTHER

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vicinity of one of our gang huts at Kunchinala. He further added that machans had been tied and everything made ready for sitting up that night.

"I am a keen shikari and the longing to take advantage of this excellent opportunity was irresistible, but I remembered the occasion and determined to forego the shoot.. Unfortunately, as I told Lassoo that I would not be able to come, my voice and my face must have betrayed my disappointment. Now my wife is one of those women who have been blessed with the sublimest of all human virtues, — an understanding mind. Instantly she countermanded the order and when I reminded her of the occasion, she brushed the objection aside: 'You will have an anniversary every year John, but this panther will not wait. Besides it is your duty to your workmen to protect their property'. This last argument decided me and issuing orders to get the car ready immediately, I selected both my 405 rifle and my .12 bore and by 2 P.M. set out for Baripada where only the necessary petrol could be obtained. Now Baripada is 16 miles from my Bungalow. The road is excellent and presented no difficulties, but at Baripada I discovered that I had to travel another 33 miles to a small, derelict station called Bangersosi on the now abandoned meter gauge railway from Baripada. The road was bad but not impassable and I arrived at Bangersosi within a couple of hours only to discover that my journey was not yet over. The actual "kill" had occurred at another station situated on this same line called Kunchinala. Now I was in real difficulties. The road to Kunchinala led through dense forest and was nothing more than a path hacked out by woodcutters and I would have to negotiate seven miles of this before reaching Kunchinala. However, as it was getting dark, I had no alternative but to set out immediately. Fortunately, I have an old Ford and this gallant little car overcame difficulties that would have baffled any of our modern streamlined jobs. Eventually, just as night was falling, I parked the car opposite the gangman's hut at Kunchinala and hurried across the fields to where the "kill" was lying. The goat was an exceptionally large animal and judging from the way its throat had been lacerated must have put a determined fight before it was overcome. Very little of the carcase had been eaten and the chances of the animal returning that night were excellent.

"Hastening to the machan which had been tied on the only available tree overlooking the "kill" I took up my position and as I was fairly certain that all our movements had been carefully noted by the panther, I instructed the gangmen to return to the hut, talking loudly, but on no account to return to the machan should I fire

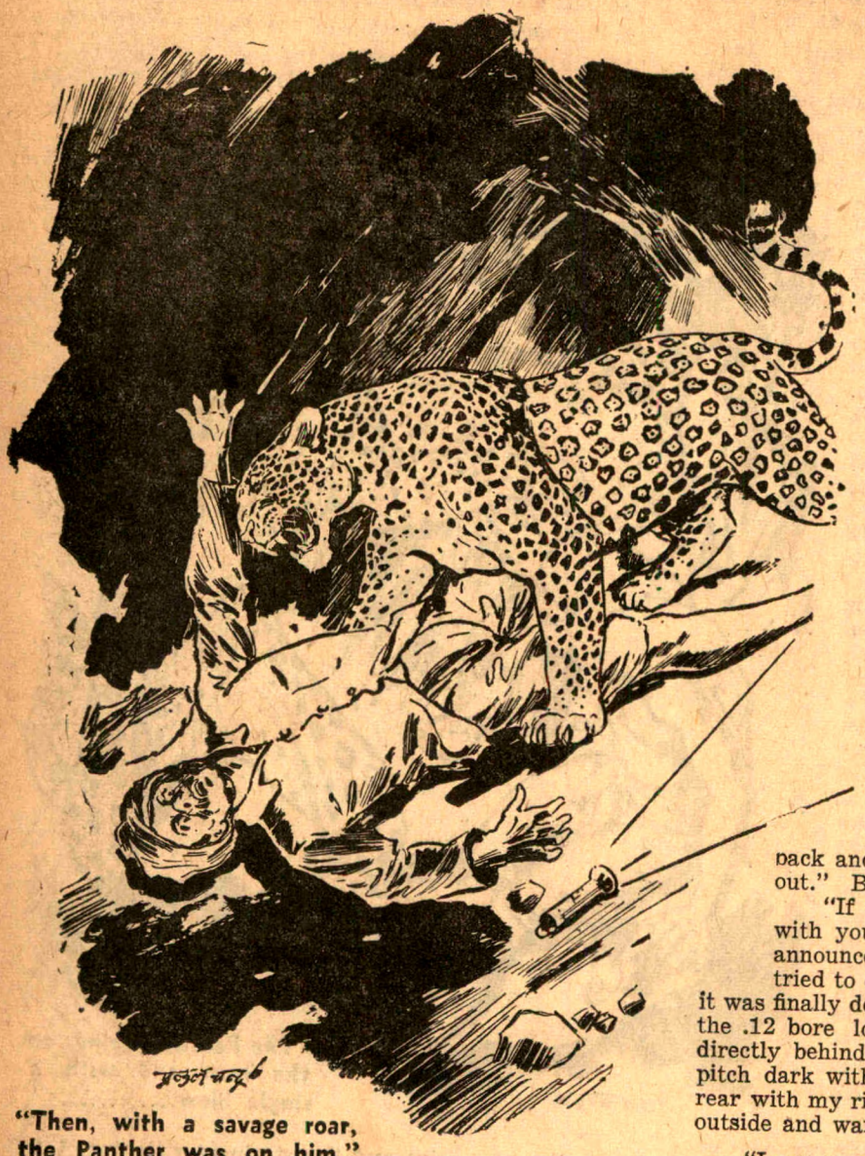
TIRESOME VIGIL

"Settling myself as comfortably as possible, I prepared myself for a long and tiresome vigil. There was no moon and as the sun set, Venus, her brightness undimmed by any rival star, shone like a brilliant jewel in the western sky. An occasional Nightjar called mournfully, while from the direction of the hut came the voices of the crewmen as they gathered round their fire. After a while even these sounds died down and I was left in complete silence. I had noted the position of the "kill" carefully and strained my eyes watching the spot for evidence of the panther's return. Towards midnight, exhausted

"The Panther springs on the man and with a single blow..... "

by the long drive and the strain of watching, I fell into a fitful dose from which I was suddenly awakened by hearing a sharp crack rrom the direction of the "kill." With every faculty now thoroughly alert, I watched the spot where the goat was lying and after a time seemed to see a larger body worrying the carcase. In that uncertain light I could take no chances, so carefully aligning my sights, I switched on the torch. In the brilliant beam I could see the panther distinctly. He was lying with his back towards me, tearing at the stomach of the goat, but although I switched the torch, off and on, several times, he refused to turn and look at me. Crouched as he was, the narrow width of his body offered a most difficult target and I had hoped that by switching the torch I would cause him to turn his head and look at me, so that I could have sighted between his eyes, gleaming in the torchlight, for a head shot. There being no alternative, I laid down the rifle and took up the .12 bore which I had loaded with L.G. Once again I depressed the switch and sighting along the middle of his spine, I pressed the trigger. Simultaneously with the shot the panther bounded

into the air and then made off across the fields in the direction of the forest. For a while I followed him with the torch but never had an opportunity to fire again and I was forced to admit that I had either missed the animal entirely or had only wounded him slightly.



"Then, with a savage roar, the Panther was on him."

"From the direction of the hut I heard Lassoo's voice enquiring if they should come, but I shouted back telling them to wait till morning as I had wounded the animal and it would be dangerous for them to come at that time.

"Thereafter I tried to sleep but could not and it was with relief that with the first light of dawn I saw Lassoo and the crewmen, reinforced by several villagers, coming towards me.

BLOOD TRAIL

"Later, examining the ground in the vicinity of the "kill," we came on the blood trail and as the animal appeared to have bled freely, I came to the conclusion that it must have been badly injured and determined to take up the tracking at once before the village cattle, wandering all over the area, had obliterated the trail.

"By this time it was getting quite clear and after a hasty cup of coffee and a few sandwiches, we set out, with Lassoo leading and carrying my rifle. I followed with Kalia and another crewman while the rest of the party trailed behind.

The tracks led directly through the forest and towards a large out-crop of rocks standing like sentinels at the very foot of the hills. Towards these rocks the trail led till we came to a single rock, some ten feet high which rose sheer out of the ground. Pierced in the centre and worn smooth with the action of wind and water was a large hole into which the animal had crawled. Hurrying round this rock we found that it was backed by an equally large rock that leaned over it forming a large natural cave. Of the two exits on either side, the one on the right showed that this had been the usual exit by which the animal left the cave, but a careful scrutiny all round showed no evidence that the panther had left the cave.

"'He is still inside, Sahib,' Lassoo shouted. 'Let us smoke him out'.

"Acting on this advice we collected a large quantity of leaves and straw and thrust this into both entrances as well as the crack in the rock. Being slightly damp the straw threw off dense clouds of smoke when lit, but although the men shouted and threw rocks into the cave, nothing emerged and after half-an-hour or so, when the fire had died down I determined that the animal had either sneaked out from some secret exit or died in the cave.

"Lassoo," I informed my crewman, "I am going inside the cave to have a look. The rest of you stand back and shout if you see the panther coming out." But to this Lassoo would not agree.

"If you are going in Sahib, I am coming with you," and fired by his example Kalia announced his intention of coming as well. I tried to dissuade them but without success and it was finally decided that I would enter first carrying the .12 bore loaded with L. G. Kalia would come directly behind carrying the torch as the cave was pitch dark within, while Lassoo would bring up the rear with my rifle. The rest of the men would stand outside and warn us if the animal was escaping.

"I assure you I was not happy at the thought of entering that cave. It was against all my experience and my knowledge of the ways of wounded animals and the thought that I was leading others into the same danger as myself was not very heartening. However, there was no way of backing out now. To have done so would have been to lower myself in the estimation of the men who would have concluded I was afraid.

INSIDE THE CAVE

"Holding the .12 bore carefully before me, I forced myself between the rocks at the entrance and entered. Once I was in the cave itself I found a natural hollow about four feet wide, fifteen feet long and sufficiently high to stand up in. Taking the torch from Kalia, who had entered immediately after me, I swung the beam round and saw that the floor on which we stood was a foot or two higher than the entrance. About three feet further in was a deep cleft in the rock that formed the floor of the cave and this crevice ran the whole length of the cave to

where the opposite entrance could be seen. Of the panther there was not a sign.

"I was about to leave the cave when happening to cast the beam of the torch on the floor, I noticed a patch of blood at the very entrance to this fissure. Immediately I concluded that the animal had entered the cave, forced its way into this crevasse and there died. Anxious to test the truth of my supposition, I stepped up to the entrance and was about to shine my torch into the cleft in the rocks, when I noticed a huge spider crouched at the entrance watching me. Now I have an inborn horror of these insects and would sooner face a tiger than one of these creatures, so handling the torch to Kalia I instructed him to shine the torch into the crevice and see if the body of the panther was lying there. Advancing cautiously, Kalia did as he was told, but no sooner had the light entered the cleft in the rocks, than, with a savage roar, the panther was on him. Taken completely by surprise I had no opportunity to fire nor could I have done so without injuring the man as well, so I did the next best thing automatically. As there was no room to swing the gun, I jabbed the barrel into the panther's ribs with all my strength. In an instant it had released its victim and sprang back into the crevasse.

"Shouting to Lassoo to help me lift the injured man, we soon got Kalia out of the cave and into the open where I left Lassoo to attend to his wounds, returning to the cave to retrieve my gun that had fallen to the ground in the melee.

GRIM STRUGGLE

"As I entered the cave I discovered the torch, still alight lying on the ground, while my gun lay a few feet away. I can assure you I lost no time in getting out of that cave. With my legs halfway out of the entrance I turned to see if the panther was anywhere about, and noticed the tip of his tail, which he was obviously holding erect, moving in the direction of the opposite exist. This gave me an idea. The exit was small and for a while the panther would be silhouetted against the light. At that distance it was impossible to miss, so stepping back I levelled my gun and waited. What caused the animal to abandon the idea I do not know, but once he reached the end of the crevasse, he paused a moment and then returned. The tables were now reversed and I was the target silhoutted against the exit. The panther was taking no chances. He must have spotted me before he returned half the distance, for with a sudden roar he raced along the passage and sprang. No sooner did his head appear than I fired, but unable to raise my gun in that confined space, I fired from the hip and the L. G. intended for his face and chest, took him in the stomach and the next instant he was on me burying his fangs in my right shoulder. Five hundred pounds of bone and muscle is not easily supported and his charge flung me against the rock. Fortunately I still maintained my balance and bracing myself against the rock at my back, I struck out with all my strength at his head, using the butt of my gun to augment my blows. Partially stunned he released his hold for a moment and I used this brief respite to force the gun between us, holding the barrel in one hand and the stock in the other, so as to form a barrier with which I was able to ward off his next attack. But my advantage was short-lived. With one vicious stroke of his paw, he severed the stock just below the trigger guard, wrenching the barrel out of my hand. I was now completely at his mercy. As he came in for the kill I made one desperate lunge at his head but succeeded only in forcing my hand between his gaping jaws and I felt his teeth slipping past the bones in my palm as he bit fiercely on my hand, but this also gave me a slight advantage. Seizing his tongue with my partially paralyzed fingers, I strove desperately to force my fist further and further down his throat. In this position he was unable to do me any further injury with his teeth, but his claws raked me unmercifully, tearing the shirt and coat from my shoulders, while he endeavoured cat-

"I struck out with all my strength at his head....."

like to disembowel me. All this while, although I myself was unaware of it, I had been shouting to Lassoo to shoot. It was now for the first time that I saw the gallant fellow forcing his way into the cave. As he entered he cocked the hammer on my rifle and I distinctly heard the click as the hammer fell on the empty chamber, and I remembered with a sick feeling of despair that I had forgotten to load the rifle. Lassoo I knew was unable to work the bolt to force a cartridge from the magazine into the chamber and with the realization I probably went mad with fear, agony and frustration. Releasing the animal's tongue, I started lashing out wildly with hands and feet in a frantic effort to drive the animal from me. By some lucky accident my boot drove straight

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THE GUARDIAN

(Continued From Page 180)

termined fellows. So he could not help parting with the fan.

Priti spoke for the first time.

"Let me have the fan, please," she said, extending her hand. She didn't like an unknown young man fanning her.

"No, no, it's all right," said Abinash.

But Priti managed to get hold of it and started fanning. Abinash felt comfortable.

"Ah!" he said, closing his eyes.

After some time he opened his eyes and found that the people in the compartment, the old as well as the young, were discussing something in a low voice.

One of them spoke to him.

"Does she go to school?" he asked.

Abinash looked at Priti and the others and replied, "Yes".

Then the man turned to the rest and said, "See, didn't I tell you? She goes to school and yet she can look after and care for other people. You can see that from the way she is fanning him."

To be the object of the attention and discussion of so many people was quite embarrassing to Priti. But there was no way to run away from this. The bench was in the middle, and too far from the window to make it possible for her to turn her face about and look out at the countryside. So at last she put her head on her arm and pretended to sleep. A man sitting next to her moved away and gave her room to stretch her legs. Abinash helped her with a small bundle which served for a pillow. She felt quite comfortable.

When the train started, fresh air rushed into the compartment. Everyone felt relieved. Abinash also closed his eyes. His marriage had been arranged and was to take place in the month of Agrahayan. He dreamed of somebody fanning him. Then he woke up with the thought that for the present he must fan himself. Priti was asleep. He pulled the fan out of her hand and started fanning.

A man sitting next offered him a cigarette.

Abinash lit the cigarette and looked at him.

"You were talking of somebody's marriage," the man said. "Her marriage I suppose?"

Abinash looked at Priti and saw that her eyes were closed. Must be sleeping, he thought.

"Yes," he replied calmly.

"Who is the bridegroom?"

Abinash laughed and said, "Well, there is one, of course."

The laugh helped intimacy. The younger fellows moved nearer.

One of them asked, "Are you her guardian?"

"For the present, yes."

"You are a fool, Haridas", said another. "Don't you understand? He isn't yet, but he is going to be, very soon.....Isn't that so, sir?"

Abinash smiled and remained silent.

Priti wasn't sleeping actually. She had heard the conversation. She had learnt fencing in school. Now her hand was itching. If she had a rapier handy Abinash and the other young fellows would have been instantly decapitated. But now she found it all so compromising that she could not even open her eyes.

The express train was running fast. The passengers were now quiet. The train went by many small stations and stopped at last at Barasat.

The young fellows got down there. One of them wished Abinash best of luck.

"When is the wedding going to take place," asked somebody.

"In Agrahayan," was his brief reply.

They congratulated him and left.

The long seat was now almost empty. Pritilata opened her eyes. She was about to get up when Abinash told her that she had better remain lying, for a new crop of passengers was expected in the next station and they might occupy the seat. He had had no sleep on the previous night and needed some space for stretching himself. Priti asked him to lie down in the place she was occupying but was told that it would not do, for the new passengers would not be polite to a man.

So she lay down again. Abinash also relaxed himself.

When the train crossed the Gobardanga bridge, Abinash got up and brought out a long sheet of cloth from his bundle.

As Priti watched him, he said, "Why are you goggling at me. It's Bongaon next. Cover yourself up in this. Listen to what I say, please. I know what all you have to put up with when you travel in this route. Let's try to travel as comfortably as we can. Yes, wrap yourself up and lie as stiff as you can. You may uncover your face and have a peep once in a while when the train has left the station but not before, mind you."

Priti felt amused. She did as he had told him.

Abinash was correct. The deafening clamour of the waiting passengers reached them when the train was yet a furlong away from the station. The moment the train halted the door was pushed open. The next instant the compartment was packed. One could only hear the continuous thud of luggage being thrown in. The upper bunk was full. A number of people were hanging from the edge like bats.

Abinash paid no attention to all this. He was fanning Priti with a look of concern on his face.

Suddenly he stood up, folded his palms and said in a sad voice, "Don't make any noise, if you please. She has been restless all the time and has just closed her eyes. Small pox, see? You know how painful it is."

A number of people jumped up. Small pox!

"Yes sir. Her condition is rather serious. I have put the sheet over her to keep the flies away. Or else you would have seen how thick the rash is."

Those in the upper bunk dropped themselves down. Those in the seats stood up. Those standing rushed towards the door. Everyone tried to get out of the compartment first, pushing the others out of his way.

Priti tried hard to keep herself from bursting out with laughter and couldn't help the violent fit of coughing that came on.

"Oh dear, dear," said Abinash to others, "You see? She has a bad cough also."

The compartment was empty before the train started moving.

When the station was out of sight Abinash said, "There won't be any more rush anywhere. You can get up now."

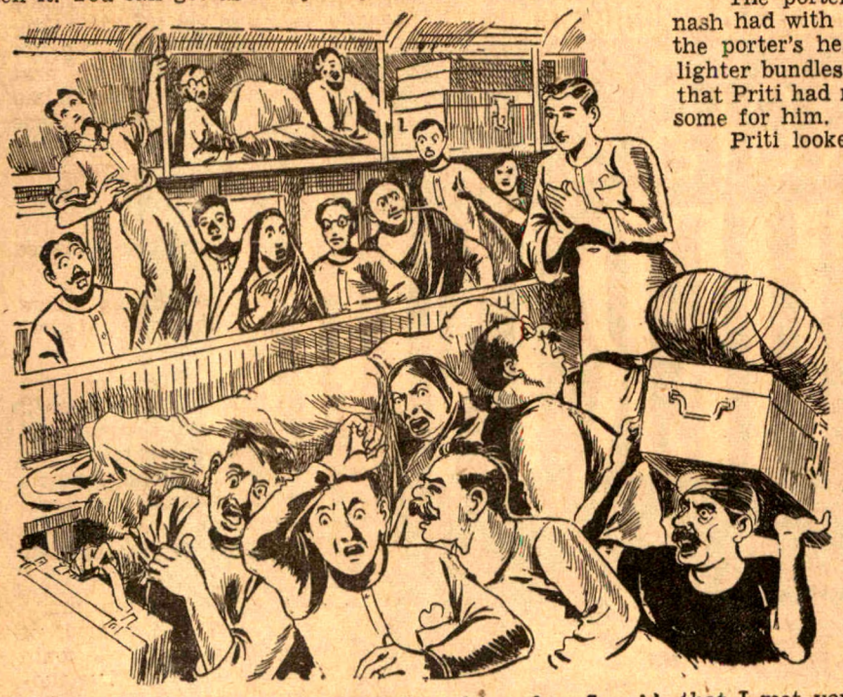
But she didn't seem to hear. She was imagining what fun it would be if she really fell ill. Then this fellow would have to fan her all the way, would have to reach her home and wouldn't be able to rush to his own house with the bridegroom's head-dress. Really she shouldn't have come alone, for people do fall ill in the train.

Abinash was impatient. "Why don't you get up,"

he asked. "I want the sheet of cloth back. It's new and I don't want it to get soiled."

Priti lowered the sheet and looked at him. There was a smile on her face. "How much did it cost you," she asked. "I'd like to buy it."

Abinash looked irritated. "No, I don't intend to sell it. You can get as many as you want in Burra-



Suddenly he stood up, folded up his palms & said in a sad voice, "Don't make any noise, if you please. .....Small Pox see? You know how painful it is".

bazar. May I have it back please. Now hurry, we are near Jessore. Must pack up our things."

"You don't have to worry," Priti quietly replied. "I shall pack up everything when we reach the station."

"We shall hardly have any time. I wouldn't like to miss the bus and spend the night in the station swatting mosquitoes."

"You don't have to spend the night in the station," replied Priti. "We live in Daratana. A carriage will reach us there in ten minutes. You will come along, of course. You have done so much for me. My mother will scold me when she learns that I ventured out alone but she will be very pleased with you for having looked after me."

"No, that won't do," said Abinash. "If I had time to spare I would have done some more marketing and come by the next train. I cannot waste a minute in town. Now get up, please."

Abinash started packing in a hurry. Priti wanted to help him but felt very shy. She lazily watched him from a distance.

Suddenly she asked, "But why can't you stay in town for sometime. Is there going to be a marriage ceremony in your house?"

She wanted to ask if he was the bridegroom concerned. But she thought it might not look nice to ask him that.

Abinash looked surprised. "Marriage? Whose marriage," he asked.

"Weren't you saying——"

He frowned and then started laughing. "Oh yes," he said. "I remember mentioning something like that in Sealdah. Well, I couldn't help saying that. This head-dress is for my own shop. By Agrahayan we shall be having the marriage season. So I thought I had better replenish my stock now. We don't come to Calcutta for our purchases so often."

* * * *

The porter could not carry all the things Abinash had with him. So he put the heavier articles on the porter's head and shoulders and carried the lighter bundles and boxes himself. When he noticed that Priti had nothing with her he asked her to carry some for him.

Priti looked around to see if there wasn't anyone who knew her. She didn't like to be seen with an unknown man carrying some of his bundles.

The ticket collector challenged Abinash and wanted to see the contents of the big steel trunk. Abinash hurriedly explained that the box belonged to Priti and contained nothing but her clothings and make-up aids.

"She hasn't had any lunch today," he added. "Look at her condition. We are in a hurry to reach home."

The ticket collector looked at Priti's tired face and let them pass.

As they came out Abinash started giggling. "You know," he said, "the trunk is packed with all sorts of kitchen utensils. Must be at least a maund and half in all. Thank God that I put them all in the trunk and that I met you. Or else it would have been difficult to avoid the surcharge."

Priti was thinking something else.

"Supposing I don't let you leave me now," she said. "Why not come along to our house? Come, let's take a carriage. You are tired. You can stop with us for the night. It would give you the rest you need and then you can leave for home tomorrow."

"No," said her companion curtly and took the bundle that she was carrying. Then he moved away without any more words.

"Then at least help me fix up a carriage," she said from behind.

"You will find so many of them over there," Abinash said, pointing out the carriage-stand with his hand.

He didn't wait for her reply and started walking.

Priti lost her temper. "Did you keep me company only to get away with your things without paying for the luggage? Is that why you were so nice to me?"

"Well, not only that," replied the man, "Let alone my luggage, even I myself wouldn't have been able to come in this crowd. But just because you were with me I managed to have sleeping accommodation as well.—Good bye. If you ever happen to be in Kotchandpur, please drop into my miscellany store."

A horn tooted in the distance. Abinash hurried the porter on and walked away to catch his bus.

(English rendering by Barin Das).

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In the Jungles of Haldwani

By DHIRENDRA NARAYAN ROY (Lalgola Raj)

DISCUSSION on Rabindranath's poetry and philosophy was in full swing when it was announced that meals were ready. As we rose Bilash initiated a talk on hunting and soon we were absorbed in it. The subject being new there was also a remarkable change in the mode of discussion. A moment ago it was of a serious nature and now we were in a lighter vein — from the grave, sombre music of the Mridanga to the gay light play on the Tabla, so to say.

It was extremely cold then and the question was where to go. Various places were suggested but none appealed to me. My idea this time was to go for an excursion to a far off region. Eventually, Nainital was selected and it was decided that we would start next Wednesday. Salil and Bilash were to accompany me.

This happened long ago.

Salil was putting up at the *Mando Bhalo Garden* alias Mandeville Gardens. This side of the city of Calcutta was not so developed then as now. Bilash was a boarder in the Hardinge Hostel of the University. Despite failure in the Law Examination year after year he was continuing his study without showing any greater interest in it. His father was ultra-enthusiastic in the expectation of finding him a Law graduate but the son would not like anyhow to hasten the day. If the father goes on making monthly remittances without fail, the son logically cannot keep away from his student life and his many friends in their turn cannot but squeeze money out of him to be benevolently spent for their entertainment.

Bilash was luxurious in his habits. Treating his wavy hair with perfumed oil, assiduously rubbing the body with Pear's soap for at least an hour to ensure a delightful bath and after that meticulously dressing the hair with costly lotions — to give just a sample — these were among his daily duties. 'Lily of the Valley' was his favourite scent.

Bilash protested — Oh, no. I am not prepared to go if Salil does. It will be bad luck for us if he is in the party. Don't you remember our ill-fated excursion year before last when not a single game could be bagged by us?

Red with rage Salil shouted, "Enough of it. Leading a life of luxury, you better keep to that instead of bothering about hunting in jungles".

God be thanked that after an excited wordy duel they cooled off and warmly shook hands.

A QUEER CRAZE

Salil had a queer craze. Before going out to another place, he must consult the almanac for a suitable date. A day to his liking being very difficult to get, he had to remain content with what is traditionally done in such cases. He said that the

dawn of Tuesday ushering in Wednesday might be accepted as the auspicious time for starting.

Accordingly we set out at the appointed hour. Needless to mention, a cook and a servant were with us because there is no Grand Hotel in a forest.

We travelled by Punjab Mail upto Bareilly Junction, from there to Kathgodam by the metre guage. Then there was a motor road up to Nainital. Our destination, the Haldwani forest was on this road—about twenty-five miles down Nainital.

As in a holy place one is surrounded on arrival by Pandas or his agents who open their long yellowed books wrapped in coarse red cloth and trace out the names and addresses of the ancestors, similarly on our reaching Nainital, a band of guides who were even certificate-holders encircled us when they noticed our hunting equipment. I picked up from them one or two who were well mannered and looked smart.

We spent a week in Nainital. The daily routine was drab and colourless — taking meals, going about holding friendly parties. We did not however forget to make enquiries about particulars of jungles so that we might select where to go for hunting. We heard that in the whole of Haldwani Forest Division, the best forest was Jalasal. The word Jalasal at once struck me and punning upon Salil's name I said "Don't you see Salil, this time you have an opportunity of asserting your real self at Jalasal and thus fulfil the real purport of your name. For me also it will be possible to quench my thirst for hunting."

"Rather get drowned in the waters of the pit dug by yourself", retorted Bilash.

But, alas, the Dak Bungalow of Jalasal was already occupied by the Commissioner !

This gave Bilash handle to have a dig at Salil. He cast his costly cigarette, straightened up and giving me a shake said: "Look here, it is just the beginning of the trouble we have to go through for having Salil with us."

BAD LUCK AGAIN

So the next best was considered, the 'Chorgalia' block. Salil was sent to obtain the necessary permission. But he came back quietly and reported that military officer was occupying the Block. We were very much depressed. Bad luck again.

Lifting his feet over the arms of the easy chair, Bilash looked askance at Salil and exclaimed: "This number two."

Salil shouted back: "Will you not stop? Is it fair and becoming for one who can never pass an examination to suggest that I am ominous?"

Finding another war imminent I pleaded with folded palms that peace should prevail.

A day or two more passed without any incident during which I had time to look into the plans of other blocks. Not very far was the Sudlimath. Should we then, I thought within myself, at last seek shelter in a math (temple)? But what else could we do? Having no other alternative we had to get permission for that block and a day in advance sent our cook and servant there along with the guides.

The road ran straight from Nainital to Kathgodam. After 25 miles another narrow road branched off from it towards Sudlimath. We had barely gone about a mile along this road, when to our surprise we heard the roar of a tiger. Immediately an antelope crossed the road in front of us and quickly disappeared out of sight. A tiger howling during daytime is a very uncommon thing! We decided not to leave the place before we had definite information. Alighting from the car I slowly walked and the moment I came across pug marks I was convinced that the tiger was a very big one. I got into the car again and after going a short distance found more marks left by the tiger, just by the side of a wide but shallow canal. When trying to cross it the wheels of the car went deep into the sand and water and became immobilised. Ill luck again!

And quickly came Bilash's comment:

"Now Salil, this is the third instance!"

Naturally I was worried and did not know what to do. But very soon an opportunity presented itself and we seized it with avidity. Four bullock-carts loaded with timber were coming in front of us, two men in each. These eight people and we four, Bilash, Salil, driver and myself were sufficient to drag the car out of its wretched plight.

The sun was setting and there was no time to lose. Before it was dark we must reach our resting place. What we found there on arrival was not at all pleasing. The dak-bungalow was very nasty and wore a miserable look. The adjacent block was Salpani. So Salpani was also reserved as the next place for our excursion. God forbid, if Sudlimath disappoints us totally, we will have to lead our expedition there.

HOPE FOR GOOD GAMES

Tanakpur on the border of Nepal was not very far from here. This gave me some encouragement for good games might not be difficult to get there. We had heard a lot about Nepalese tigers.

The dak-bungalow though very poor in appearance had a good stock of crockery. Bilash at any rate was over-joyed at the sight of the kettle and the tea-set and expressed the desire for a steaming cup. The Chowkidar was the only helping hand for my servant to get some water boiled with which Bilash gleefully made tea for himself and Salil. Being disinterested in tea my pleasure was to see them happy.

Personal inspection of the jungle by us was the main thing now. The forest guard who was already informed came with his attendants. These people are an enthusiastic lot, able to pick up spots where games are available and get very excited to see them bagged. When they talk about animals, they become absolutely inspired so to say. Another reason why they feel so happy is that when they accompany parties like ours they have the prospects of good food in addition to handsome 'baksheesh'.

I started making a chart of our hunting expeditions with guides, and a rough plan was made. We took rest for the night.

Early next morning these people were again with us. A few of them were sent to spot out places

for games. The leaders had come first, each having his own party. One would suggest — Oh, just at the foot of the Sal tree and that Haritaki tree where antelopes come to eat the Haritaki fruits, why not go there first? Another would say—Go first to that fig tree where bears come off and on. Bilash who was there always to find fault with Salil broke into a laughter and remarked : "Just the thing, just the thing! It was a foregone conclusion that with Salil among us a tiger would be a fig-flower (Dumurer Ful)."

Another headman throwing his fist in the air by way of a challenge asserted that a bear was sure to make its appearance near the plum-shrub.

The fourth man interrupted him saying that the creek near the jungle where a tiger killed a fellow year before last must also be taken into consideration. It was at that very place again where Atin Babu bagged one tiger and gave them lavish 'bakhsheesh'.

Being a new-comer I did not know the topography, nor particulars about the hunting spots of that forest. I examined the various suggestions in consultation with a map of the forest I had with me and decided that I would personally inspect some of the spots before giving directions as to where the "bait" should be placed.

I set out with the gun in hand. My companions were three "jungle-masters" i.e. experts who could show the way in the forest. Their men had already been sent to all corners with special instructions to procure baits. We entered into the depth of the forest.

CAUTIOUS STEPS

We proceeded with very cautious steps maintaining perfect silence. Consulting the map was indispensable for selection of the spot where a bait should be placed. The guides were not of one mind and that was a problem to me. Without relying on them I myself made a rough plan of the strategic points and calculated as to the number of baits that would meet the requirements. The day had far advanced and so we returned to the dak-bungalow.

Only three baits were procured and that too at an unreasonable price. But necessity knows no law. I drank a glass of water and asked Salil if there was any fresh development about their friendly feud. I was disappointed. Salil had not a word to say against Bilash and showed no sign of excitement either. On the contrary, with a calm unusual to him he said, "Don't you see we have signed a truce and are spending our time with the young buffaloes."

In the afternoon we again went to the forest. Under my instruction two baits were sent to two spots and the third I placed myself after a good deal of calculation.

The first news that reached me early next morning was that the three "baits" were alive.

Ah me, what a luck!

One of the parties on returning with the baits told a rather curious story. They said that a tiger had definitely come as close as only six or seven cubits from the bait but did not touch it.

Certainly it was a matter deserving serious thought. I wondered if the tiger had turned into a Sadhu! Bilash gave a jump and took the dust from Salil's feet and before I could realise what was happening begged of Salil in all humility to give him some more "holy dust" with the comment who else was a more auspicious person? Is not this the fourth instance where we fail?

Brilliantly responding, Salil granted the prayer and Bilash actually had the benedictory dust on his devoted head.

In the meantime the guides were indulging in all manner of speculations and invented incredible stories.

But what was it that made the tiger behave this way? I was puzzled at first. Then I thought possibly because of its inflated superiority-complex it was too proud to touch a captive animal.

MIXED FEELINGS

On enquiry, it was gathered that the tiger's footprints were very big in size but where was he? I had mixed feelings of joy and sorrow, joy because the tiger had come so near the bait and sorrow because it did not care to touch it.

Full five days passed in vain. On the sixth the tiger reappeared and made its exit, leaving the bait as it was.

There was a stretch of tiger grass in the Terai of the hills and once the tiger could get into it during the day, it was rather difficult to attempt a Beat. One day, it was noticed that after slaying the bait the beast had disappeared into the tiger grass along with the prey. So I failed to get at it.

Bilash, accustomed to luxurious way of living, was resting on a soft bed. He now sat up and gave vent to his feeling of disgust. He cried: "It is extremely tiresome — that damned beast has exasperated us."

Retorted Salil: "You of all persons lazily rolling on the soft milk-white bed feel tired! What would happen if you were in the jungle?"

Only six days were left for us after which we were to leave the place unless a fresh permit was secured. I was not the man to give way so easily without an encounter with that game-killer.

Along the fire-line of the forest, where the tiger made his appearance but refused to touch the bait, I selected a place on a higher level near the junction of the creek and the fire-line and a young buffalo was tied up. A fire-line is a clear length in the forest made by cutting down the trees so that if fire breaks out in one part of the forest, the other part may be saved. This line went up to the creek. About 20 yards away from the bait a platform was built on a tree and camouflaged with leaves and branches. Now our duty was to take our position on the platform in the evening, driving the attacking mosquitoes throughout the night and return at day-break. Four days passed in this way.

DISMAL SITUATION

My usual optimism began to give way to despair. Bilash's discomfort knew no bounds and his continuous teasing made Salil's life miserable. In the midst of this dismal situation only the guides kept on holding up rosy pictures before us. But I could not lose sight of the fact that we would have to pack off after two days. Only two days!

That evening before starting for the forest we

did some painting over the body of the bait. The young buffalo was jet-black, only the head was almost milk-white. Lest the contrast of white and black should confound the tiger, we painted the head grey as far as we could.

We went to the platform a bit earlier. The guide was with me as usual. Darkness gradually crept over us. Not even the drone of a cricket could be heard; an endless silence pervaded the whole forest; the air was still and there was no sign of any movement anywhere. The crescent moon of the Astami night appeared to mock at me.

I seated myself facing the bait, waited and waited. Suddenly in that pallid moon-light something seemed to be moving. Wide awake I cast my searching glance all round but nothing could be seen.

Tigers are very cautious, their habit is to proceed in a circuitous way, stealthily, without giving any indication of its approach. But what was it there! My heart gave a bound. In a few moments something was noticed coming up in zigzag way. It vanished where the trees cast their shades and then it came to view again! Well no more proof was needed and all speculations were set at rest. It was the very tiger we were after. A hunter must try to know the psychology of this particular type of tiger. So, as far as possible under the circumstances, I closely watched its movement.

Now the tiger could be seen quite distinctly.

It came straight along the fire-line and went down the creek. Then it became invisible behind a bush. After a few minutes, I heard the splashing sound in the water which meant that the tiger was crossing the creek and would soon come up this side. My only anxiety was how to receive the good grand animal.

ROAR SILENCED FOR GOOD

The tiger's attention was in the direction of the bait and the young buffalo was watching him with pricked ears, remained calm and made no noise.

Now the tiger came closer. The stripes on its body were noticeable. It cast a fierce glance at the bait, seemed to be musing for a while and then raised its tail swinging in the air and soon started valiantly beating it up against the ground. Translated into human language it would mean "Poor fellow.— the buffalo — you are already worse than dead".

It moved around the bait in a semi-circle and slowly advanced towards our covered platform. From its high and mighty attitude it seemed as if the animal held in contempt the rest of God's creation.

The arrogant tiger was right in front of me. In a situation like this one must be braver and more determined. The moment of glorious realisation was very near. An electric current seemed to pass through my whole being. I clasped the rifle on my breast and the moment the guide focussed the light I pulled the trigger. It went off.

The terrible roar coming from the depths of the mighty tiger's heart was hushed into silence for all time. The one-time valiant lay prostrate before me. I fired a second shot but it was not necessary.

THE PANTHER

(Continued From Page 205)

into the gun-shot wound in its stomach and so great must have been the pain that the panther fell back gasping with agony. This was my opportunity and seizing the rifle from Lassoo I wrenched open the bolt, driving a cartridge into the chamber and with my almost paralyzed fingers presented the rifle in the direction of the panther and pulled the trigger. A good woman's prayers and a good woman's love must have been my salvation that day, for the bullet crashed into the panther's body, hurling it to the ground and I incontinently fainted. I must have regained consciousness in a few minutes for when I came to, I discovered Lassoo using the barrel of my rifle in an attempt to force open the panther's jaws where in its death struggles it had bitten through the calf of my leg. Once free I wasted no time in getting out of that cave, but so weak had I become that Lassoo had to partially drag and partially carry me out. Once in the open a cup of coffee from my flask helped to revive me and tearing strips from Lassoo's turban I bound up my wounds as best I could and the men practically carried me back to the car.

NIGHTMARE JOURNEY

"You can now imagine the quandary I was in. Once the excitement had died down, reaction set in and I was trembling all over. My shoulder and right hand were lacerated and crippled and to make matters worse, blood from a scalp wound where the panther's claws had inflicted a nasty cut on my head, kept seeping down my forehead and, entering my eyes. In this state I was obliged to drive my car down a country road, through ditches and nullahs and round fallen logs, a distance of seven miles to the main road. How I ever completed that nightmare journey I have no idea. I must have blacked-out on several occasions for when I came to my senses, it was to find Lassoo clinging desperately to the steering wheel to prevent me from going off the road. However, at last we made it and arriving at Kunchinala I drove to the only dispensary the town boasted. Here I was patched up, the meagre resources of this dispensary being wholly inadequate for the job, and returned to the car for the thirty-mile drive to Baripada.

"But here I came up against a real obstacle. The Doctor would not hear of it. 'Mr. Upshon,' he exclaimed, 'you are in a state of shock. You have lost a lot of blood and you are physically unfit to undertake a 30-mile drive. If you insist on going I will not be responsible for your life. Wait here and I will make other arrangements to have you driven in.'

"An old Sikh driver who happened to be at Kunchinala at the time awaiting some minor repairs to his truck, came up just at this time and hearing the argument, very sportingly offered to drive the car into Baripada.

"At the Baripada Hospital I received expert attention and sixteen stitches. Four hours later I was back at my bungalow at Betnoti, where my wife, although considerably upset when she heard of my narrow escape, promptly had me removed to the Railway Hospital at Kharagpur, from where I returned three weeks later, perfectly cured.

"That panther's skin now hangs in the place of honour in my hall and whenever I look at it I am filled with a deep sense of respect for a very brave animal who gallantly defended his home and his life against a weaker but far better equipped foe."

WELFARE STATE IN WEST BENGAL

(Continued From Page 28)

requirements of 600 million yards (approx) on this basis, total production of mill cloth in West Bengal at present is 260 million yards. Handloom production may be estimated at about 120 million yards of cloth.

The aim of planning should be to maximise the proportion of the total requirements that is met by indigenous production. In view of the shortage of foreign exchange, reliance will have to be placed on the handloom sector to contribute to the increased production. The handlooms should be assured of regular supply of yarn, and there should be a central marketing organisation. Small scale production in cottage industries, to be successful, should be supplemented by large scale purchase and marketing organisation. The development of the handloom industry on this basis will help to a significant extent in the solution of the problems of unemployment and refugee rehabilitation.

It is necessary, as Shri Morarji Desai, Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, told the Textile Conference held in New Delhi on July 14, to consider the different sectors of the textile industry in an integrated manner. I may draw attention to the pertinent remarks he made in this connection. He told the conference:

> "The handloom industry, which is the biggest employer today, has got to be protected and developed to the maximum possible extent. The Ambar Charkha and hand-spinning wheel have great potentialities in the existing social structure of our country. It must be given not only the blessings of all of us in the country, but also positive promotional assistance so as to give this decentralised sector an unfettered scope for development. *While this Policy is being effectively implemented I can assure you that the organised sector, namely your industry, will continuously go forward.*"

The textile industry in the State may draw comfort from the assurance contained in the last sentence. The industry can reasonably claim that it should be permitted to expand production so as to meet the gap in requirements, which will still be left after making full allowance for increased handloom production. The claims can be effectively put forward if the plans for expansion are co-ordinated with the programme for the handloom sector.

SLUM CLEARANCE

As regards housing, slum clearance in the Calcutta City and its environs claims top priority. Except in areas devastated by floods, rural housing does not have the same urgency and may be dealt with as part of the community project activities.

The average density of population in the whole State is 806 per square mile. The population density is 670 per square mile in rural areas and 13,632 in urban areas. For Calcutta the figure is 88,953 per square mile. In the built-in areas it is as much as 370 per acre.

In the course of his Budget speech last June, Dr. B. C. Roy told the West Bengal Assembly:

> "The State is feeling the strain of the severe density of its population. The municipal area of Calcutta has by far the highest density of population in the whole world. The density is 88,953 per square mile, as against 13,463 of Bombay municipal area and 30,139 of Delhi municipal area. The density per acre is 139 in Calcutta municipal area, 47 in Delhi municipal area and 21 in Bombay municipal area. It has been calculated in the last census report that considering only the built area, the density in Calcutta rises to 370 persons per acre".

These figures give an indication of the urgency of the problem of slum clearance in Calcutta, which can claim priority in the schemes of slum clearance for which the Second Five Year Plan has provided Rs. 20 crores.

Replacement of slums in Calcutta by decent habitations will be the single great step by which Government could convince people of the genuineness of its concern for the underprivileged. The problem bristles with many difficulties of great complexity. Apart from the financial cost, there is the problem of sites, of building material, of employment facilities for bustee dwellers and the problem of the vested interests that are deeply entrenched in the slum areas. In view of the high density of population multi-storeyed tenements appear to be the only means of providing adequate living space to the citizens of Calcutta. But such costly tenements, built far away from the areas where the bustee dwellers earn their living, will not meet their requirements. One important point should be borne in mind in this context.

RESETTLING OF OCCUPANTS

No programme of slum clearance will meet the desired result, unless the occupants of the slums are resettled near the places where they work. As sufficient land is not available in the busy areas of the city, the programme of slum clearance should be coordinated with a programme for the dispersal of the Government establishments and other big institutions, which between them provide employment directly or indirectly, to a large number of persons. The dispersal of offices will make it practicable to resettle the present occupants of the slums in the outlying areas of the city where land may be available at cheaper rates. The programme is too vast and complicated to yield to compartmental measures. The programmes for housing and slum clearance must be co-ordinated with the programmes for provision of employment.

A recent survey has shown that 1,32,800 families comprising 5,31,500 persons live in the 350 bustees of Calcutta. A complete programme of slum clearance and resettlement of the bustee dwellers in decent habitations, it is estimated, will involve expenditure of over Rs. 65 crores. The total amount provided in the Second Five Year Plan for slum clearance in all cities in India is Rs. 20 crores. The wide disparity between the available resources and the cost of replacing slum dwellings by pucca structures indicates the need for adopting short-term measures for affording immediate relief to the inhabitants of the bustees. The vested interests that have grown up in the bustees will have to be dislodged. Government may take over the bustees from their present owners and provide the minimum amenities of sanitation and water supply which are lacking in most cases. This will afford some measure of immediate relief to the inhabitants and cause least disturbance. In course of time, as resources become available, they can be provided with better dwellings.

STAGGERING UNEMPLOYMENT

The success of any programme for the improvement of living conditions is linked up with the solution of the problem of unemployment. The extent of unemployment in the country has been various

estimated but all investigators agree that it is of vast dimensions. Recently it was reported that, in response to an advertisement for 1500 clerical posts of the lowest cadre in the Railways, applications were received from 54,000 candidates. That gives an indication of the seriousness of the problem.

According to a survey carried out by the State Statistical Bureau, 40 per cent of middle class families in the Calcutta Industrial area and 22 per cent of the workers families had one or more unemployed persons. In the Industrial area, there were 1,94,500 employment seekers, which is 13 per cent of the total number of persons belonging to the employable age group (16-60). Among the employment seekers were 30,800 Matriculates and 15,300 women. In the Calcutta city, 14 per cent of the employable age group numbering 2,57,300 were unemployed of whom 65,400 were Matriculates.

The employment exchange figures also tell the same story. The total number of the unemployed in the State is estimated at over 16 lakhs. The Second Five Year Plan aims to create 8 million new jobs of which 2.5 lakhs will be in West Bengal.

While the number of the unemployed is thus very large, it is also stated that suitable candidates are not available for the jobs which do exist. In his address to the National Council for Training in Vocational Trades, which met in New Delhi on July 30, Shri Gulzarilal Nanda, the Labour Minister, drew attention to this curious situation confronting the country. While there were large numbers who had registered themselves as unemployed, there were at the same time many jobs calling for a variety of skills, which remained vacant because of shortage of suitable personnel. This gap had been increasing, he said. Dr. J. C. Ghosh has also drawn attention to the same problem, in his address to the panel on education of the Planning Commission which held its second meeting at Poona on July 15. The existing condition in India, he said, revealed the pitiable condition of 5.7 lakhs of post-Matriculates searching for jobs which did not exist, but not trained for jobs which existed. A thorough remodelling of the educational system at the secondary level on the pattern of the U.S.S.R. and Japan was, therefore, called for and numerous experiments on a pilot scale should be carried out in each State during the Second Plan period so that a pattern could be evolved which the country could develop with confidence in the Third Plan period.

TACKLING THE PROBLEM

Remodelling of the system of education will become effective only at the end of the Third Plan. In the meantime there is need for an employment service which will maintain continuous survey of employment opportunities and coordinate schemes of vocational training. The employment exchanges, which hitherto were under the Centre, have been turned over to the States. The State Government thus has an opportunity to create an employment service which, in addition to notifying vacancies, will also advise the candidates and help them to acquire the requisite training.

The problem of middle-class unemployment can be tackled if it is successfully co-ordinated with the programme of rural development and social welfare under the Community Development projects. Up to the end of April 1957, 15,190 villages with a total population of over 80 lakhs had been covered by community development and National Extension Service blocks. At present there are 113 C.D. and N.E.S. blocks and it is proposed to open another 343 blocks by end of 1961 when the entire State will be covered.

The development of small scale industries in the Community Development areas alone can provide the economic foundation of social welfare. As I have mentioned earlier in connection with handloom industry, small scale operation of the industries, in cottage sized units should be supplemented by large-scale organisation to deal with purchase of raw materials, their distribution and the marketing of the finished products. Such an organisation will provide suitable employment opportunities to large numbers of the educated unemployed.

PUBLIC HEALTH

The extension of education and public health schemes should also be co-ordinated with Community Development. As far as medical relief is concerned, West Bengal is comparatively well placed in respect of the number of trained doctors, hospitals and beds. The number of doctors per 10,000 population is 16.7 in urban areas and 3.5 in rural areas. There are 405 dispensaries and hospitals and 14,002 beds in urban areas, and 1291 hospitals and dispensaries and 9500 hospital beds serving rural areas. Medical facilities are available in 96.5 per cent of the Thanas in urban areas and 91 per cent in rural areas. On this basis it should be possible to establish a National Medical Service to cover the entire State. But while the number of doctors is adequate, there is great shortage of other categories of medical workers, especially of nurses and midwives. Suitable arrangements should be made to impart necessary training to the *dais* in the villages, in order to enable them to render competent assistance in maternity cases. The aim should be to have a trained midwife in every village as part of the rural medical service.

Economic development in India is a race with the population. The importance of family planning has been recognised by the Planning Commission. The organisation of rural medical service will make it practicable to establish family planning centres in each village.

ERADICATION OF BEGGARY

Along with schemes of long-term significance, it will also be necessary to take up programmes for rendering immediate relief to the destitute and disabled, and the victims of social injustice. Eradication of beggary, which is a blot on our civilisation, should claim priority in any programme for social welfare. With determined effort beggary can be totally abolished even with our present resources. It will not be necessary to wait for the completion of the Plan projects to deal with this evil.

In the whole of India it is estimated that there are two million blind, one million mentally ill persons, 1.2 million beggars and 200,000 deaf mutes. According to the 1951 census, beggars constitute 0.14 per cent of the total population of India. The percentage for West Bengal is 0.17 per cent. About 30 per cent of the beggars are found in urban areas. Legislation should be enacted banning beggary throughout the State. All beggars should be rounded up; the disabled should be maintained in homes, and the able-bodied provided with employment in insti-

tutions. The necessary resources can be found by directing private charity towards institutional channels.

Along with abolition of beggary, measures should also be taken to provide for the old and infirm, the orphans, and to relieve the exploitation involved in certain forms of manual labour like rickshaw pulling and handcarts.

The Government of U.P. have introduced a scheme of old-age pensions for persons over seventy who are in indigent circumstances, and made a provision of Rs. 25 lakhs for the purpose in the current year's budget. Even as a gesture, it is valuable, for it gives an assurance to the mass of workers of the Government's interest in their welfare. The possibility of introducing a more broadbased scheme, perhaps on a partially contributory basis, deserves examination, and Government should make immediate arrangements to draw up the blue print for old-age pensions in the State.

As regards rickshaw pullers and handcart pullers, the use of human labour for haulage is distasteful, but is perhaps unavoidable. Abolition of handcarts and rickshaws, by law, will only aggravate the problem of unemployment. But it should be possible to eliminate the element of exploitation involved in this form of labour. Very few of the persons engaged in these occupations own their own vehicles, which they hire at high rates from their owners. A good part of their day's earnings has to be paid as hire to the owner of the vehicle. Government may, as a first step, nationalise handcarts and rickshaws, and gradually take measures for their replacement by other forms of transport and for the provision of alternative employment to the persons now engaged in these occupations. If that is done, it will at least be possible to ensure that the workers get a fair share of the fruits of their toil.

DESTITUTE WOMEN

Along with abolition of beggary, provision should also be made to take care of waifs and strays and the orphans, and destitute women, and to prevent them from falling into the hands of unscrupulous gangs. Homes for destitute women and children should be controlled by a committee of respectable women of good economic and social status, in order to prevent possibility of the abuses which, from time to time, are alleged against such institutions. Conditions regarding economic and social status may be insisted upon for membership of the licensing committee controlling these institutions.

It should be possible to mobilise voluntary effort for these purposes by appealing to the social conscience of the better off classes of society. Voluntary efforts should also be mobilised for a campaign for social education and eradication of illiteracy. Students may be organised to visit villages during the holidays to carry on the campaign.

For these and other honorary works like that of special magistrates, honorary magistrates, etc., plenty of men and women of status will be available if the proper approach is made. But it will be necessary to arouse the enthusiasm of the people and to convince them that something worth while is being attempted to make this country a better place to live in. This should not be regarded as a party affair.

The resettlement of displaced persons is a very big problem in itself, which, it has now been acknowledged, cannot be satisfactorily solved at the State level. Therefore I have not included it in the scope of this article. But it is necessary to keep in mind that no lasting progress will be possible in our efforts to reach the Welfare State, until and unless the task of resettlement of the displaced persons from East Bengal is successfully accomplished.

PLANNING AT STATE LEVEL

I believe that for effective planning and execution of the plans drawn up, there should be a Planning Commission or Board at State level, whose work will be integrated with that of the Central Body. In order to arouse the enthusiasm of the people and to enlist their active co-operation, Planning should start at the base in the villages, thanas and districts and co-ordinated at the higher levels with the plans for other areas. On this reasoning, there should be a planning board not only for Bengal, but for every State in the Union. It will be a mistake to think that this will encourage a limited, parochial outlook in economic matters. On the other hand, there is no other way of co-ordinating economic development of a vast area like India to the mutual advantage of the several distinct economic regions. I may also point out in this connexion that centralisation of planning has not prevented the growth of fissiparous tendencies and agitations over economic issues. Too much of centralisation absolves the units of responsibility on the one hand, and on the other provides a fertile field for the cultivation of grievances. The appointment of planning bodies at State level does not mean that each State will reach out for self-sufficiency. The main function of these bodies will be to take stock of local resources and requirements and to ensure that requirements are equated to supplies, either produced locally or obtained from other States. The existence of State Boards will help to avoid the co-existence of surplus in one area and famine in another, and create the optimum conditions for national development. To take a homely analogy, if each householder keeps the street in front of his house clean, (of course without dumping the refuse on to the neighbour's door step) the whole city could be kept neat and spotless without any special effort on the part of the Corporation. What is required is to create the attitude for co-operative effort.

The establishment of a Welfare State and even the first steps in that direction, will require the concerted efforts of the entire population at all levels. And I hope that the co-operation will be forthcoming in abundant measure, if Dr. B. C. Roy will take the lead and chalk out a programme of social betterment.

INDIA LIVED

and still lives in the villages. Time was when these were self-sufficient in their needs but long foreign rule left them ruined. So the father of the nation stood for "Decentralisation" and "Village uplift". Manindra Mills is humbly following his exhortation and doing yeoman service in Cossimbazar, where its factory is situated. This is an area of economic depression, teeming with hordes of unemployed and East Bengal Refugees. Manindra Mills not only produces cloths at popular prices but also has made provision for many.

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Mills — Cossimbazar, Murshidabad Dist

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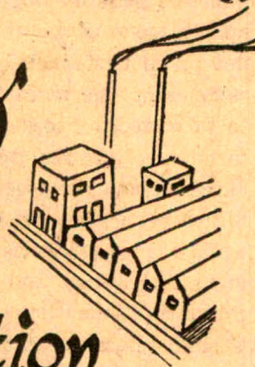

WITHIN the next few weeks, "Bengal Textile Mills" will go into production! Finishing touches are being put to its modern factory, which will produce quality yarn to feed the country's Powerloom, Handloom and Hosiery industries.

Situated at Cossimbazar in Murshidabad Dist. in an area of West Bengal where people, including a large number of East Bengal refugees, are in great distress as they have no means of earning a living. "Bengal Textile" will do yeoman service to the country.

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A VISIT TO THE Agricultural EXHIBITION IN SOVIET RUSSIA

The main pavilion.

By DR. K. BISWAS

M.A., D.Sc. (Edin.), F.R.S.E., F.N.I., F.B.S.,

AFTER the attainment of freedom many a scientist, artist, leader of thought and culture and tourist interested in Indian spiritual culture and natural beauty visited India. During their visits they did not fail to go round India's most ancient and the largest Botanic Garden. The writer during his tenure of service as the Superintendent of the Indian Botanic Garden, Calcutta, came in touch with many famous academicians of U.S.S.R., President, Academy of Arts, trade agents and other personalities from Russia when they visited the Botanic Garden. Stories of the fast development in this what was then generally considered a forbidden land or the land of the so-called iron curtain, roused in my mind a keen interest in this country and the people of the great land of Soviet Russia. Towards the end of July in 1954, I heard to my great joy a rumour that I might be invited to Russia as a representative of India to see the famous All-Union Agricultural Exhibition in U.S.S.R. The rumour came to be true and definite information reached me when I was at the plantations of the Medicinal Plants at Rongo at an elevation of 4,000 ft. bordering Bhutan hills during the end of the month of July. Here for days together incessant downpours created havoc in the foothill region of the eastern Terai. Little rivulets, mountain streams, and tiny water-sheds swelled up. Hill-sides tumbled down uprooting trees and shrubs and carrying masses of debris down hill and choking up the river beds and thereby caused unprecedented floods everywhere. Rushing water of the roaring current washed away villages after villages. When I came down and reached the foothills, I found that the hanging bridge across Murti river suspended at a height of about 30 ft. could only be traced by a few wires at one end. I had to wade through the quagmire and flooded pathways of the dense Kumani reserve forests, crossed over sinking bridges and caught a plane at Grassmare and reached Calcutta on the 1st of August, 1954. A trunk call from Delhi informed me that necessary arrangements had been made with the State Government for my visit to U.S.S.R. as a member of four-man delegation to the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition in U.S.S.R. The party consisted of Shri M. V. Krishnappa, Deputy Minister for Food & Agriculture, Government of India (Leader), Shri R. P. Rawat, Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Government of Uttar Pradesh, Dr. S. M. Sikka, Head of the Division of Botany, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, and myself. Passport with Visa for U.S.S.R. from the Russian Embassy in Delhi, vaccination, travellers' cheques, etc. were all arranged promptly by the Government of India. Armed with President's letter of introduction and our

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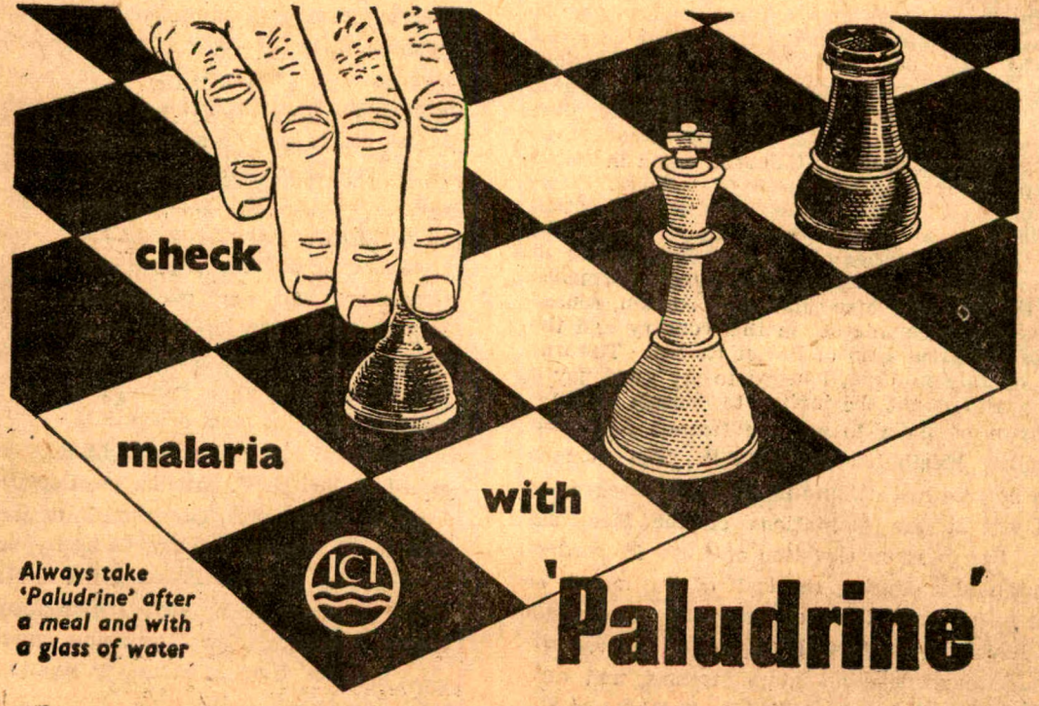
CALCUTTA



Always take 'Paludrine' after a meal and with a glass of water

Imperial Chemical Industries (India) Private Ltd.

IGP 704

great Prime Minister's instructions to our leader, we four left Bombay on the 8th of August, 1954, afternoon for U.S.S.R. in a luxurious plane of Air-India International *en-route* to London. But we were to get down at Rome via Cairo to resume our journey by a Swiss plane and then to be picked up at Prague by a Russian plane to Moscow.

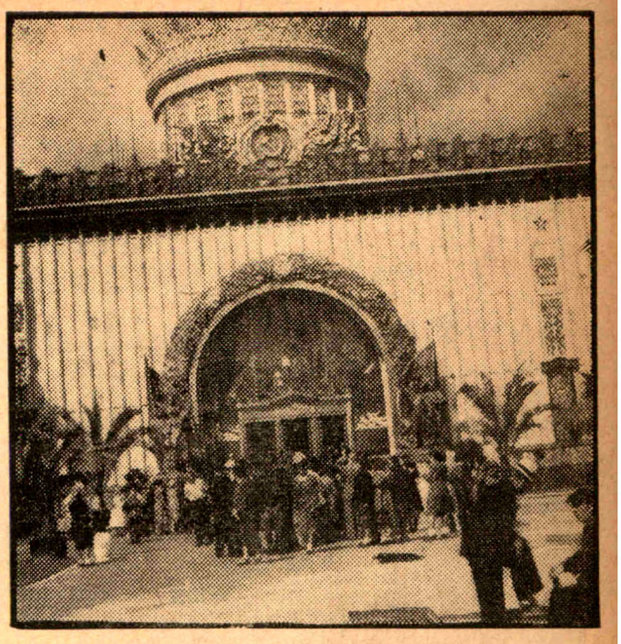
RIGHT ROYAL RECEPTION

Many interesting experiences we had while undergoing custom formalities during our air travel from Cairo to Moscow, particularly at Luvov on the border of the Russian territory. We passed through Zurich, Praha, Moscow, Luvov and Kiev. At Kiev we had a right royal reception by the Russian officials of the Agriculture Department, although we nearly starved while we left Praha without having anything to eat and drink in the plane upto about 1-30 P.M. Nevertheless, we enjoyed rice, chicken curry, delicious fruits and wine from grapes. The food is more or less similar to Indian preparation. There was also the same spontaneous hospitality. Large bouquets were also presented to us all. At Prague we stayed at Hotel Alcicorn and found it very expensive. At Zurich we had wonderful panoramic aerial view of the snow-capped peaks of the Alps and blue water of the lakes here and there. Zurich appeared to be one of the finest towns. Almost every house was decorated with flowers neatly arranged on the verandahs, balconies, and, in fact, all nooks and corners had a patch of colour and it appeared as if the whole town was in a wedding mood.

IN MOSCOW

We reached Moscow at 4-00 P.M. on the 11th August, 1954, and were accommodated in a beautiful hotel — Hotel Metropole. Subsequently, we were shifted to National Hotel. We were all State guests during our stay in Russia. Two interpreters — Miss Luba and Miss Lida attended us all the time. The latter came to India during Baroda Science Congress and called on me at the Botanic Garden with a party of the Russian botanists and forest officers. Comrade Nicholii, an official of the Agricultural Department, always looked after our comfort and made all arrangements for visiting the different sections of the exhibition and other places. During our stay in Moscow for eight days all of us were extremely busy in visiting the different sections of the Agricultural Exhibition and taking notes of every detail. Our leader Mr. M. V. Krishnappa and Mr. R. P. Rawat were busy in studying details of the organisation and working of the Kolkhoz, mechanised agriculture, agricultural inmplements and the social aspect of the life of men and women of Russia. Dr. Sikka and myself were busy in studying agricultural and botanical aspects of the exhibition. Dr. Sikka and the author had a very instructive and amusing experience during our long discussion with the great Comrade Lysinko—Russia's modern plant wizard.

Pavilion of Karelo-Finnish S. S. R.



Pavilion of Ukrainian S. S. R.

EXHIBITION SO VAST & ARTISTIC

The All-Union Agricultural Exhibition in U.S.S.R. is so vast that if one has to study it properly it would take at least one month. Innumerable exhibits in large quantities in each section were arranged artistically showing their gradual evolution and attainment of the best results in the improvement of the cereals, agricultural products including fruits, and vegetables etc. The agricultural exhibition is the permanent exhibition of U.S.S.R. meant for demonstrating achievements of socialist agriculture, the might of the Kolkhoz system, and the unbreak-

able alliance of the working class and the Kolkhoz peasantry, but, at the same time, to serve as an effective means of popularizing and inculcating the attainments of science and the experience of agricultural innovators in Kolkhoz and State-farm economy. The entire architectural aspects of the exhibition was remodelled and reconstructed. Such a gigantic endeavour reflects great credit to the Russian experts on the highest form of architecture in the construction of the various buildings, laying out of the roads, gardens, fountains, fruit gardens, vegetable gardens, animal sheds, and so on and so forth. It is really a marvellous achievement of human endeavour in the modern days. Within the boundary of the exhibition a panoramic beauty is presented with artistic water-areas, fountains, lakes, etc. covering an area of about 20 to 30 acres. There are 307 pavilions connected with miles and miles long asphalt roads, gravel roads, path-ways, lanes, trolleybus lines along the boundary, and every possible arrangement has been made for easy movement of every vehicle without causing any congestion or crowd. Accommodation for about one hundred thousand visitors and free and comfortable movements for men, women and children have been made. When a visitor passes through the main entrance, he cannot but be amazed with the magnificent architectural and decorating schemes displayed in full harmony with the massive structures of the different pavilions of the different States of Russia. The sculpture of a strong, healthy and beautiful tractor driver and a Kolkhoz woman holding overhead a sheaf of golden wheat, is a significant embodiment of the creative labour of the socialist agricultural workers.

RECTION COSTS RS. 50 CRORES

This is the third agricultural exhibition in U.S.S.R. during the Communist Party's regime. The construction of the exhibition started in 1950 and was completed in 1954. It took more than three years to bring it into its proper form. The cost for the erection of this exhibition is 485 million roubles (1 rouble = Rs. 1/3/-), that is about 500 million rupees. The total area of exhibition covers about 11.497 acres of land. 76 pavilions designed by prominent Soviet architects were artistically laid out in four main sections, namely, (i) the main pavilion consisting of 16 Union Republics and 12 pavilions representing different sections of Russian federations; (ii) the plant-growing section where various crops were displayed; (iii) the live-stock section where the activities of the expert breeders of cattle, horses, sheep, pigs, poultry and fur animals in addition to various wild lives were on show; and (iv) the most impressive was the mechanization and electrification of agriculture section with various models of motor tractors. A large building, that is, ice-cream house which was constructed and designed as a huge mountain covered with frozen ice provided beautiful accommodation for the ice-cream lovers to enjoy delicious ice-cream.

0 FT. HIGH PAVILION

The main pavilion with its colossal structure with about 350 ft. high minaret crowned with a golden star is the most elegant of all the pavilions which can be seen from a distance of miles and miles away and makes a deep impression in the minds of everyone visiting the exhibition. Inside, the walls and panels were profusely covered with paintings, sculptures, photographs, drawings of various types showing the gradual development of agriculture, diagrams, documents indicating the advancement in collective farming, mural paintings showing the human activities, social customs and culture of various peoples of Russia. From almost ceiling to the floor full-sized Stalin and Lenin's figures depicting their keen interest in the welfare of the Nation are painted in the most inspiring lively manner. One entering in such a pavilion feels as if men and women were actually talking with each other.

Pavilion of Mechanization and Electrification of Agriculture. Fragment of the main facade.

In the central hall of the pavilion were depicted in magnificent paintings and relief work almost on all sides the historical events in the life of the Nation which makes a deep impression of the Soviet people struggling to attain peace and plenty for the humanity throughout the world. The figures given below indicate the approximate increase in production of milk, meat, grain, potatoes etc. in U.S.S.R.

Milk	..	1926-27	..	4.3 million tons.
		1952-53	..	13.2 ,, ,,
Grain	..	1926-27	..	10.3 million tons.
		1952-53	..	40.4 ,, ,,
Meat	..	1926-27	..	2.4 million tons.
		1952-53	..	5.0 ,, ,,
Potatoes	..	1926-27	..	3.0 million tons.
		1952-53	..	12.5 ,, ,,

Breeding fishes from the flowing water representing mountain currents gives a unique picture where the fishes are seen swimming freely in the blue flowing water. Increase of production of various kinds of edible fishes as shown in this section was most astounding.

MOST PICTURESQUE SECTION

The plant-growing section is unusually picturesque. Here about 108.724 acres of land are occupied by 16 branch pavilions: Farming, Grain, Cotton, Flax and Hemp, Sugar Beets, Potatoes and other Vegetables, Forestry, Water Economy, Oil-Bearing and Other Industrial Crops, Fruit-Growing, Gardening, Viticulture, Silk, Apiculture, Floriculture, Peat, and Hydrometeorology. Artificial cotton field of

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A Pseudonym

By PHANI BHUSAN MAITRA

A gripping story of love between a young man and a girl who were irresistibly drawn towards each other but the girl's fear that marriage might break her invalid father's heart stood in the way of their union.

AS the curtain rises on the scene Miss Namita Maitro, the unpretentious heroine of this story, is seen moving about among the pictures on display at the annual All India Exhibition of Arts and Crafts being held at the Museum. The place is literally bursting with bustling humanity—a heterogeneous crowd consisting of people of all ages and belonging to different strata of society.

A slim, swarthy maiden of some one score two summers, she has rather a longish face with an aquiline nose beneath two large, black pools for eyes.

Of course to try to visualize the girl with any amount of precision from the scrappy details given above would, most probably, be for the readers an abortive attempt; but, then, most of them being more or less familiar with young Bengali girls with similar, if not identical, figures and features, the best they can do in the circumstance, is to pick up one out of their acquaintances who comes closest to the description.

* * * *

Namita looks jaded.

Probably she has come to the exhibition straight from her place of employment. So the impress left by the stress and strain of long hours of cheerless drudgery at the office desk is still markedly visible on her calm, sad face.

She has besides an apparent air of distant aloofness about her. As she flits about listlessly among the superb specimens of exquisite art—paintings and sketches and etchings—and stands indifferently sometimes in front of a magnificent masterpiece by some renowned artist, at others, a splendid achievement by a young aspirant as yet unrecognised and unknown to fame and fortune, not one seems to arrest her eyes or arouse the least curiosity in her. Accordingly, though she carries in her hand a catalogue she has purchased only a short while ago from the office for a couple of rupees, she hardly ever feels like opening it and turning, for the better appreciation of a picture, to the explanatory exposition of the exhibit given in it against its number of entry.

By accident or by design two young men have been, for some time, keeping her company. Wherever she is, they are beside her or behind her.

So, naturally, Namita cannot, for this close proximity of presence, willy-nilly, help hearing occa-

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VISIT TO SOVIET RUSSIA

(Continued From Page 220)

Ukrain and cotton harvesting by mechanical means is a unique exhibit.

On the demonstration plots of the Vegetable, Flower and Fruit Section there have been planted about two thousand sorts of grain, industrial, vegetable and other crops.

The Livestock Section has 79 pavilions. It covers about 98.84 acres of land. All the productive breeds of agricultural animals are gathered here. The Exhibition has a demonstration arena for the four-footed inhabitants of this section. There are also model livestock buildings and a model stock-breeding and veterinary station.

A considerable part of the Exhibition is occupied by the Section of Mechanization and Electrification with its colossal pavilion, MTS model estate, field-brigade camp, and other structures. On an area of about 43.2425 acres the Mechanization has 41 structures.

THE RECREATION ZONE

Finally, there is the recreation zone with its restaurants, cafes, tea-rooms, and its shops and entertainment pavilions covering in all about 67.9525 acres of land. It abounds in verdure, flower-beds, picturesque nooks, and places of rest.

The pavilion has 9 vast halls, the central one being dedicated to the Constitution of the Soviet Union. It is covered by a dome and is 31 metres high. The frieze beneath the dome is adorned with the emblems of the Union Republics. The halls are finished in marble and are decorated with sculptures, bas-reliefs, and paintings. The best Soviet artists took part in decorating them.

In the halls of the main Pavilion are shown the historic transformations brought about by the Great October Socialist Revolution, the success of the Soviet people in building socialism, and the struggle of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. for peace and for building communism in their land.

Fountains in Central Square, the water reservoir in Mechanization Square, and the Wheat-Ear Fountain at the upper pond are important contributions to the Exhibition's architecture. The Friendship of the Soviet Peoples Fountain and the Stone Flower Fountain are real masterpieces. The former is situated in front of the main Pavilion. The area of its reservoir is 4,000 square metres. Dressed in red granite, it is ornamented by the gilded bronze figures of 16 collective-farm girls representing the 16 Republics of the Soviet Union. The girls seem to be dancing in a ring round a colossal gold sheaf. Eight hundred streams beat from the fountain, and the water constantly changes its pattern and colour.

A KINGDOM OF FLOWERS

Rose, flaming red cannas, gladiolus, begonia, phlox, gillyflower, aster, and peony make the Exhibition look like a garden in full bloom. About five million flowers have been planted on the lawns of the parterre of squares and avenues. Rose varieties alone number 30,000 shrubs, and there are 500 standard rose shrubs. A real kingdom of flowers ! And the flowers, with their magnificent forms and delicate shades of colour, have been made to blend harmoniously with the architecture of the pavilions and the other buildings.

It is rightly concluded in the book on "U.S.S.R. Agricultural Exhibition—Moscow"—one copy of which was presented to each of us with a Souvenir of Russian gold watch and other presents, that "The permanent U.S.S.R. Agricultural Exhibition is an integral part of Moscow, the capital of our Motherland. It reflects the political and economic might of the Soviet Union, the great progress made by agriculture, and the constantly improving cultural standards of the Soviet People.

"The U.S.S.R. Agricultural Exhibition is a vivid example of the great friendship of the peoples of the U.S.S.R., of their great endeavour to consolidate the happiness of their Motherland, of their struggle for world peace."

We went to Leningrad by train and had glimpses of the agricultural villages from the train in the early morning. It is more or less like the villages of other European countries. The pasture land for the cattle, the village homes, the dairy, the poultry, all are of the same type as one sees in Northern European countries. Fields for cultivation of wheat, rye, barley and other cereals, beat fields wherein men and women were seen at work, gave us the same impression as we had later on in Finland, Sweden, Holland, Denmark, Germany and England.

LENINGRAD WONDERS

In Leningrad we stayed in Hotel Astoria. During our two-day visit to Leningrad, we were taken round almost all the interesting places with the old and famous Leningrad Botanic Garden and its Herbarium and the Botanical Institute, which is also the institute for the post-graduate teaching in Systematic Botany with 50 students. Peter's house, Czar's palace etc. are worth-visiting here. In the Czar's palace there is a vault underneath where we were admitted as special visitors and saw the unique collections of ornaments which are said to be as old as 5,06,000 B.C. These were discovered from excavation in the Ural Zone. The ornaments worn by a rich lady in those days compare very well with the ornaments used to be worn by our women folk in olden days.

The mausoleum containing bodies of Lenin and Stalin are preserved in their most natural state. The bodies laid down side by side on a high pedestal bordered with black marble cannot fail to make a deep and everlasting impression, and inspire respect and reverence in the minds of those who visit this *Samadhi* of the two great heroes of the Soviet people.

CORDIAL RECEPTION EVERYWHERE

During our stay in Russia and other European countries we were cordially received. We felt that India has at last taken her rightful and honourable place in the comity of Nations. This has undoubtedly been possible through our Prime Minister Shri Jawaharlal Nehru whose name was on the lips of all we met in Russia and other countries of Europe. Our most sincere and grateful thanks are due to the Russian people for their overwhelming hospitality, the reception given to us, and last but not least the opportunities and facilities offered for studying the great U.S.S.R. Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow and witnessing the remarkable advancement made not only in agriculture, but also in various other fields.

A PSEUDONYM

(Continued From Page 221)

sionally what they talk between themselves in agitated undertones.

"Surely you don't believe,—do you?"—She overhears one of them commenting disparagingly to his friend, "that it's only the pictures that people come here for.....Why, I can easily pick you up hundreds and hundreds of such silly mannequins as have come solely to parade themselves in their fashionable finery before packed houses.....Then there are lots of others to whom these exhibitions serve merely as trysting places for clandestine meetings with their sweethearts. Well, as for the rest, you may safely take my word for it that most of them are no more than mere slaves of fashion, and fashion demands that they visit such shows."

"Hush, hush, my dear crack-pot, please don't be cackling so loudly, or she might hear you," his friend quickly admonishes him under his breath. "You are offended," he then proceeds to remonstrate with him, "simply because the girl would not pay your picture the attention it merited.....But surely I need hardly remind you that a true artist is above such pettiness.....Your business is just to conceive and execute a piece of Art.....It's done and your part of the job's finished. How the public receive it.....well, what do you care? They may respond to it favourably or otherwise as they please.... They may, if they so will, swarm round it like bees round a honey-pot, or pass it by without so much as casting a glance at it—if you are the artist you profess to be, you are unconcerned either way....Well, well, that's just enough of it, and now we had better mind what we've come here for....Have you, by the way, noticed a nice profile? Oh, it's simply topping!"

"Yes, I have.....But, then.....Look here, what's biting me at this moment is the vexed question—to do, or not to do.....I can't for the life of me make up my mind if I should put the vermilion mark on the forehead of the figure in my portrait at the parting of the hair, or leave it as it is.....Well, now, honestly, how do you think about it?"

The worries of the artist and the solution his friend ultimately offers him for his relief, interest Namita but little.....She leaves them to themselves, and steps out on the adjoining verandah on the southern side of the building, overlooking a tiny patch of green, velvety lawn.

Altogether a new sort of landscape now meets her eyes.....It is Nature's own handiwork.

With its trunk leaning slightly forward in its blind craving for a fairer share of warm sunshine there stands in front of her an unfamiliar tree of some unknown species at the farther end of the compound. As she gazes and gazes at it with unwinking eyes, her hands resting idly on the wooden rail of the balustrade, Namita notices how the soft glow of the setting sun, sinking in an ocean of colours, caresses lovingly, before finally parting for the night the green of its long and spreading leaves, and how they blush scarlet at this longing lingering kiss of their passionate lover.....In sweet languor they lie inert, dreaming placidly.

It is not for the first time that she witnesses this sacred communion between heaven and earth in the calm setting of a tranquil evening. On the last several occasions she visited this annual exhibition, she invariably came out to this identical spot and feasted her eyes on this identical love-scene. It had been a source of perennial joy to her, and each time she saw it, she was thrilled. But there is just ever so little a difference between the past and the present. The kindred soul that then stood beside her and shared her delight, is not there now by her side.

Apparently this minor detail is of but little significance no doubt, but actually there is more than meets the eyes.

For, not only the young man is not there, he is nowhere in her vicinity; and though they are employed in adjoining offices, how far have they drifted away from each other....The limitless expanse of the seven seas now separates these two residents of the same locality.

* * * *

It was here at this very exhibition that Namita first picked up acquaintance with her young man two years ago.

Barely a couple of days had elapsed since the opening of the exhibition and the ceaseless stream of visitors had not as yet, shown signs of ebbing when Namita took a few hours off from office with the knowledge and permission of her boss for a pleasant evening at the Art show. Earlier she had made an appointment with one or two of her girl friends and they were to have accompanied her to it. But as they ultimately preferred the movies to such motionless pictures they failed her at the last moment.

Still Namita would not be shaken from her resolve. She knew perfectly well that though fundamentally static in nature, a true piece of Art could rise to any occasion and be powerfully suggestive of dynamic motion to the perception of a discerning observer.

Fortunately she was amply rewarded for her pains, and all unexpectedly, she came upon such a real rarity....It was a picture of a sea in storm, done in a wealth of loud colours, by a modern artist of talent whom she adored. The man usually revelled in brilliant pigments, and was an accredited topper in his particular line.

As she stood absorbed before the picture, scanning its subtleties critically, suddenly the catalogue dropped to the floor from her inert fingers, and before she could make any move to recover it a young man in mid-twenties, who was drinking the same delight as she, instantly picked it up for her.

"Thanks....much obliged!" softly murmured the girl, apologetically, as she accepted his services.

"Much obliged, indeed.....only it's rather the other way round, though," gallantly retorted the youth with a sly grin. "Surely I should be thankful to you for this proud privilege."

Namita smiled back at this merry pleasantry.

"If I have placed you right, you are not a total stranger to me," the man fell in steps with the girl as she moved on from one picture to another, and kept up the conversation that had accidentally sprung up between them. "Guess, you are an Income Tax employee.....And, you'd invariably be coming to office by the 9-20 tram from somewhere in Kalighat locality.....Isn't it so?"

"Yes, so it is, indeed," she assented, laughing. Then to reciprocate the genial gesture of cordiality of her companion she counter-questioned him, "Didn't I sometimes see you in the same car?"

"Ah, the unspeakable shame of it!" the man mimicked mock despair like a skilled play-actor. "Oh yes, you saw me all right no doubt; but it was perhaps once in a blue moon or thereabout....God

overhead is my witness if to be in time for office you should not see me daily.....Alas, the proverbial Late Latif that I'm always behind time for anything I am about."

The girl was immensely amused.

"Would'nt it be better to go to the cool passage outside just for a breath of fresh air?" presently he invited her. "In, here, it's so stuffy."

The prospect of a brief respite from the stifling atmosphere of the densely-crowded rooms was highly welcome to the girl.....She obliged him readily.

* * * *

Together they came out and stood on this very spot in front of the banisters. Only on this first occasion they stood decently apart as decorum demanded, and maintained this respectable distance between them throughout the meeting.

"Now that I come to think of it, how curious indeed are the ways of modern society! .....We saw each other so often, still we were not on speaking terms.....Don't you think it's more primitive than civilized", he sneered caustically....."If rare luck had not but intervened the way it did, and the catalogue dropped from your hand....."

"You call it luck!" Namita asked shyly, flattered.

"Most assuredly I do," the young man asserted with emphasis. "Of course I have a writer-friend, though," he then added as an after-thought—"a diehard realist—who would not believe in fate having any hand in human affairs.....If he were to spin a yarn around us, he would surely have represented it as a deliberate act done with an ulterior and none-too-honest motive."

"Far from it," Namita blushed pink, and protested vehemently. "That's never true.... But then why should this friend of yours write anything about us at all?"

"Never mind about that.....He would, I'm sure, require but little persuasion to oblige us..... He has moreover an embarrassing way of portraying persons in his stories he is fairly familiar with."

"How awfully impudent!" Namita pretended to be shocked....Then as the inkling of an idea suddenly dawned upon her, she hazarded, "Could it be that you are, by any chance, this imaginary writer you have concocted on the spot?"

A broad smile spread over his face from ear to ear.

"Oh no, no, 'pon my life, no.....I am usually a reader.....May be, I occasionally discourse on the books I read,....and once in a while even go to the length of criticising one or two of them....But catch me writing, you never would....In short, I plead guilty to any charge but dabbling in penmanship."

His stout disavowal sounded unconvincing to her, and Namita's suspicions were not dispelled.

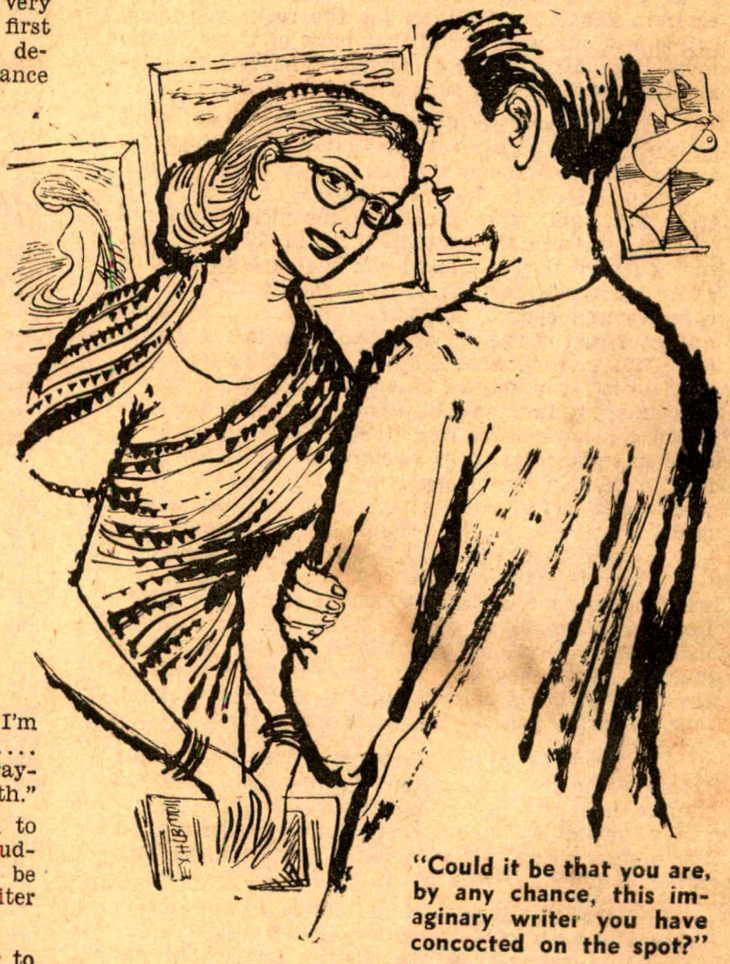
"But," he continued in the same light vein as before, "how long are we going to drag it on, this one-sided conversation I mean?....I've been doing all the talking all the time, and you have been keeping mum throughout....An admirable instance of division of labour, indeed....one giving the tongue and the other the ears...." Then suddenly he grew serious and added after a pause, "Don't you think that by now we should have mutually exchanged our names and addresses?"

Namita politely gave him her name.

"Namita!.....Oh, splendid!.....Splendid and unique!.....How well it goes with your disposition!" He at once grew warm and exuberant....."But it shames me, all the more, into silence by its sweet expression of modest humility."

"It's neither here nor there what it expresses .....Well, what's yours, now?"

"It's unfortunately Rajyeswar Dutta....A more miserable misfit in this age of democracy could hardly be conceived....Of course I am not to blame



"Could it be that you are, by any chance, this imaginary writer you have concocted on the spot?"

for it....It's an imposition, and not an adoption. My parents, in their fond affection, saddled me with this glaring incongruity in my infancy."

* * * *

This chance acquaintance between the two young people rapidly grew into a warm and close intimacy. They would now daily meet after office hours and spend some time in chatting together merrily. The venue of the tete-a-tete was usually some secluded spot in the Eden Gardens, or on the bank of the adjoining river, or in the vicinity of the Lake. Even a lone corner in one of the countless big and small wayside restaurants would admirably suit them. The subjects they discussed at these meetings nearly covered the entire field of human knowledge. They talked Art, Literature, Science, Politics, or Philosophy or whatever else took their

fancy, and talked for the mere pleasure of it than for any progressive advancement of learning.

A full year thus passed swiftly by, and the annual exhibition opened again at the Museum. Every evening they visited the show together, and every evening, after they had done with the pictures, they would come out and stand on this very spot discussing what they had seen. In their estimation of values of the masterpieces which was particularly their own they often struck the names of many a renowned artist off the roll of true talents and incorporate in it those of comparative new-comers who were as yet indifferent strangers to the public.

One day Rajyeswar resolved to leave the beaten path and introduce an intimately personal theme into the conversation.

"Curiously enough I have, of late, ceased to feel ashamed of my name," he put out his feelers warily.

"Really?....But why so, pray?" Namita asked innocently.

"Because only recently I have come to learn of a strange land — or, have I discovered it? — in which monarchy holds its sway to this day....And, people do not resent it either."

What these preliminaries were heading for was now plain to the girl; but she would not admit as much.

"There's hardly anything remarkable about it, is there?" She countered in assumed artlessness. She took his words literally, and ignored what he intended to imply. "Surely there's no dearth of countries where despotic monarchism even now rides rough-shod over the people.....Of course the appearance is in most cases that of benign democracy though."

"Look it square in the face, Miss," the cunning pretence of the girl exasperated him. "I'm not referring to this country or that. The land I'm speaking of....."

"Please don't get vulgar," Namita interrupted him hastily.

"Vulgar or not vulgar, let me first say what I must," Rajyeswar persisted. "It's the United Kingdom of Hearts with an ideal Government which might truly be styled in imitation of the famous words of the illustrious Apostle of Freedom, Government of two people, by two people and for two people—and they are the queen, its supreme administrative head at the helm of affairs, and her devoted consort.....There's no third soul to rule, or be ruled over."

Then after a brief interlude when he spoke again, he was a changed man, totally transformed by the touch of some invisible magic wand....His voice was now thick with emotion, and there was an air of pathetic appeal about his manners.

"Namita, darling, how long more are we going to wait before you are mine?" He cast off his cloak of jovial frivolity, and out came from behind the thirsting lover that he truly was.

But the girl refused to reciprocate this melodramatic outburst; she would curb it if she could.

"Ah, your gift of the gab doesn't seem to help you much now....Where's your funny play on words, eh?" She laughed softly, and scoffed.

"Namita, darling, how long more are we going to wait before you are mine?"

No responsive smile now lit up the features of this love-distraught wooer. "You haven't answered me yet, dearest", he pointed out gravely.

"Have I not already told you all there was to be said about it?" Namita whispered to excuse herself.

That was indeed undeniably true. In between the learned academic discussions on Art and Literature they had been having for a year now, they had been fully apprised by each other of the state of affairs in their respective homes.

* * * *

Namita's father was an orthodox Brahmin, both in principle and in practice. Of course extreme poverty and utter helplessness otherwise had forced him to allow his girl to graduate and to pick up a job afterwards, still that was perhaps the utmost limit to his concessions and no further would he go. So it could never be conceived in the wildest of imagination that he would ever countenance an inter-caste marriage for his daughter.

Moreover, though Namita had, as essentially required in such cases, introduced her young man to her father, the latter could never bring himself to like him.

His excuses were many and varied.

Rajyeswar was so conceited, the old man would complain, one of the sort of know-all young men so commonly found these days....He thought a world of himself....Besides, as to his dress and manners there was so much to be desired.

But the girl knew only too well to be deceived by this eyewash. He might stoutly deny it and con-

tend that he knew a host of such people as were Kayasthas and yet quite decent folk, still it was a fact that simply because the man on whom she lavished her virgin's affections happened to be outside their fold, and an inferior to them in caste, he would not find favour with him. But whatever it was, loving considerations for an infirm old man with one foot in the grave held her completely tongue-tied. She would not, though sorely tempted to do so, utter a single word of protest or remonstrance.

He was a decrepit invalid, Namita's father. The ill-fated widower had been for sometime past suffering from a bad type of chronic heart disease. The physician attending on him feared that anything might happen any moment without even a timely warning to the patient or to his relatives.

In these circumstances he was naturally forced to depend on her wholly to feed and clothe them all ....Namita was the sole bread-earner of the family.

Still, she never doubted for a moment that if she ran counter to his desire and profaned any respected, age-old social practice, the obstinate stickler for rigid and uncompromising adherence to custom would stubbornly refuse to accept another farthing from her. He would sooner starve with his three minor children....It was the tenderest spot in her heart.

The other side of the picture was as dismal, and Rajyeswar's share of worries and anxieties was not any the less. He had his old parents, his brother's widow with her children and a grown-up unmarried sister, the sore head-ache of this indigent family.

The girl was, if anything, at least a year older than Namita in age, darker in complexion and less comely of features. Besides, having read only upto Class VII or VIII of a high school she had scraped up but scanty education. Accordingly, so far as looks and accomplishments went, she was rather poorly equipped. It was small wonder then that she was, unlike the other girl, as hopelessly unequal to securing a respectable job and earning an independent livelihood, as she was to picking up a partner of life out of her few acquaintances. In fact, any young man would have been as welcome to her as any other if only he condescended to have her for his wife. But such a prospective groom for such an unassuming girl had not as yet been found.

Rajyeswar's father came to the rescue of his son with a potential solution—and, this was perhaps the only one in the circumstances—of this knotty and baffling problem.

"Why don't you marry, sonnie?" he would ask him reproachfully. "If you accepted any one of the offers I have on hand, the dowry might well come handy in getting the girl wedded and having done with her once for all."

Of course if he had but nodded his head ever so little and given in as became an obliging son, it might not have been his lot, as often happens in juvenile story-books, to be blessed with a divinely beautiful princess together with a half-share in her father's kingdom, still an indifferently educated pretty girl with a few ornaments and some cash, say to the tune of some seven or eight hundred rupees or thereabout, would not have been altogether wanting.

Whenever the members of the household discussed a proposal for her brother's marriage the eyes of the girl lit up and shone in joyous expectation, and each time Rajyeswar invariably summarily dismissed it, they grew dim and misty in frustration. As her brother watched this pained look of helpless disappointment and dumb despair which so vividly reflected, as on the shining surface of a polished mirror, the tumultuous feelings surging in her maiden's breast, his heart ached acutely for her.

Though the two girls were so different from each other in every other respect, he often wondered in his mind, still how strangely similar were their eyes. They were as calm and black and passionate in one as in the other, and stored boundless love in their fathomless depths.

* * * *

If Rajyeswar married Namita and got no money for it the fondest hopes of his father he had so long cherished at heart, would be shattered, and he would incur his intense displeasure. But he sincerely hoped that whatever his first reactions might be, the old man could be finally persuaded, with the help of solid facts and figures, to see reason and to realise that what on the surface appeared as a loss to him was, in the ultimate analysis, an undoubted gain in reality. "For," he would point out to him, "even if the money is not available all at a time, we are no losers by any computation. The earnings of the bride would enrich our slender coffers by Rs. 150|- every month, and the initial loss would, in no time, be compensated for many times over....Moreover, if we judiciously laid by this extra income, very shortly the accumulated savings would amply suffice to meet all the expenses of sister's marriage."

It should not be presumed for a moment that Rajyeswar actually intended what he said. Because that would be doing the cruellest injustice conceivable to the near and dear ones of the girl....If they were thus deprived of their only income they would be virtually abandoned to unspeakable misery and stark starvation....It was simply to propitiate an angry parent and to tide over his first outburst of wrath at a marriage thrust upon him against his will that he had paraded all these rosy potentialities.

Having something up his sleeve the young man was not afraid that he would at all be very seriously

handicapped if he went without her money. For, he firmly believed that if anybody was sufficiently clever and really intent on making some additional money over and above his pay, he could easily do it in a thousand and one ways. He had secretly resolved that directly they were man and wife they would take up a part-time job or a private tuition or burn the midnight oil for a few days and devote themselves to writing notes on text-books. If this extra labour did not fetch them anything equal to what Namita earned every month as emolument at office, still he was confident that in a year at the longest he would have the funds necessary for his purpose.

"I don't however see why we need be wedded before we did it," Namita drew his attention to the aspect of the question he had overlooked. "We might very well have pursued it now."

"Can it be that you don't really understand ?" he retorted irritably. "I am on tenterhooks . . . So long as I'm not married and all his fond hopes are set at rest for good and all my father won't give me the briefest respite for a moment". The utter coldness of the girl towards what he was impatient for, offended him terribly.

"Ah, there you remind me . . . I've my father, too, to think of . . . you know he is an invalid, is my dad—tottering on the brink of the grave. Wouldn't our wedding break his heart ?" She asked in real concern. "Surely the poor dear hasn't many more days to live."

To press his point further in the face of such genuine apprehensions would have appeared shamelessly selfish of him. So Rajyeswar discreetly left it at that for the moment.

* * * *

Some six months ago the curtain was finally rung down on the concluding scene of this drama.

One afternoon Rajyeswar came to see Namita at her office after the closing hour. He looked excited.

"I'd like to have a few words with you," he said gravely, and invited her to come with him.

This air of seriousness about him at first tickled the girl. Surely it was not the first time he had something to tell her, she thought, and laughed within herself.

Side by side they walked for some distance in silence. Then as they came upon a lonely spot they sat down on the grass together.

"Do you know what Gita's been up to lately ?" He plunged straight into the subject and asked abruptly in his impatience.

"How should I ? . . . Well, what's it ?"

"It's obnoxious and hateful . . . Govinda Sil is a do-nothing loafer of our locality . . . Gita's been for some time past exchanging love-letters with this scum of society . . . You know what usually happens when a thing like this is out ?. . . .Not only the co-tenants we live with are poking fun at us, but all the vile tongues of the entire neighbourhood have started wagging viciously . . . Father's furious . . . 'If she walks in the wake of her brother she's but little to blame for it,'—is all he would say about it in pithy sarcasm."

"Is he really as bad as that, this chap, Govinda, I mean ?" She asked in whispers.

"He's worse.....A notorious rascal addicted to all sorts of dopes and vices."

"I'm so sorry."

"No, you are not." All his pent-up emotions hissed out in an angry stream. "Had you cared a fig for the peace and prestige of our family you would have listened to me long ago".

"But how could I ?" Namita pleaded apologetically, "There's dad . . ."

"Dad, dad, dad !" The merest mention of her father who had so long stood between him and his beloved was like the last straw on the camel's back . . . Blinded by uncontroliable passion he overstepped the bounds of propriety and decorum and shouted, "How long is that selfish geezer going to shelter you under his wings ?"

This gross disrespect struck the girl dumb for a few moments. Her big, black eyes flashed fire as she speechlessly fixed him with a steadfast stare.

"That depends". At last she found her tongue, and replied with calm severity. "Still, the longer he keeps me away from the clutches of people like you the better and luckier would it be for me."

Her voice was harsh and grating.

A stony silence now fell on the couple. Without another word they presently got up and parted from each other.

* * * *

Days rolled into weeks and weeks into months, still none of them would be the first to come forward to make it up with the other. If ever they accidentally met in trams and buses they were as perfect strangers to each other as they had been before their acquaintance—or, more distant still if that were possible.

The pleasant episode was apparently over. The light that had shone to shed lustre and warmth on their drab and cheerless lives, had gone out. Seemingly they looked upon it as natural and inevitable and accepted it with stoic indifference.

Ere long fresh proposals for Rajyeswar's marriage began pouring in daily, but Namita was unmoved.

Her chief concern now was one Sudhir Lahiri—a doctor with foreign qualifications. He was a charming young man of amiable disposition. He was some sort of a distant relation of the family, besides.

Namita's father was eager for a closer tie to link them up, and Sudhir Lahiri was willing to meet him half way.

But the girl herself was not as yet prepared for it. She had asked for a few days time in which to do a bit of heart-searching before she finally decided one way or the other.

* * * *

"Please, Miss, it's time we closed for the night." A bearer in livery steps up to her, and informs her politely.

Namita is startled out of her brown study.

She blushes to the tips of her ears as she wakes

up to what she has been about. The shame and folly of it ! . . . . . "I won't be a minute," she tells him hastily.

The rooms are all deserted save for a few menials. The middle-aged officer-on-duty is arranging the files and papers on his big table. As she approaches him, he pushes a black-looking, longish register towards her.

"Would you mind putting down your name in it ?" He invites her with ill-assumed grace, and then adds, "Really, I wonder what people come here for. If it were the pictures . . ."

Her face flushed at this thinly-veiled insinuation of the man.

At the sight of the Visitors' Book in which men and women attending the exhibition entered their names and addresses, Namita receives a rude jolt. On previous occasions whenever she came to this picture show there had been Rajyeswar with her, and together they signed the register, one below the other. But now it is to be her signature alone.

Suddenly the shadow of a possibility crosses her mind. Can it be that he too has visited the exhibition alone as she ?

With impatient fingers she turns over the pages of the Visitors' Book and hurriedly runs her eyes over the names.

But the one she hungers to cast eyes on, is not there.

Like a flash of lightning a strange resolve takes possession of her . . . If there is no Rajyeswar, there would be no Namita as well.

"Why should she," the girl argues excitedly in her mind, "leave any shameful evidence in black and white of her disgraceful humiliation ? Why should her signature bear undeniable testimony to the fact that she came here, perhaps, on the off chance, to meet Rajyeswar, perhaps, if possible, to bridge the gulf that separated them, or, perhaps, God willing, to renew the sweet intimacy that had been the only joy and solace of their care-laden lives . . . ."

"If you'd at all sign, please be quick about it," the man with specs on his nose breaks in upon her reverie. "What's there in the Book to pore over so, really beats me."

Pen in hand, Namita hesitates just for a fraction of a moment. Then boldly and firmly she writes down the name of a girl friend at office—the first that comes to her mind.

She signs Sivani Roy.

"Thanks, thanks, Miss, much obliged, indeed . . . To think how queerly people behave now-a-days ! . . . Only last evening a young gentleman in trousers and vest turned up at this very table.....He stood committing to memory all the names there were in the register. But as I frowned and looked at him sternly, he left in a flurry....He even forgot to sign his own name . . . What strange specimens of humanity we usually come across in shows like these !"

In an instant Namita is on the tip-toe of curiosity. "What did he look like exactly ?" She asked breathlessly.

"Excuse me, Miss, if I can't oblige you . . . Thousands of people visit this exhibition daily . . . If I were to remember them all by their features and describe them accurately, I'm undone."

He motions to the bearers to close the doors and windows of the rooms.

As Namita descends the stairs her heart aches acutely for remorse.

"Could it be," she thinks bitterly, "that the same fond hope as has drawn her to this exhibition, had as well dragged him hither ? . . . Could it be that he, too, like herself, had been constantly on the lookout for a beloved face to catch his anxious gaze? Had he examined exhaustively the long columns of names to find out one he held dearest to his heart ?"

Namita is painfully aware that all her guesses might be no more than the wishful thinking of a love-lorn girl....There was nothing positive to prove any of them. But then what was there to testify to her having been there, either ?

The author of this short story is

NARENDRA NATH MITRA

and not Phani Bhusan Maitra as mentioned on the opening page. The English rendering from original Bengali has been done by Sri Maitra.

"If you'd at all sign, please be quick about it", the man with specs on his nose breaks in upon her reverie.

Spotlight On Sport

By PEARSON SURITA

IT has naturally been a matter of great satisfaction for me to realise that the series of interviews with Sports stalwarts, which I have been conducting on behalf of *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, has been received with much interest and provided large numbers of lovers of games with much food for thought. At the same time, what these renowned sportsmen, old and new, have had to say has caused some consternation in certain circles but that was only to be expected and I am glad that there has been such reaction for the simple reason that nothing but good, good for Sport and the sportsmen of Bengal, can come out of it.

You will have observed that, but for minor contradictions here and there, all those to whom I have spoken appear unanimous in their delineation that much is wrong with Football, the game to which we have restricted ourselves so far, in this great city. We have too long blinded ourselves to this fact; those who might have driven it home by their writings and speeches, with one or two exceptions, have preserved a strange silence. It has therefore been necessary for these sportsmen, whom I have brought to the pages of the daily press, to speak fearlessly as they have played, in their times. Some of them, respected figures in the hearts of all of us, have been, subsequently, the targets of verbal attacks but that only proves that the shafts have gone home and that certain people in control of Sports here are most uncomfortable under the glare of the spotlight that these veterans and others have turned upon them.

WHAT'S TO BE DONE?

Leaving personalities, however, out of it, what has been brought home is that the control and prosecution of Football is in a very sorry state. The bottom drawer has been opened and all the dirty linen placed on view. One question remains: what are we going to do about it? The Association, referees, spectators, players, all have been brought under fire and so at this stage, perhaps, and for the guidance of those who will appear in the columns of *Amrita Bazar Patrika* as the weeks go on, a few comments on each are necessary.

The general consensus of opinion seems to be that drastic changes should be made in regard to the controlling body. I have laboured this point for some years now, suggesting that a much smaller and more technically-equipped Committee to manage Football might provide the answer to all the problems that have remained unsolved for far too many years. Democracy, in this instance, does not seem to work and I think this is because those who sit in these Councils have quite forgotten that they are there for the larger interests of the game and not merely to try and ensure that each one's Club gets a better deal than the others.

Unfortunately, the latter has been the driving consideration with the result that either small factions have grown up and flourish within the Association or some representatives find themselves without a friend or a supporter and spend their frustrated lives trying to obtain, for the Clubs that they represent, a few crumbs that fall from the tables of the mighty. This has resulted in continuous disagreement, bickering and ultimate chaos. Football has been slowly pushed into the background and its needs forgotten in the continual struggle for position, personal aggrandisement and so on.

This has led several of the stalwarts to ask for a complete scrapping of the IFA and the setting-up of a small, high-level Committee to take its place, for some time at least. Anything is worth a try now, so why not this and I do know that official minds have been thinking along these or similar lines for some time now. The rot that eats into the vitals of Football calls for every experiment to find a cure; this might be it.

REFEREES & SPECTATORS

Referees, in my opinion, have been a little overmaligned. While I do not deny what the standard of supervision could do with all-round improvement, and for this the CRA and the referees must make up their own minds and buckle down to business, I must point out that referees in Calcutta have to work under as difficult conditions as could be found anywhere. We do read of referees being barracked, abused and chased and beaten-up in other parts of the world but when that happens it is usually an exception; in Calcutta, unfortunately, this sort of thing seems to have become the rule. When you are next on the point of telling a referee just what you think of him, pause for a moment and take stock of yourself. Are you such a great sportsman yourself and if you were in his position out there in the middle of the field with thousands of people shouting at you, would you have done better?

This brings me automatically to the spectator and it saddens me to observe his attitude now-a-days. According to him, nobody can do right; the players of his own team, those of the opposition, the referee and linesmen, even his fellow spectators, all of them are regarded as arch-enemies; even God in His heaven, who sometimes sends the sun and sometimes the rain, comes in for a bit of vituperation. The other day I saw a team winning by nine goals but because one or two fairly easy chances were missed in between there was general fault-finding with its players. The Calcutta spectator, it would thus seem, can never be satisfied and that being so I fail to see why he bothers to come to the Maidan at all. I would say that he, more than anyone else, is largely responsible for all the bad things that infest Football now, he and the inability of the IFA to cope with him and the situations he creates.

ROLE OF THE PLAYER

A major contributor to crowd misdemeanours is frequently the player himself. Amongst the big shots that the Calcutta League has attracted in recent

(Continued On Page 244)

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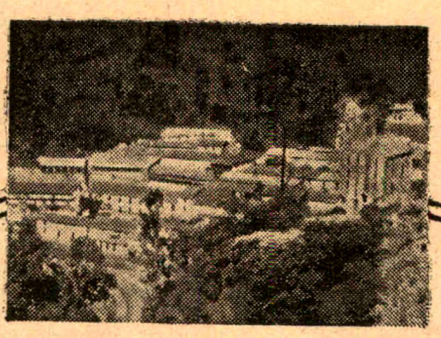

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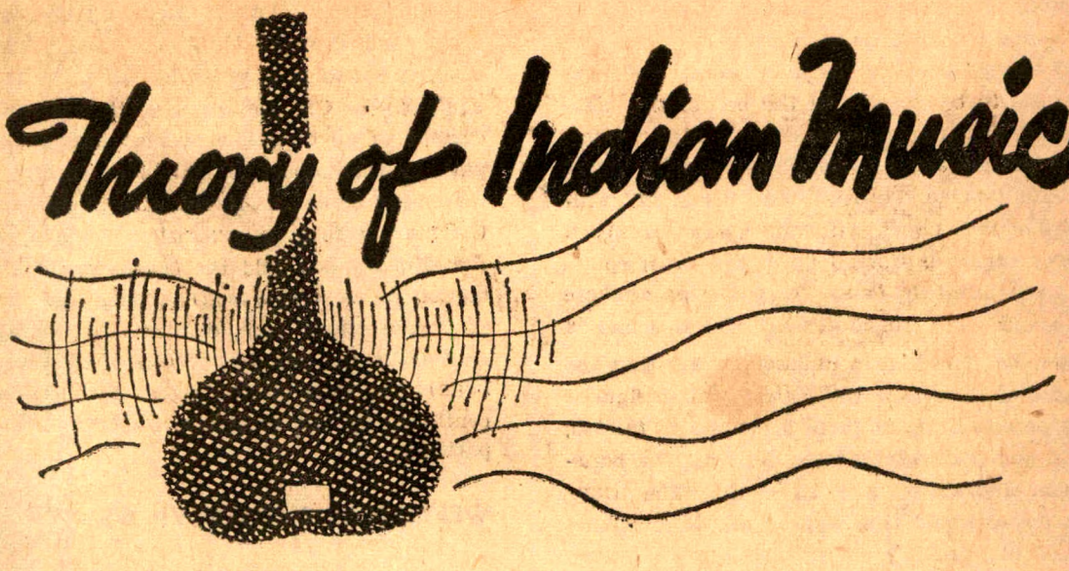

By SWAMI PRAJNANANANDA

SIR WILLIAM JONES said that music, considered as an Art, combines the sound, which philosophy distinguishes, in such a manner as to gratify our ears or affect our imaginations. Romain Rolland said: "Art, like life, is inexhaustible; and nothing makes us feel the truth of this better than music's ever-welling spring, which has flowed through the centuries until it has become an ocean."

Music as an art and a science is divided into two, *theory* and *practice*. Sometimes it is believed that *practice* is superior to *theory*, as *sadhana* is superior to *sastra*, but, truly speaking, both are complementary to each other. We produce music by tones and tunes through the medium of either vocal chord or instruments and observe some laws and methods for its correct rendering. The laws and methods are known as *theory*, whereas their application is *practice*. One is directional and the other is an applied form of it. Or, it can be said that the theory is a knowledge or an explanation of a subject or a thing, whereas practice is making the use of it.

ORIGIN OF SOUND

Psychology says that every gross material comes out of the subtle and everything subtle has its root in the cause. The law of cause and sequence governs the world of appearance. Nothing is exempted from the universal Law of Nature. The gross volumes of sound are also the outcome of the minute vibrations of atoms and molecules. Ether or *Akasa* is the basic ground or receptacle of all kinds of vibrations. All the elements or component parts of light, heat, electricity, colour, sound, etc. are the results of vibrations.

When man was created in the beginning, language was given to him to express his thoughts and ideas. Language is like the mirror in which man's subjective ideas are reflected as objective forms. So language may be said to be the symbol of man's ideas. Now, what do we mean by a *symbol*? The *symbol* is a sign that implies a thing, a person or a quality. Therefore, the function of a *symbol* is to express a thing, a person or a quality for which it is substituted. The subtle ideas are materialized in gross form through language or words. The psychology of music says that music is a representation of sounds which are soothing, pleasing and sweet.

VERDICT OF SCIENCE

Science says that, music or musical sound is also the outcome of vibrations and those vibrations have some sensations which are produced from the frequency of certain distinguishable and perceptible vibrations. Wilmer T. Bartholomew said in his book *Acoustics of Music* that when the frequency of vibrations reaches about 20 or more per second, we begin to hear a very low sound, and as the frequency continues to rise we hear sounds (both musical and non-musical) of higher and higher pitch, until finally at a point roughly around 20,000 vibrations per second we cease to hear sound. Hermann I. F. Helmholtz was of the same opinion though he put it in a different way. He said in his celebrated book *On the Sensations of Tone* that the musical tones which could be used with advantage, and have clearly distinguishable pitch, have between 40 and 4000 vibrations in a second, extending over seven octaves. Those which are audible at all have from 20 to 40,000 vibrations, extending over about eleven octaves.

HINDU PHILOSOPHERS' VIEWS

The Hindu philosophers also subscribed their views regarding the sound and its origin. They said that the human body is a microcosm composed of all the five elements, ether, fire, water, air and earth. The vibrations causing musical notes evolve from the navel base (*muladhara*) where psychic energy is

stored up. The psychic energy in human beings and animals is the creative energy or *prakriti*. The psychic or creative energy normally remains latent until it is quickened by the exertion of will-power (*ichha-sakti*). The Tantra philosophy says that it remains coiled up as static in causal form. The causal static energy is called the *Kamakala* or *Kundalini*. It seems to be sleeping in the bed of the subconscious or unconscious level of the mind, where thousands of impressions (*samskara*) remain stored up in a latent stage. Through the fusion of will-power (*ichha-sakti*) and vital air (*prana-vayu*), a heat-energy (*agni*) is worked up, and from it comes out an unmanifested causal (*avyakta* or *anahata karana*) sound. The unmanifested, causal sound is called the *nada*. The Tantra philosophy says that the causal state of *Brahman* or *Kulakundalint* figured as a triangle consisting of three principles or *tattvas, vindu, bija* and *nada* which come out from the *para-bindu* under division of 'a + ka + tha.' The triangular *Kundalini* would thus appear to be a manifestation of the primary energy (*para-sakti*) represented by *para-nada* and *para-bindu*. The *Vindu* is known as Siva, the supreme Lord and *vija* as Sakti, the primordial energy.

5 GRADES OF SOUND

Matanga of *Brihaddesi* (5th-7th century A.D.) said that the *nada* or causal sound passing from five grades of evolution manifests as five kinds of musical sounds. The five grades of evolution are known as subtle (*suksma*), most subtle (*ati-suksma*), unmanifested (*avyakta*), manifested (*vyakta*) and gross mechanical sound (*kritrima*): *'sa cha panchavido bhavat,'* etc. In truth, the causal sound, *nada* is the primal musical sound that spontaneously rings up in our inner depth, and from it originates both the subtle unmanifested (*anahata*) and manifested (*ahata*) sounds. The Yoga and Tantra philosophies say that unmanifested sound passing through four cross levels of the body, *para, pasyanti, avyakta* and *vaikhari*, comes at last to the level of the throat (*kantha*) and through the medium of vocal chord it manifests itself as gross musical and non-musical sounds.

SAGES DIFFER

The Indian Logic or *Naya* philosophy says that before the creation of the universe, the causal sound was first evolved as a category of ether or *Akasa*. The *Mimansa* philosophy differs from it. It says that air-unit or *vayu* has a special quality called *nada* and that causes the gross audible sound. In the analysis of sound the *Mimansakas* distinguish between three elements: (a) *nada*, a quality of air, which is the physical basis of suitable sound; (b) *dhvani* or sound as heard, audible sound, and (c) in the case of significant sound, *sphota*, the transcendental or intelligible sound representing the Platonic Ideas or *Logoi*, which are eternal (*nitya*), ubiquitous (*vyapaka*) and noumenal being groundless (*niradhara*). Others including the authors of *Siksas* and *Pratishakhyas* hold that the physical basis of sound is a series of air-movements (*vayu-santana*) or the air particles themselves flow in a current in all directions, being obstructed in their path by the impact of tangible objects, and the movement ceases, as in the case of an arrow, when the moving force is exhausted. Some of the orthodox *Mimansakas* hold the causal sound *nada* as the motion of air (*vayu-vega*), being the transmission of conjunctions and disjunctions (*samyoga* and *viyoga*), in the minute particles of air (*suksma vayu-kana*), the wave originating in the first impact and continued by the successive impacts of the minute particles.

WESTERN SCIENTISTS' VIEWS

A Western scientist Dr. Dayton C. Miller had also analysed the word 'sound' in his book: *The Science of Musical Sounds* and said: "*Sound* may be defined as the sensation resulting from the action of an external stimulus on the sensitive nerve apparatus of the ear; it is a species of reaction to this external stimulus, excitable only through the ear, and distinct from any other sensation. Atmospheric vibration is the normal and usual means of excitement for the ear; this vibration originates in a source called the *something body*, which is itself always in vibration". Sound is comparatively a tangible phenomenon. It can be divided into two: *noises*, which are disagreeable or irritating, and *tones* or *notes*, which are pleasing to the ears of all living animals and are received with pleasure or indifference. But it is a fact that *noise* and *tones* are merely the terms of contrast, as a *noise* is known by its non-periodic vibrations while a *tone* by its periodic and constant vibrations. Both are regarded as sound.

Dr. Alexander Wood said in his *The Psychics of Music* that musical sounds are those which are smooth, regular, pleasant and of definite pitch, whereas unmusical notes are rough, irregular, unpleasant and of indefinite pitch. It is a fact that ether (*akasa*) or air causes all kinds of sounds. It has been said that when sound was evolved, adequate words were invented to articulate the sounds to convey their meaning. The assemblage of words (*shabda-samuchchaya*) gave birth to language, and language became the vehicle of thoughts and ideas of all kinds of living beings. The language was gradually brought into system. Some laws were framed to regulate and to maintain the order and proportion of the system. Science helped the process of framing the structures of the law and the law

brought the whole thing into a logical consistent order and psycho-physical arrangement. In this way grammar had its origin as a science of words and language and was intended to direct and regulate the arts of speaking, singing, etc.

EVOLUTION OF MUSIC

In the beginning men used to sing and dance at their sweet will without obeying the dictation of any rigid law and order. Music was very plain and simple at that time. It sprang up spontaneously from the innermost hearts of men who expressed their pathos and delights through the medium of those plain songs. With the gradual development of culture and civilization, man's intuitive perception, intelligence, judgment and creative instinct and faculty grew more and more sharp and acute. Men elevated their standard of living, eating, thinking, speaking and singing and everything that was necessary for their material requirements and spiritual life. Their plain and simple music became gradually complex and extensive in its forms and rules were framed and restrictions were imposed on them. The old types and patterns were replaced by new ones, and additions and alterations were made to adjust and readjust their forms, modes and expressions.

The notes of the songs were not at first in a successive order and there was no question of concordance and discordance of them. There was no direct or definite design behind the music of the primitive man and it was neither organized nor systematized. Gradually an order came into being in the forms of succession and organization in the composition of music. The relation of equivalency of tonal sounds were discovered between the notes, first and fourth (*sadja* and *madhyama*) and first and fifth (*sadja* and *panchama*). The evolution of rhythmic part represented the action of the nature of timing measure (*laya*) of music and dance and melodic part represented the harmonized singing and vocal utterances. The music was then somewhat definite and its effect on the mind of men and animals was permanent.

Dr. Parry was also of the same opinion and he said in his *The Art of Music:* "Music indeed cannot exist till the definiteness of some kind of design is present in the succession of the sounds. The impression produced by vague sound is vague and soon passes away altogether. They take no permanent hold on the mind till they are made definite in relation to one another, and are disposed in some sort of order by the distribution of their up and down motions or by the regularity of their rhythmic recurrence. Then the impression becomes distinct, and its definiteness makes it permanent." However, the practice of music grew gradually definite and more serious and distinct with orderly manner.

EINSTEIN ON MUSIC

The interesting story of the beginnings of music and its gradual development have been beautifully related in Alfred Einstein's book *Short History of Music,* though in a different way. He said: "To the man who in prehistoric times first perceived musical sound as it originated in the beating of a hollow object or by the swing and whir of a staff, it was something incomprehensible and therefore mysterious and magical. The mere sound of percussion instruments excited him to the pitch of intoxication. From them he discovered the power of rhythm, which inflamed and ordered the ritual dance and also coordinated the movements of labour and, as if by magic, lightened the toil. At the same time man may have acquired practice in the use of notes of definite pitch for signals in war,..... From that he may soon have hit upon a preference for the most sonorous and 'easy' intervals, the fourth and fifth. To tone and rhythm was added primitive melody in conjunction with more or less intelligible words....". The theory of music was evolved in this way as a rule to govern and systematize the practice of music.

Now, theory and practice are better known as the *sastra* and the *sadhana.* The *sastra* (scriptures) ordains, frames rules and conducts the *sadhana* or practice and the *sadhana* follows the rules and the methods directed by the *sastra* in the way of fulfilling its manifestation, ideal and purpose. Therefore, the *sastra* and the *sadhana* are complementary to each other, one helps to complete the other. But it should be remembered that the *sastra* never guarantees the success of the *sadhana,* because the achievement of success depends upon the sincere and wholehearted efforts of the man who devotes himself in the *sadhana.*

SEVEN PARTS OF THEORY

The province of theory can be divided into seven parts and they are : (1) *grammar,* (2) *literature,* (3) *history,* (4) *science* and *physics,* (5) *iconography,* (6) *psychology* and (7) *philosophy.* It will be wrong to suppose that the grammar or grammatical discussion forms the entire field of theory, because the grammar is regarded as a part of it and not the whole. Now let us explain the work of every province of the theory and see how they function to complete the theory as a whole.

(1) The province of *grammar* of music is limited to the discussion about the constituent elements

or raw materials of music like tones, microtones, *murchhanas, tanas, varnas* and ten *laksmanas,* etc. together with rigid rules and restrictions for the proper use or application of them. Generally the dictionary meaning of grammar is an art and science dealing with a language's inflexions or other means of showing relation between words as used in speech and writing and its phonetic system. The grammar really investigates into and systematizes the facts of phenomena of language. Now, the language of music is the pleasant and periodic sounds that manifest as melody-types or *ragas* composed of different arrangements of notes and graces.

(2) The *literature* of music deals with the construction of words or thematic composition (*sahitya*) of songs, together with their intrinsic nature and rhetoric constituents like, *riti, vritti, chhanda* or metre and emotional aspects. It unfolds the inner meaning of the melodies or *ragas* and also helps both artists and audiences to appreciate the theme and spirit of music.

(3) The *history* of music records the birth and evolution of music, and deals with different types and patterns of music of different climes and ages. It collects the annals and chronicles of music both ndigenous and foreign, arranges them in a chronological order and represents them before the People f the world as a complete picture of the creative rt of a nation.

(4) The *science and physics* of music deal ith the intrinsic nature and constituents of tones nd tunes, their method of production, their quality, nalysis, intensity, pitch, timbre and vibrations; heir disonance and consonance, scale, temperament, tc. The *science* and *physics* disclose the mystery of he mode of artistic expression or technique of muc, develop the power of conceptual and percepial appreciations of value and beauty of tones and nes and well-equip the artists and lovers of music ith the knowledge of making objective interpreations or physical transformations of their subjecve designs and also the psychic aspects of music. truth, the *science and physics* of music develop e real power of evaluation of art and science of usic and ultimately help to realize the super-sensie depth and beauty of the art of music.

(5) The *iconography* of music helps to deve- the power of feeling and sensibility of pictorial otifs and their appreciations among the artists. It pplies also the means and materials of construct- the usual pictures of *ragas* and *raginis* in rela- n to their respective contemplative compositions *dhyanas,* aesthetic sentiments and moods and us the ideal of the *ragas* and *raginis* transforms into the real. The *iconography* of music helps the imaginative poets to compose the poetical pieces (*dhyana-mantram*) of the *ragamala* pictures, and inspires the artists and sculptors to draw colourful paintings and chisel out rock-representations of the *ragas* and *raginis.* In fact the *iconography* of music reminds us of the truth that tones and tunes form only the outward structure or skeleton of music, so, blood and life-force should be infused into it for making it living and dynamic. The *iconography* of music also implies that though music i.e. *ragas* and *raginis* manifest themselves through the medium of sensuous and material forms, yet they *as such* transcend the limits of matter and mind, and their sensuous experiences are also sublimated by the supersensible realization of the absolute Beauty and Joy.

(6) The *psychology* of music is concerned with the knowledge and experience of the *psyche,* the foundational psychic content of music. It lays stress upon the emotional value and beauty of tones and tunes and says that the *psyche* of music forms the basic ground of emotion and aesthetic beauty. So the knowledge of the *psyche* as the *Atman* or foundational content is essential for the culture of music.

(7) The *philosophy* of music leads us to the love of divine wisdom of the essence of music. It discovers the cause or root of music and says that the unmanifested divine sound or *nada* is the *e'lan vital* of music. The *nada* is the *Sabda-Brahman,* and the knowledge of it makes us conscious of our Divine heritage. The *philosophy* of music incorporates the ideas of both *Yoga* and *Tantra* literatures and teaches that the foundational psychic content of music assumes itself as the seven levels of consciousness which are symbolized as the seven plexuses (*sapta-chakra*) in the spinal column. The basic consciousness is the sleeping *psyche* and it should be aroused by the will-power of the artists. It should be raised upwards from one level to another and when it manifests itself on the highest level of consciousness (*sahasrara-chakra*), it communes with the *Parama-Siva,* the embodiment of all-existence, all-intelligence and all-bliss. Then the artist of music enjoys the eternal peace and tranquil happiness. The *philosophy* of music also informs the artists that the practice and culture of music (i.e. *ragas, tanas, gamakas, murchhanas,* etc.) control the breath and consequently the life-force, and make the mind concentrate upon the *icons* or images of the *ragas* and *raginis.* They gradually transcend the idea of the material tonal (*sabda-maya*) forms of the *ragas* and *raginis* and meditate upon the celestial (*deva-maya*) forms of them. The concentration and meditation consequently lead the artists to the highest

(Continued On Page 241)

Dance, Drama and Music

By A. C. PANDEYA

WITH independence, cultural India embarked upon a 'policy' of horizontal development of dance, drama and music. It activated varied activities and helped spreading the war-time confusion, largely due to the death of the pioneers of renaissance in these arts. Lack of a directive force invalidated others to arrest the confusion. It was meet, in this context, that the Government of India constituted the autonomous national academy for these arts, the Sangeet Natak Akadami.

Extensive revivalistic activities deflected the movement from Indian to un-Indian corners and afforded an opportunity to the serious student of art to study the trends and to tow it to safe shores. Much work that has been done ever since the war in dance, drama and music may not entirely be justifiable from the standpoint of artistic standards, nevertheless it cannot be ignored. It needs scrutiny and a constant watch.

CLASSICAL DANCE

BHARAT NATYAM, the classical dance of Tanjore, received a fillip like which no other dance-style got. A large number of young dancers went round the country to give performances at different important centres. The outstanding amongst them, who have also established a reputation as roving cultural ambassadors of India, visited some foreign countries. They include Shanta Rao, Mrinalini Sarabhai, Indrani Rehman, Kamala Laxmanan, Kumari Radha, Kumari Sharda, and Kumari Makhijani who have acquitted themselves as admirable exponents of *Bharat Natyam,* with such individualistic traits which have made each of them outstanding. Shanta Rao has developed the virtuosity of a seasoned dancer, who started believing in the clean execution of physical attitudes and rhythmic sequences. She dances with self-abandon. Indrani and Kamala have imbib-

degree which makes their recitals lovely. Radha and Makhijani are two products of Kala Kshetra. Their art is lyrical and sculpturesque. Mrinalini as a ballerina has built a name for herself.

Besides the monumental contribution of Pandanallur to the popularization of *Bharat Natyam,* Shrimati Balasaraswati and Rukmini Devi have served this dance-style to their full and have been honoured with the Akadami awards and titles. Rukmini Devi was nominated by the President of India as a Member of Rajya Sabha. Kumari C. V. S. Vasantha is the only outstanding exponent of Melattur Bal Bhagavatar School of *Bharat Natyam.*

In the death of Pandanallur Meenaxi Sundaram Pillai in 1955, the country lost the greatest of all living *Bharat Natyam* masters and the teachers of all the great exponents of this dance. He remained unhonoured by the Akadami.

KATHAKALI made an outstanding contribution to dance activities of India by deploying a good many eminent artistes like Guru Gopinath, Guru Kunch Kurup, Krishna Kutty, Kalamandalam Nair and Kumari Padmaja. These exponents and Mahakavi Vallathol Narayan Menon visited some foreign countries and enriched the wide attention that this dance-drama had already earned from the performances of great artistes like Ram Gopal, Uday Shankar, Kumari Shirin Vajifdar. Kunch Kurup and Gopinath are an asset to the nation today. In the capital their performances were highly valued and they demonstrated the intrinsic histrionic value of Kathakali

The life that was breathed in the art of Manipuri by Gurudeva Tagore and was carried forward by Haren Ghosh — both of whom did not live to see the light of independence — was zealously kept alive by the work of Guru Amubi Singh. He trained a whole generation of able teachers and exponents of Manipuri dancing. His students are imparting training in this dance throughout the country. The flame that he has kept alive for the appeal in this dance

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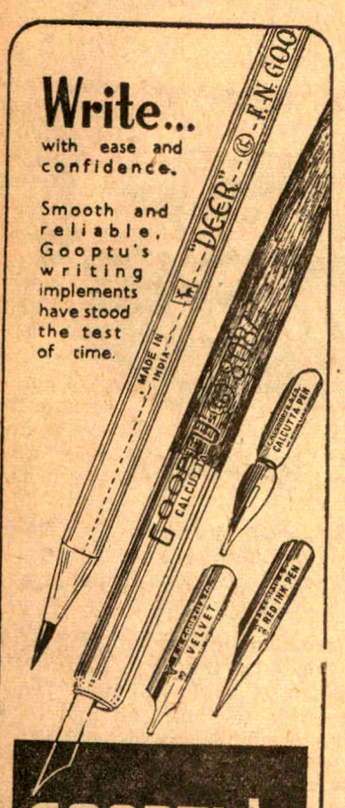

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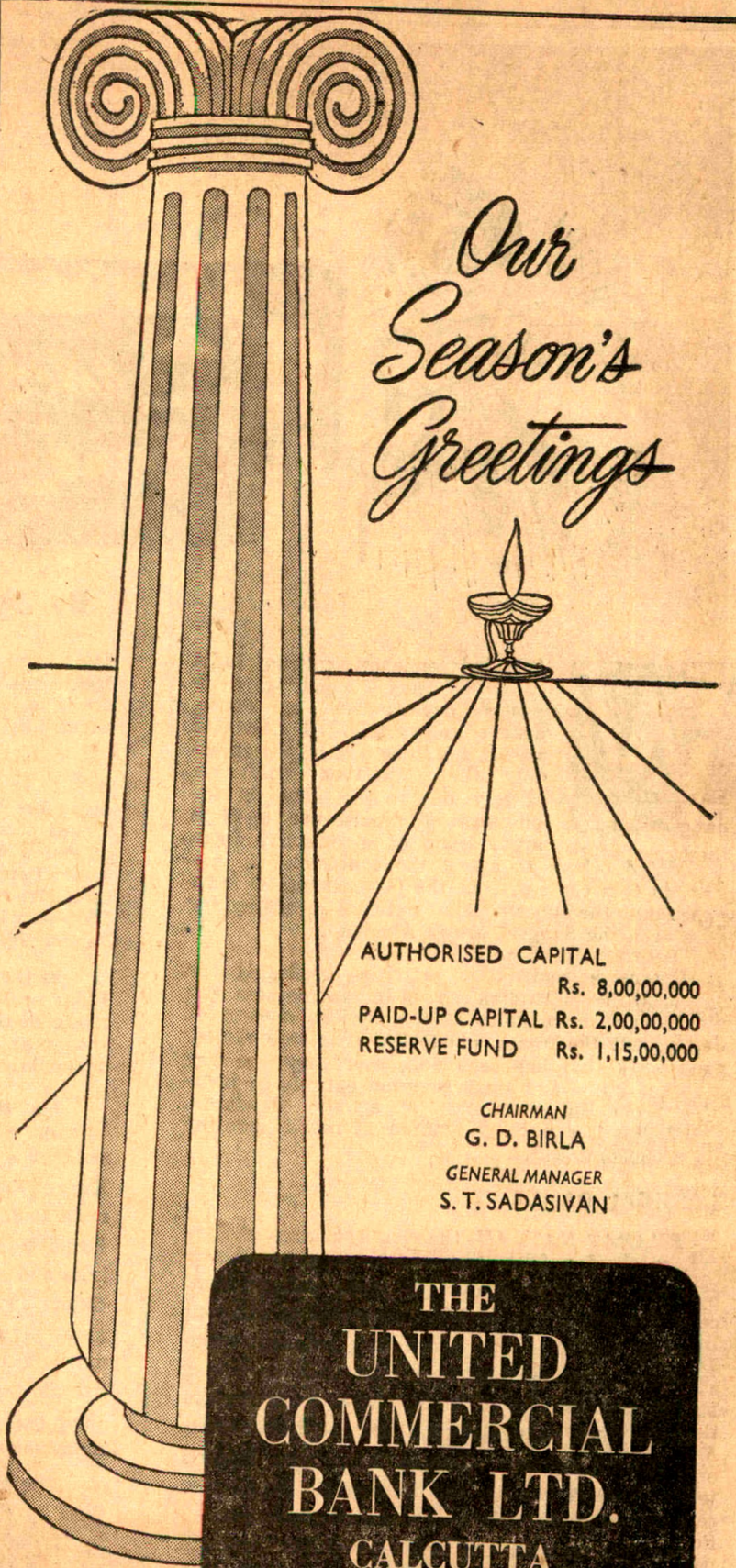

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of the devotional people of the hilly tracts of North-East India, sent out some troupes of Manipuri dancers and musicians to foreign countries where they created an impact of the lyrical beauty embedded in its art.

CONTINUED NEGLECT

Before independence, the pioneering work in the revival of *Bharat Nritya* (mis-called *Kathak*) of North India, with traditional centres at Lucknow and Jaipur, was made by the late Madam Menaka (Lady Lila Sokhey). Her mission could not be followed up, because there was no other able dancer-organizer in this field. Students who were members of her troupe and inmates of her institute of dancing failed to carry forward her objective. Some of these inmates deserted her during the crucial moment in her organized art activities. The result was that after independence India could not find a dancer-organizer of distinguished merit. The continued neglect to which this dance of North India was subjected during the by-gone rule left little in the great traditional dancers of Lucknow — the late Achchan Maharaj, Luchhu Maharaj and Shambhu Maharaj — and of Jaipur — Sita Ram — to produce students of any standard. However, credit goes to Guru Shambhu Maharaj who relieved himself from Lucknow to settle down in Delhi to impart advanced training in *Bharat Nritya* at the Bharatiya Kala Kendra. The only son of Achchan Maharaj, Brij Mohan, has also joined the Kendra. Besides him, among young dancers are Kumari Roshan, Sitara and Rohini Bhate of Poona, who are contributing immensely to the propagation of this dance. They have flowered out into dancers of unalloyed *Bharat Nritya*. Sitara and Anuradha Guha visited foreign countries as members of official cultural delegations. The young dancers who are coming up as outstanding exponents of the Lucknow School include Kumari Maya Rao and Kumari Bala.

With a view to making a stock-taking of the classical dancers and the available talents in them in the country, the Sangeet Natak Akadami sponsored the first National Dance Festival in 1955 which was attended by a good many great exponents. Though the festival fell short of our expectations and did not fully meet with the objectives of the Akadami — it was a step from the top without tackling the bottom —it roused considerable interest in the country.

Folk dances attracted the attention of the Defence Ministry of India and became a regular feature for exhibition during the Republic Day celebrations, since 1953. Under the auspices of Indian National Theatre, a 5-day Folk Dance Festival was also held at Bombay in 1956.

Folk-dance troupes are drawn every year from different States to present different folk dance items. They reflect India's rich cultural heritage hitherto kept subdued and demonstrate the verve with which our countrymen create and recreate healthy recreational items. Their themes are social, religious or ritual. There is nothing spontaneous about the whole technique. Folk dancers dance to the beat of rhythm and to the tune of the piper. They make different gestures which, leaving aside exuberance, are systematised and have a unique mellowness or masculinity. Every year the best adjudged troupe carries a roving trophy.

DRAMATIC ACTIVITIES

Dramatic activities in the country were largely directed by three agencies: All India Radio, amateur theatrical groups and Sangeet Natak Akadami. The Radio continued to broadcast Radio plays whose main technical characteristic has been "sound effects". Their themes have varied from humorous to social subjects and from social to nation-building. It is not that always these plays have been well-executed; a class of them has been badly written and badly directed. The amateur group has been the most vocal in holding the tradition of the English stage and of the regional languages stages.

One of the major experiments in the field of revivalism in drama, including ballet, has been made by the Song and Drama Division of All India Radio. It has given impetus to folk drama and dance parties to interpret to the people the progress and achievements of independent India under the Five-Year Plans. The degree of success in weaving the Plan-themes in folk traditions will remain a matter for individual judgement, though, by all assessments considerable improvement can be effected.

When the first National Drama Festival was held in Delhi in 1944, it organised a symposium whose enlarged form was mainfested in the first National Drama Seminar organized by the Sangeet Natak Akadami in 1956. Both did not measure up to the expected standard and did not give a lead to the country in any sphere. The major defect about the festival was that it was started from the top. As a corollary to the increased dramatic activities in the country, the holding of the World Drama Congress in Bombay was a natural consequence. While symposia have their own importance, in practical art it is the presentation by regional groups at a festival that can really mark initiation of a movement.

NATIONAL THEATRE

Professional theatre in India is a misnomer; National Theatre is yet to come. Both are interdependent. The National Theatre of India is to be the theatre of the amateurs. That India is such a vast country is in itself an indication to the demand that the country first needs healthy, regional the-

tres before a National Theatre can be built. The needs of regional theatres differ from one region to another — a fact which pin-points the necessity for the development of rural-cum-urban theatres region-wise before the National Theatre is constructed. Such a theatre cannot as well precede a well-developed Hindi theatre. Towards this end All India Radio has already done considerable work by attempting to translate quality plays of different regional languages in Hindi. On the other hand, plays of one region have also started travelling into another. For a concerted effort in this sphere, the country needs a strong National Federation of Theatres to serve as a nucleus of theatrical movement in India. Poona, Bombay, Calcutta, Trivandrum, Madras and Ahmedabad are the important regional theatre centres. The movement, as a whole, needs several safeguards for further development. Much, however, is yet to be done in the field of organizing regional dramatic talent, regional festivals of drama, regional Theatre Federations and a strong central organization to co-ordinate the activities of all, to guide, to direct, and to consolidate various aspects of the theatre movement in the country. Under its guidance (central organisation's) with State subsidy or wholly at the cost of the State, the construction of National Theatre may be taken up. An outstanding contribution in drama movement has been made by a galaxy of dramatists and drama companies, such as Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, Dr. Mulk Raj Anand, Dina Gandhi of Ahmedabad, Ganesh G. Bodas of Maharashtra, Rajaramanickam Pillai of Kerala, Sombhu Mitra, Bahurupi of Calcutta, Mama Warerkar, and the Little Theatre Group of Delhi.

A movement for children's little theatre was aunched first by Bengal which has now flowered into n all-India affair. Samar Chatterji has done a aluable work in this direction.

OST-INDEPENDENCE MUSIC

In the sphere of music, since independence, the rocess of renaissance has continued with new zest nd increased contribution by All India Radio. The ountry is, no doubt, poorer by a few great masters ho have left us. Among them are Zia-uddin Khan, iaz-uddin Khan, Faiyaz Khan, D. V. Paluskar, ovindrao Burhanpurkar, T. N. Rajaratnam Pillai nd Sakhawat Husain Khan. The setback that was iven to the classical music by the films was arrest-l to a small degree by the Government (All India adio). The film music, with its mass public con-ct, lowered the general aesthetic appreciation by mping up foreign jazz or other light music varia-ons. The solace for classical music became con-ied to music conferences and the Radio. These nferences received a setback during the war, but ter independence, at district and provincial level ey were again started. The centre for recognition artistes remained normally the same, i.e. Calcutta d Madras, although with the establishment of the ngeet Natak Akadami, Delhi became the all im-rtant centre for such recognitions. All India Radio rted the National Programmes of Hindustani and rnataka music, broadcast from Delhi on the na-nal network. In 1954, the first National Festival Music was held in the historic Red Fort of Delhi. ree years later, the Akadami convened the first na-nal music seminar at the Vigyan Bhavan, New hi.

All India Radio's National Programme of music now an established institution. From classical sic, its scope has been extended to include regional folk music and operas. Special concerts of

Kerala's Scheduled Castes Folk dancers.

orchestra music and of similar *ragas* in the two schools of music have also been introduced. Every year, Radio's Sangeet Sammelan, preceded by a country-wide music competition, is held. Modern light music is receiving planned development at the hands of the Radio which has set up Light Music Production Units. Folk music now enjoys a status within the framework of the music policy of the Radio which has decided to set up fully equipped units at some AIR stations for recording best *Lok Sangeet*. AIR *Vadya Vrinda*, which includes artistes from both the schools of music, composes classical, thematic and mood music. Choral music troupes have been strengthened at major stations which help popularising classical and light music. The Radio is also making special efforts to collect and preserve the music of celebrities of the past. In spite of these measures to enrich the broadcasting menu, cultural India continues to face a crisis.

HORIZONTAL PROGRESS

Often it is suggested that musical development is now progressing in a horizontal, instead of vertical manner. It is so since the thirties and, therefore, it cannot justify decadence or waywardness evidenced today. For sometime past, the need to preserve and to bring to the fore the work and music of top class artistes, who are no longer with us, has been emphasised, but apparently no concrete steps have been taken by responsible authorities so far. There is need of conducting researches in their styles of music and of establishing their ascending and descending scale-singing. The undue emphasis which continues to be placed on Khayal singing should stop: it has already done incalculable damage to the chastity of music and the development of a musical throat. The Radio alone can save the country from a possible musical break-down. It has to unearth its vast treasure of recorded music, edit it to a broadcasting standard and reduce it to notation. Dhrupad which forms the backbone of Hindustani

(Continued On Page 241)

Evolution of Indian Music

By RAMESH CHANDRA BANERJEE, B.A.

Sangit Ratnakar, Dean of the Faculty of Music, Academy of Dance, Drama and Music, West Bengal.

THE great heritage of Indian Music is a glory not only to the people of her soil but also to the cultural world as a whole. The music of India, like that of all other countries had its origin in the pre-historic age and had the main source of inspiration from nature, but later on, in the process of its evolution, music developed into a science and art. Master musicians, rather master artists, played a significant role in this evolution.

If we go through the world history of music, we see that the origin and development of music of every country are almost the same. We cannot deny the fact that musical art whether it is classic or semi-classic is to some extent based on primitive folk-music. Both in the ancient and medieval periods there are instances of higher melodic materials coming from folk-music.

In folk-music, we find the technique, the tune, the theme, with all their natural colour and simplicity, whereas, in classical music, the original form, whether it is derived from folk-music or other sources, developed into richly ornamented melodies.

Now, what are the melodies ?

They are the combinations of different musical notes, adjusted in such a way that they become pleasing to the ear. But it is the aesthetic sense which is the main factor of a melody. It is something intuitive and in it are infused the human sentiments—love, devotion, joy, despair and sorrow.

Music is the finest of all arts; but what is art ?

A true art is not exhibition but revelation. Exhibition is something which exhibits the artist's practical attainment, but sometimes it happens that it does not become appealing though technique, grammar and demonstration are quite in order but lacking in the aesthetic representation, which is the life and soul of art.

Music is sublimest of all arts, it is the realisation of our inner self through the melodies. In art is infused the eternal joy; so art is the joy of life. It is just a deviation from the stern realities of life. Art is a pleasure, and it is the most intoxicating of all. But it is a pleasure, that is won at the cost of life-long practice.

SOURCE OF ART

Nature is the source of art. The main inspiration regarding the creation of melodies is from Nature. The Indian melodies or *ragas* are not simply the product of the combination of notes but they have their psychological basis. The time theory of Indian *ragas* has both a scientific and psychological basis.

It cannot be called simply a tradition, when we go deep into a morning melody, we have a vivid picture before our mind's eye, the early dawn when the first rays of the morning sun, brightens the earth. What is its psychological effect on the mind It means awakening from slumber and the spirit of adoration and worship. The sad notes of *Purabi* brings the idea of the dusk, and in the midnight the distant notes of a *Behag* fills us with pathos Apart from the time theory, the Indian melodies a

classified according to seasons. For instance, there are particular melodies for the spring which depict the gaiety and festivities of the season. The Indian music had thus gone into the very depth of its soul in ancient times.

In the ancient times, songs were mainly composed in Sanskrit. But later on Sanskrit as the language of songs ceased to exist, when its offshoots became the language of the people; though we get reference of some Dhrupad or classic compositions of Swami Haridas in Sanskrit even in the sixteenth century. Hindi, Brajabhasa, and Urdu mingled together and became mainly the language of the classic songs of the medieval periods.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

If we study the musical history of India, we find that the art of music is progressive. Dhrupad, the sublime and the foremost type of classical music, has undergone various changes as regards composition, melody, rhythm and mode of presentation from the ancient to the medieval period. It is a fact that the practical art goes ahead, and grammar follows it. But in most cases, theory and practice are not in amity. The creative artist never cares for the theory. Even today there are some conventional ideas, which I think will soon be out of date with the progressive outlook of the musicians and music lovers alike. Different periods in the history of India marked the development of Indian Music. During the reign of Alauddin Khilji, (1296-1316) besides Nayak Gopal, the then court musician of the Emperor, there came to India from Persia, Amir Khasru, a great poet, musician and a scholar of Arabian and Persian culture. He introduced many new melodies and Persian intonations in Indian Music and at that time there was exchange of ideas regarding music and other arts between India and Persia. Then we come to the sixteenth century when the Great Mughal Akbar was the Emperor. This period may be called the Renaissance of Indian Music. Tansen the great musician and composer of the sixteenth century, was the pioneer in creating new melodies and songs which upto the present time are regarded throughout India as the ideal. Himself being a great scholar he infused new life into the musical system of India by introducing new intonations and technique mainly based on melodies. And it must not be overlooked that it was Tansen's liberal outlook and specially his system of music, that paved the way for future evolution of *Kheyal, Tappa* and other songs, with all their variations and ornamentations.

Kheyal type of songs were first introduced by Sultan Hossin Sirki of Jaunpur, in the early eighteenth century, when Mohammad Shah was the Emperor of Delhi, but this type of music was greatly developed and modified by Sadarang and Adarang and later on *Tappa* by Gulam Nabi and *Sori Thumri* mainly by Sanad and Kadar. But it is to be noted that the orthodox school of music, though adverse to accepting those new creations in the classic fold, had ultimately to yield to it for their popular appeal. The eighteenth century is a great transition period in the history of India. With the fall of the Mughal Empire and with the advent of the British there was a setback in the cultural and social life of the people. The political situation was not congenial to the growth of culture and art. The musicians of the Delhi Darbar migrated to far off provinces and Native States.

BISHNUPUR & CALCUTTA

The classical music that attained glory through the contributions of master musicians who were patronised by the Delhi Court, was by this time decentralised and spread to the remote corners of India including Bengal. From the early eighteenth century, Bishnupur, an ancient Hindu Kingdom of Bengal and later on Calcutta, the then newly born city under the British, became the centres of classical music, specially *Dhrupad*. The age sounded the death-knell of the pomp and glory of medieval age and at the same time heralded the advent of the new era with new ideas, new type of education and social order. But there was even the dark side. There became a fancy for everything new to the utter neglect of the true spirit of Indian Culture. In this dark period, the great Raja Rammohan Ray was born. His mission in life was not only to reinstate India to its pristine glory, but to give it an honourable position in the modern world. He had anticipated the need of a new type of education and a new social order. Rammohan may be called the father of the Modern India. The country would ever remember the Raja as a great reformer. He was the pioneer in composing Brahma-Sangit or devotional songs set to classical tune and rhythm of *Dhrupad* and *Kheyal*.

At that time, music was almost neglected by the educated society and the common people had no access to it. With the introduction of Brahmo Sangit, whose main source of tune and rhythms were classical, the original classic *Dhrupads* and *Kheyals* also began to be popular in Bengal. Thus, in Bengal, there was introduced a classic type of music through Bengali compositions which were later on highly developed by the followers of Rammohan and ultimately by Rabindranath, the world Poet.

MUSIC & STATES

It is a fact, that music and other arts were patronised by the States and some of the patrons were real lovers of art, but instances are not rare,

when this was more a luxury or show for the aristocrats than real regard and appreciation for the art. Sometimes it happened, that court musicians had to eulogise the emperor and kings against their will, and this often resulted in conflict. The artists were sometimes helpless, as they had no contact with the mass, they had to yield to the whims of their patrons. Thus the discontented musicians or artists had to adorn the court simply for livelihood but the light of genius in them did extinguish. Great artists are often sentimental. Once the great Beethoven, while in Silesia with Prince Lichonovisky in his estate, was asked by a French officer at the table whether he knew violin. This was too much for the great artist, who became furious and left the place and afterwards wrote a letter to the Prince saying.

"Your Highness! What you are, you have become by accident and by birth. What I am, I am by virtue of myself. There always have been and always will be princes by the thousand, but there is only one Beethoven."

This letter bespeaks the true spirit of an artist. Lives of great musicians and artists are so scanty in our country that we know very little of them, whereas volumes have been written on the lives and works of emperors and kings. Our society is also to be blamed for this. We should remember that a country is recognised and honoured by her culture and the artists are the torch-bearers of national culture and civilisation.

SONGS OF BENGAL

The conception of music and its appreciation must not be onesided. True appreciation means regard and love for good music as a whole. Have not the intelligentsia or the so-called connoisseurs turned a deaf ear and showed utter neglect to our culture of music in Bengal, the store-house of melody? From the origin of *charya-giti*, in the tenth century upto the nineteenth century, Bengal's culture of music has maintained the progressive outlook. Then, the swadeshi-song is a new phase in our music. The swadeshi-song which originated during the Hindu Mela reached its peak in the Anti-Partition Movement (1905-1911). Though, we get reference of such type of songs in the famous works of Ramesh Dutta — *Maharastrajiban Prabhat* and *Rajputjiban Sandhya*, the swadeshi-songs of Bengal were quite a new type. The posterity will never forget the great composers of swadeshi songs, such as Iswar Gupta, Satyendranath, Jyotirindranath, Swarnakumari, Sarala Devi, Rangalal, Hemchandra, Madhusudan, Dwijendralal, Rabindranath, Atulprasad, Rajanikanta, Satyendranath Dutta, Mukunda Das and Nazrul Islam.

RABINDRANATH'S MISSION

I conclude with the age of Rabindranath which is the age of a great renaissance and revolution in the history of Indian culture and music as a whole. He was the man who liberated life and culture, so also our music from the clutches of conservatism and made it popular in true national way through universal appeal. His great and creative genius re-modelled music to meet the urge of a newly awakened people, conscious of their glorious past. Rabindranath continued his predecessors' ways and styles in his music. Then, he took his own creative way for further progress step by step. He was a great student and lover of classical music and was born and brought up in that atmosphere at Maharshi Bhavan. His departure from the strictly classical form in his lyric and opera composition was the result of his urge for new creation and met the demand of the age. Rabindranath not only composed music for a set of people, but was a poet of a democratic age. Hence he brought back the music to the people from whom it came.

In a democratic India, music too needs democratisation. It is already going to be freed from the stone wall of *Durbars* and *Khas-Mahals* and it was Rabindranath, who had shown the way to the musicians. Now, this is the time that they should fulfil this great mission.

THE ACADEMY

With a view to train a new band of young talents, imbued with the missionary zeal, our Chief Minister Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy who is trying his utmost to make this province an ideal State in all respects, has established an Academy of Dance, Drama and Music at the birth place of our beloved Poet Rabindranath at 5, Dwarkanath Tagore Lane. Its mission is not to teach music and other arts in a stereotyped manner. Along with it a new institution of art and culture is emerging at Rabindra-Bharati. This is the place where soon a great cultural centre will grow up in commemoration of the great name of Rabindranath and it will give a helping hand to our new creative talents to meet the demand of a new nation emerging after hard struggle for fuller development in life and culture.

DANCE, DRAMA AND MUSIC

(Continued From Page 238)

music, which has voice culture properties in it and which offers a scientific process for musical development of a recital should be zealously restored.

Looking to the Sangeet Natak Akadami, a musician of note does not feel satisfied. There are innumerable musicians and dancers of recognised merit, whose economic security is not guaranteed by the country, whose mastery is a matter confined within the bounds of the disciples who are honoured with National Award. These great masters — some of them have already died in harness — are living in poverty and indebtedness and have not been honoured with the Akadami Award. There are many others who are neglected for one reason or the other. The Hindustani musical sphere can be redeemed of such a pitiable condition only when the artistes are assured of two square meals, and reasonable amenities including education to their children and respect to their life-long dedication to music. Added to this is the necessity to have a Central Institute and a Bureau of Composers of living great masters to impart training in voice culture, Dhrupad and musical mannerism. With such an approach alone, can there be "vertical" development in Hindustani music.

THEORY OF INDIAN MUSIC

(Continued From Page 234)

goal of their life and make them realize the supreme knowledge of the *Brahman*.

Now, we see that the entire field of the theory of Indian music is composed of its constituent parts, grammar, literature, history, science and physics, iconography, psychology and philosophy that only grammar or history or philosophy cannot cover the entire province of the theory but they are all complementary to one another and being worked together bring out the complete form of the *theory of music*. So, in the domain of music we should study them and apply them as a whole to make the practice and culture of music fruitful

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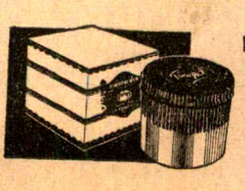

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The Odissi School of Music

By BIRENDRA KISHORE ROYCHOUDHURY

HAS Orissa some distinct music of its own? Has she contributed in the past, something unique to the vast treasure-house of Indian classical music? When these questions are put to us, our thoughts, at once turn towards the greatest contribution of Orissa to Mother India, — the Orissan Temple—Sculpture. A country or a province which could give expression to such a sublime art in her sculpture, could not be inert or blunt in other spheres of artistic expressions. Those men, who have had the good luck of visiting the Temples of Konarak, Bhubaneshwar and Puri, if they are not themselves aesthetically blunt, must have thanked Heavens for having opportunity of visualising those figures of majesty, dignity, beauty, grace and charms which are found in those temples. Together with her sublime sculpture, Orissa must have had her music, dance and literature raised to a supreme height. All arts supplement the needs of one another. So, we always find that the development of various arts goes together in any upheaval of aesthetic culture anywhere in the world. We find the forms and figures of charming *Kinnaras*, *Gandharvas* and *Apsaras* on the walls of Orissan temples showing them singing, dancing and playing on *Veenas* or flutes. These forms show that at that period of Orissa's supremacy in civilisation and culture, music and dancing were fully developed and were on way to further progress side by side with the art of sculpture and painting.

HUEN TSANG'S OPINION

History also proves this assumption. We find in the documents of the famous Chinese scholar-tourist Huen Tsang that Odissi dance and music attained perfection according to the standards of the day by the sixth or the seventh century A.D. Orissa undoubtedly followed the basic principles of classical music, as laid down in the most authentic scripture of Indian dance, drama and music, viz., *Bharata-Natya-Sastra*. All the later treatises of music accepted the authority of Bharata Muni. We find in the *Natya Sastra* that in dance and music. Orissa had a special style which was regarded as much classical as any other notable one. It mentions about Odra (Orissa) and Magadha as having distinctive music of their own.

Of course, the original classical music or *Marga Sangita* was common to all the provinces of India, during the classical Hindu period. This *marga* sangit was said to be learnt by Bharata Muni from Brahma and had it demonstrated before God Shiva, by the *Apsaras* and *Gandharvas*.

"Brahmanodhitya Bharatah Sangitam
Marga Sangitam
Apsarobhischa Gandharbhaih Shambhoragre
Prajuktaban" (Parjat).

INDIA'S COMMON MUSIC

India had a common music of archetypal character, which was called *marga sangit* and which was an ideal music, to be followed by all the musicians. In the spheres of *marga sangit* or basic music, Orissa was as much advanced as any other province of the North and the South. But during the entire period beginning from Bharat Muni and ending in Sarangadeb the classical music of India was divided into two sections: *marga* and *deshi*.

According to the music treatises those forms of vocal and instrumental music and dance which were pleasing to the hearts of the people of different lands were known as *deshi*—

"Deshe Deshe Jananang Yaa
ruchya Hridayaranjakam
Ganam cha badanam Nrityam
tad deshityabhidhiyate." — (Ratnakara)

The provincal music formed by the provincial *ragas*, after having reached a standard of refinement

was also regarded as classical one. According to Bharata, Orissa excelled in *marga* style:—

"Apasabya prabeshastu panchalo
Odra Magadhi"

Again.

"Koshala stoshalaschaiba
Kalingah Jabanah Khasha"

These latter refer to the creations in *deshi* style of dance and music.

ALL ROUND PROFICIENCY

Thus Orissa was proficient in *marga* as well as *deshi* style of music. Although she has followed the common laws of the *marga* she developed her own regional classical or *deshi* music according to the environments, characteristics and tastes of her own people. So Ratnakara says:—

"Anga Banga Kalingadyah
desh bheda hi hetabah
Jeshu Jeshu cha desheshu
Sa bhasha saiba ballabhah"

i.e. according to the differences of lands, Anga, Banga, Kalinga, have their own regionally favourite languages and music. There are three treatises written in the Odissi language, which have been preserved by scholars and musicologists of Orissa. These are:—(1) *Sangita Narayan* (2) *Natya Manorama* and (3) *Sangita Sarani.* All these are preserved in manuscript forms and now the State Akadami is getting them ready for publication. These books cover extensive fields of *marga* and *deshi* music as well as dance.

CHARACTERISTIC STYLE

Our own experience in Odissi music has convinced us that though many *ragas* of Orissa bear the common names of Hindusthan and South India the Odissi music has its own characteristic style in the representation of *ragas* and *talas.* Odissi music had its continuous courses of progress during the Pathan and the Moghul periods, because during that time, no political upheavals and disturbances upset the progress of Orissan culture. It is only at the fag end of the Muslim period and during the British period, that Orissa went through long periods of economic disturbances, which upset her hoary culture. Orissan treatises upheld the theory of *ragas* and *raginis* and in that respect the theoretical basis of Odissi music has much in common with the Hindusthani music. Only several districts of the southern Orissa follow entirely the Karnatic system of music. But, as a whole, the theory of Odissi music has more in common with the Hindusthani *sangit paddhati.*

On account of economic distresses, the lives of Orissan musicologists and musicians had an uphill struggle for maintaining themselves and their knowledge. Arts cannot grow under the shadow of penury. However, after the independence of India, Orissa State is reorganising itself for an all-round revival of its glorious culture and music will surely thrive again in that wonderful region, where the temples of Jagannath, Bhubaneshwar and Konarak call both the masses and the classes with their everlasting message of devotion, beauty and greatness. The real specimens of Odissi music are still found among traditional classical musicians (both vocalists and instrumentalists), and also in the temple-music. For the future of Odissi music, knowledge of both the Hindusthani and Karnatic systems are essential and Orissa's geographical position makes it an ideal region for assimilation and fusion of these two schools of music, which were originally one.

SRI AUROBINDO ON ART

Last but not the least of all, we should all remember the real meaning of Indian culture including the arts and the music, which is to express the spirit in the vehicle of forms and sounds. Orissa being a holy region, one is always reminded there of this supreme truth of life. We must always remember what Sri Aurobindo has said:—

> "The value of Eastern Thought and Eastern Art to the world is altogether incalculable. For their greatness is that . . . . . they have always seen in the mind and body only instruments for the expression of that which is deeper and greater than the instruments. Even intellect and emotion had for them only a secondary value. Not to imitate nature, but to reveal that which she has hidden, to find significant forms which shall embody for us, what her too obvious and familiar symbols conceal, has been the aim of the greatest Art, the Art of those countries and ages whose culture has been faithful to the original truth of the spirit." ("Views & Reviews" By Sri Aurobindo).

Orissa certainly bears the greatest examples of this spiritual Art and the future development of her Art and Music lies in unfolding the true values of the spirit in a new environment in ever-new and ever-lasting forms.

Spotlight On Sport

(Continued From Page 229)

years there have been one or two consistent trouble-shooters. These are the gentlemen who can never take a referee's decision without a show of annoyance and incredulity and their reactions and grimaces are quickly taken up by the crowd which, in no time, are on their feet shouting for the referee's blood if they haven't already drawn it with a well-placed brickbat!

Such players have been no good for Calcutta Football and yet some of them have been lionised. Fine performers though they might be, their complete lack of sportsmanship disqualifies them for any team that I might be running. They influence the younger player to bad ways because he worships them and tries to copy them in all that they do; they bring a bad name to the Clubs they represent and to the State when they are sent out to play in Bengal colours. A very senior Army Officer once asked me why Bengal includes non-Bengalees whose only object, on the field, seems to be to bring discredit to the State. "Pot-hunting" was all I could reply.

Yes, in this mad race for trophies we are too inclined to overlook the more important issues. Some people have argued with me that Bengal's Football reputation would be at stake if certain imported players were left out of the team just because of continued bad behaviour. I have laughed at this because in what way is Bengal's Football reputation upheld by a team consisting of eight outsiders and three Bengalees? I am not unreasonable.

These, in a nut-shell, are the main troubles that beset the game in these parts to-day. In an endeavour to examine them more closely and to find out the best suggestions for overcoming them I shall bring before the readers of *Amrita Bazar Patrika* many more eminent players of all games and, by picking their brains, try and discover workable methods of doing so.

Being an optimist, I am convinced that one day we shall turn the corner. How greatly is that to be desired and the thought that some day we might play games and watch games in the spirit of comradeship and understanding for which games, when you think of it, were devised. Then life will surely take on a little more pleasantness, the pleasantness, I hope, that all of you will experience in the days of festival that lie just ahead.

WEST BENGAL TO-DAY

By BIMAL CHANDRA SINHA
Minister for Revenue, West Bengal.

ABOUT four years back I had the privilege of compiling and editing a book entitled "West Bengal To-day" on behalf of the Government of West Bengal. In that book I tried to assess some peculiar social and economic tendencies affecting the structure of West Bengal as could be discerned from facts then available. The main features that could be observed at that time were as follows:—

(1) Density of population was practically the highest in West Bengal amongst all Indian States. While the density of population per square mile for the whole of India was 287 in the 1951 Census, the corresponding figures for Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bombay, the Punjab, Orissa and Assam were respectively 557, 572, 323, 338, 243 (without tribal area) and 106. But in West Bengal it was 799.

(2) It has a very unequal demographic distribution. While the overall average indicated a very high pressure of population the detailed break-up shows that some of the police stations maintained a density of more than 1050 persons to the square mile.

(3) There was another feature. While the growth of population was more or less erratic up till 1921, there was a very steady increase after that year. Between 1872 and 1921 sometimes even there was some degrowth in some of the areas in West Bengal as a whole. The total growth over 1872 population during these 50 years was only 20.5 per cent, but the net increase between 1921 and 1951 was as much as 51.3%, the rate of growth in fact being more than double. As the Census Report, 1951 observes: "From 1921 onwards a totally different pattern of growth has prevailed. The period 1921-51 has been one of steady and rapid growths, which for West Bengal as a whole is only slightly less than its growth during a longer period, 1901-51, of which it forms the 2|3rds in length. And different demographic authorities have observed that even leaving out the influx of displaced persons we have now entered into a period of steady growth of population and it is not likely that this trend would be reversed soon".

(4) It is remarkable that this distribution of population follows an economic pattern. For instance, of the 104 police stations which contain a population density of more than 1050 persons per square mile, 33 are in the Calcutta and Howrah municipal areas, 28 police stations are in other industrial areas such as Asansol, Budge Budge, etc., 17 police stations are in non-industrial areas with one non-industrial town each and 26 police stations are entirely rural. This clearly indicates that overcrowding has taken place where there is varied occupation pattern. Even those entirely rural police stations which have a high density are mostly located round about the Calcutta and Howrah industrial belt (such as Amta, Mograhat, Chanditala, Bagnan, Sankrail) and there are special historical and economic reasons for conglomeration of population in these areas. To quote from the Census Report again: "Out of a total area of 30775 square miles 13.4% of the total area contains as high as 42.7% of the State's entire population in these areas." Almost by contrast 86.6% of the State's area contains 57.3% of the State's population. This is clearly a result of correlation of density to the livelihood pattern as the Census Report indicates: "In respect of only six police stations whose densities are between 750 and 1050, there is a close correspondence between the percentage of population and the area; or in other words, it is in the police stations of these densities that the distribution of population is matched to the area. The further away one moves from this norm the greater is the disproportion of the area as a whole, until at the two extreme ends, on the one hand 5.81% of the State's area contains as little as 0.08% of its population and on the other 1.37% of the State's area contains as much as 21.73 per cent of its population, with an average density of about 12700 persons to the square mile."

(5) Analysing this process further we find that there has been an almost automatic correlation between livelihood and density even in the agricultural sector. The statement of the 1951 Census Report (West Bengal) shows that if we examine rural density per square mile and the proportion of total population supported by agriculture per thousand of general population during 1901-1921 and in 1951, it will be found that both registered an increase upto a level, but as soon as that level is reached rural density goes on increasing, but the proportion falls off, this indicating clearly that agriculture can no longer give occupation to the increasing rural population. It is found from that table that the peak level is reached round about the rural density of 560 persons per square mile. As the Census Report observes: "In the industrial districts of Hooghly, Howrah and Burdwan the peak of agricultural crowding seems to have been reached as early as 1911, ... it is interesting to note how in all the districts, except in Birbhum and Bankura where cultivation is a more different problem than elsewhere, agricultural crowding reached its peak 10 years later, i.e. in 1921, ... the decline is marked enough to be significant and shows how agriculture is steadily heading towards a crisis. But the stage has already been reached when agriculture cannot entertain larger population but must drive away some of the surplus. But as has been shown, ... the population driven away to towns by agricultural overcrowding leads a pillar-to-post existence and aggravates submarginal living."

(6) There are also other signs of overcrowding: For instance,

(a) Land utilisation is unnaturally high in West Bengal.

The following table speaks for itself:—

TABLE I

Land utilisation in different States and density per square mile

	1st set Per cent	2nd set Per cent	Density per square mile
ALL-INDIA	32.8	65.1	..
Total—Part "A" States	40.7	65.1	..
Assam	10.2	15.4	106
Bihar	50.7	82.6	572
Bombay	57.7	81.1	323
Madras	38.3	76.9	446
Orissa	16.5	23.9	244
Punjab	49.9	80.7	338
Madhya Pradesh	34.9	56.8	163
WEST BENGAL	59.5	85.1	806

(b) Another fact about overcrowding is to be found in the very small proportion of owner-cultivators of land in this State. In the U.P., for example, owner-cultivators with their dependants constitute 62.27% of the total population, whereas in West Bengal the corresponding percentage is only 32.3%. That

is why the Census Report for West Bengal, 1951, very aptly remarks: "This statement shows at once how deep the crisis in agriculture is in West Bengal and how fearful overcrowding and uneconomic agriculture is, compared to all other States in India. In no other States except Bombay and Madras is the proportion of owner-cultivators and their dependants so small, nor the relative proportion of share-croppers and agricultural landless labourers so large."

(c) Another index of overcrowding in West Bengal is to be found in the proportion of earners to dependants. The Census Report gives us the figure that in 1901 the proportion of earners in agricultural occupation was 19.8, but corresponding figures for 1911, 1921, 1931 and 1951 are 23.4, 23.4, 18.5 and 14.9 respectively. This also clearly demonstrates that the peak capacity was reached in 1921 after which the decline has set in. More and more people have, after 1921, come to depend on a lesser and lesser number of earners. The same trend is available also in the non-agricultural livelihoods. The Census Report observes: "This indeed is a shocking revelation..... it shows how gradually the proportion of earners to total population has been rising steadily in agricultural and total livelihoods."

(d) A still more alarming indication of overcrowding is to be found in the fact that there is more and more dependence on agriculture. For instance, non-agricultural classes sometimes used to depend partially on agriculture as their secondary means of livelihood. The Census Report, 1951, reveals that in the Burdwan Division the number of self-supporting persons in all the non-agricultural classes having some agricultural means of livelihood was only 60 in 1921, but the corresponding figure for 1951 became so high as 831. This clearly indicates that even those who depend primarily on non-industrial occupations are gradually falling back on agriculture.

(e) This is not only true of the industrial sector but also in the tertiary sector such as commerce and other similar avocations of life. Statistics reveal that the growth of economic opportunities has been outpaced by the growth of population during recent decades. The findings of many surveys of unemployment in Calcutta and other areas also bring this fact out.

II

We have examined above some of the trends that were operating in Bengal for some decades. Let us now examine some more recent facts.

The first point to be noted is the sharp increase in population growth. There are two factors involved. An unnatural increase is due to the rapid influx of refugees. But even leaving this point apart, it has to be recognised now that our population is set for a steady and fast growth. The primary reason for this change is undoubtedly better health measures and the fall in the death-rate. A recent report published by the Public Health Department gives the following data about the steady fall in death-rate and steady increase in birth-rate in West Bengal.

	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
Birth-rate per mille	21.3	22.8	20.3	21.9	23.1	22.7	23.0	23.7
Death-rate per mile	18.1	17.4	16.7	13.0	10.8	10.2	9.3	8.9

It is well-known that there is a time-lag between the fall in the death-rate and the fall in the birth-rate. In fact here also birth-rate is increasing while death-rate is falling. There is bound to be faster increase in population in this situation. It has been estimated that in 1955, the total population was as high as 26,200,532, the density per square mile being 844.0. The mean annual growth in percentage is as follows:—

BENGAL	
1901	0.47
1911	0.76
1921	0.26
1931	0.70
WEST BENGAL	
1951	1.27
1954	1.31
1955	1.52

This obviously includes the refugees. But even if we leave the refugees out year by year the mean annual growth would be very high, (in fact practically the same)—in any case more than double of what it was fifty years back. Any planning for the future must therefore take into account the expected rapid population growth.

The second point that deserves consideration in this connection is the overcrowding in certain avocations of life. We again turn to the agricultural sector. The recent Survey and Settlement Operations in West Bengal have brought out a large number of facts. We give below some of them.

(a) From the tentative figures now available, it appears that the number of bargadars has remained steady. These figures are yet subject to further checking and it would not be desirable to draw any final conclusions. But one assumption may not be incorrect even at this stage. Perhaps the number of bargadars has remained steady because employment in land has reached saturation point and agriculture cannot absorb even more bargadars.

(b) The following table gives some idea of existing waste land blocks in some of the districts :

TABLE II

NUMBER OF WASTE LAND BLOCKS

Sl. No.	Name of the district.	Number of waste land blocks below 30 acres.	Number of waste land blocks between 30-50 acres.	Number of waste land blocks between 51-100 acres.	Number of waste land blocks between 101-150 acres.	Number of waste land blocks between 151 and above.	Total number of waste land blocks.	Total area of waste land (shown in acres)	Remarks.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	Burdwan	147	25	25	7	4	208	6,577.27	
2.	Bankura	355	34	22	3	2	416	9,494.44	
3.	Midnapore	Not estimated	247	180	65	65	557	37,190.27	
4.	Malda	,,	20	23	6	4	53	4,007.25	
5.	Birbhum	,,	21	6	3	1	31	1,781.12	
	Total	502	347	256	84	76	1265	59,050.35	

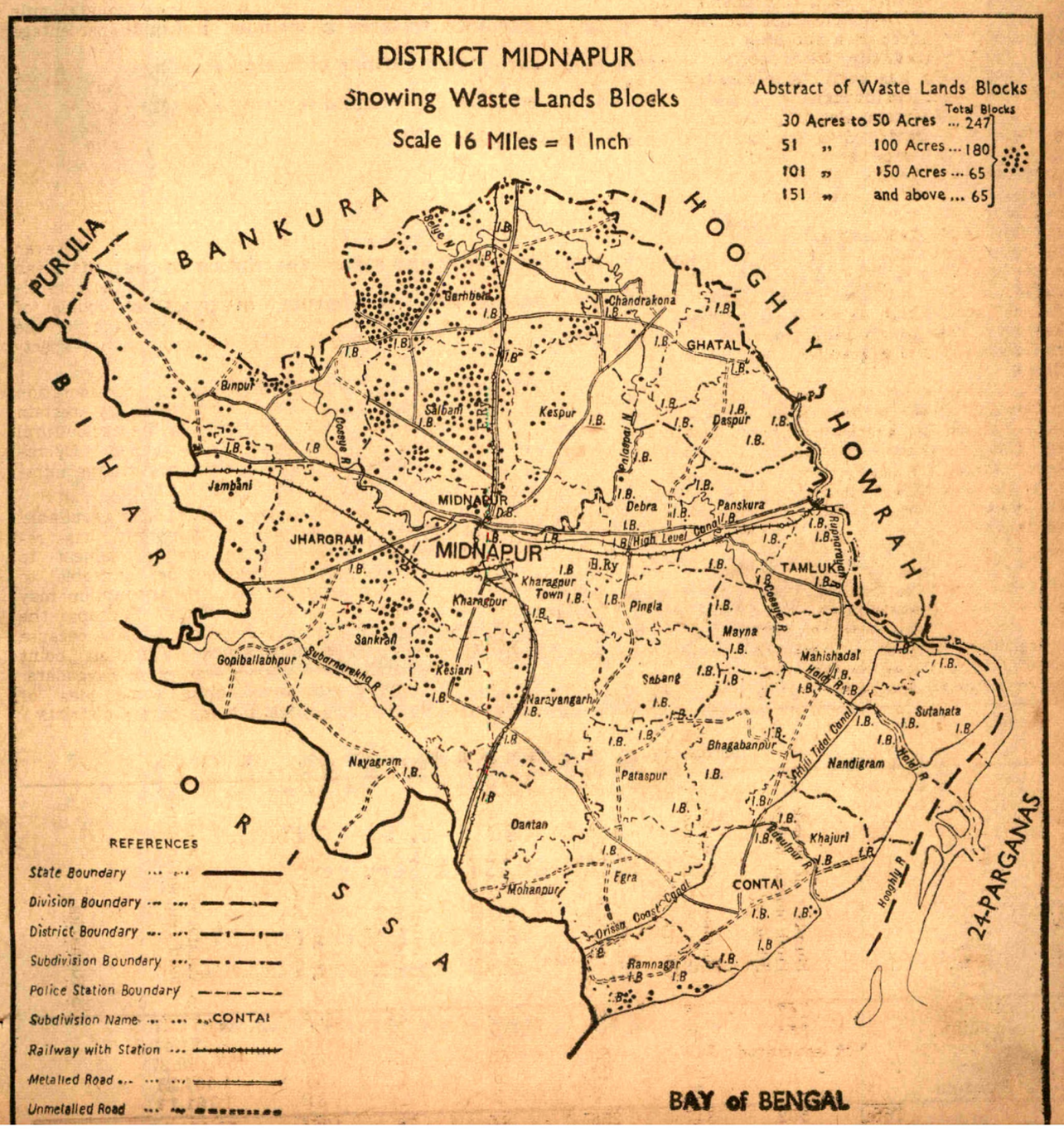
It will be seen that the more arid and barren the district the greater the number of waste land blocks. The Government of West Bengal have also been preparing maps showing the location of these waste land blocks. The map of the district of Midnapore is reproduced below as a specimen.

The map reveals the expected phenomenon of the waste land blocks being mostly situated in arid zones. In the deeply agricultural areas of south Midnapore, the blocks are very few. But as we proceed towards the laterite belt in the north-west or the sandy belt of the coast we find a greater number of waste land blocks. This makes it clear that all marginal lands have been cultivated, and those which are still not cultivated may not be easily cultivated, perhaps not without an enormously high cost. If such cultivation is technologically possible, it is always economically not so,—at least not for the peasantry.

III

These are undoubtedly signs of economic crisis. In the case of West Bengal, however, these are not unexpected. First, from a very broad socio-economic point of view, it may be remembered that the crisis, typical of colonial exploitation, is expected to develop in all its intensity and extensity in West Bengal. The brunt of British capitalism fell first and most strongly and effectively on Bengal. In fact, not only there was the brunt, but its influence was so deep and penetrating that our social and economic pattern too was very substantially moulded by that impact. The creation of a new class of revenue far-

(Continued On Page 252)



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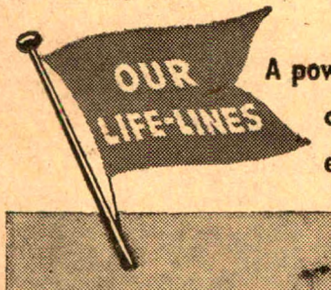

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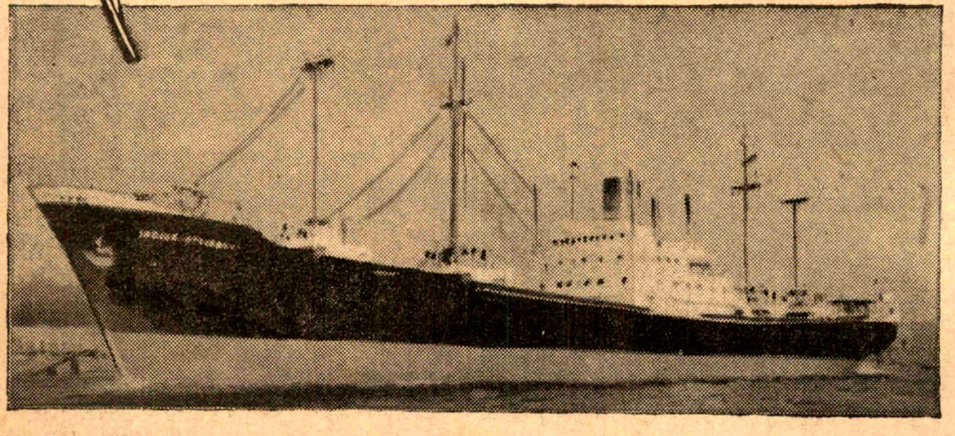

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ADIVASIS Of Uttar Pradesh

Aboriginal of Dudhi cutting a lac tree branch.

By A. KUMAR

MAHATMA GANDHI once termed the Adivasis of India the 'unspoilt children of God'. Perhaps, this description is so apposite to none as it is to the aborigines of Dudhi in Mirzapur district of Uttar Pradesh.

Known for their truthfulness, these simple, God-fearing Adivasis lived in the seclusion of their forest-dwellings for ages uninfluenced by the currents and cross-currents of modern civilization. These unsophisticated tribal folk were till recently an exploited people. Maybe, this was the price they had to pay for being guileless.

VICTIMS OF MALNUTRITION

The rugged nature of the soil and the mountainous terrains of the Dudhi tribal belt rendered land cultivation unproductive. The aborigines were virtually rendered desperate by poverty. They lived on tree leaves and roots to stave off the pangs of hunger. As a result of malnutrition, they suffered from the dreaded yaws which mutilated their arms and limbs. In 1857, this picturesque tribal area witnessed a large-scale influx of migrants from the neighbouring plains of Bihar. With their business acumen, they acquired land, monopolised trade, lent money to the aborigines and became their overlords.

The Adivasis were inclined to be reckless and extravagant on festive occasions. They soon got into debt. If a male member got married, it was considered a reproach on him, if he did not incur debt for the occasion!

EMBRACES SLAVERY

The interest charged by the money-lenders was so heavy that very few were able to pay it. Then they would go to the money-lender and say: 'I am your Kumia', which means that the Adivasi had finally decided that he could not pay any more and was prepared to sign himself and his family as slaves to the money-lender concerned. The aboriginal worked for the money-lender as a servant or field labourer. He was given a piece of cloth every two years. Serving in this manner, the Adivasi could not hope to pay off his debt, and the system, not far removed from slavery, helped the money-lender.

MONEY-LENDERS' RUEL RUSE

With the dawn of freedom, the Government outlawed this cruel system. The money-lenders who had been trading on the misery of these tribal people sought, for a while, to thwart the Government's move to end the evil. Working on the fears of the Adivasis, the money-lenders told the credulous aborigines that a Government delegation was arriving in Dudhi to pick up a victim from among the aborigines for a human sacrifice to propitiate God. When the members of the Committee appointed by the Government reached Dudhi to enquire into the economic conditions of the aborigines, not a single Adivasi was found in the tribal area. They had fled to their jungle hutments the previous night.

SADIST CLERK

Even the money-lender's clerk, who derived a sort of ghoulish delight in imitating his master

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Some Adivasi girls attending a knitting class.

harassed the Adivasis. Once a *munim* (clerk) lost his pair of shoes. He summoned a batch of Adivasis working as his employer's slave-labourers and asked them to prove their innocence by dipping their hands into a pot of boiling oil. One by one they dipped their hands into the pot of boiling oil and were severely scalded. The sadist, resorting to this ingenious method, held all of them guilty of stealing his shoes. An outsider who happened to be on the scene asked the *munim* himself to prove that he had lost his shoes by dipping his own hands into the boiling kettle. If the *munim's* hands were not burnt, his shoes would be taken as stolen. But the wily *munim* would not go through the fiery ordeal and beat a hasty retreat.

Till the advent of the Community Project Administration in 1952, the Adivasis took fright on seeing well-dressed people approaching them and fled in panic. They spent sleepless nights on tree-tops till the visitors left the place.

The Adivasis of Dudhi belong to different clans, the chief among them being Mahjis, Panikers, Pathari, Bhuinya, Chero, Mushar, Kolh, Korwas and Parahiya. They are animists and worship Nature in all its manifestations. On fixed days in the year, they worship trees. They sacrifice goats, birds and animals on these festive occasions. Marriage customs differ from clan to clan but the dowry system is common to all. The bride is offered the dowry and not the bridegroom.

FOLK SONGS & DANCES

The Adivasis' love of song and dance has served to lighten the drudgery of life. The folk dances of the aborigines are famous for their vigour, lilt, grace, allure, rhythm and abandon. The most popular of the folk dances is the *Karma* dance in which men and women participate. The dance is staged around the *Karma* tree which is also worshipped on the occasion. The *Karma* trees abound in the forests of Dudhi.

One of the dancers acts as the leader of the dancing party consisting of men and women in equal numbers. The leader wears *ghangurias* on his loins while the others wear them on their legs. The leader sways his body in rhythmic motion with the *ghangurias* tingling and beating the drum called *Manar*. The roll of the *Manar* is louder than that of the ordinary drum.

ORIGIN OF KARMA DANCE

The *Karma* dance has an interesting origin. There were five Adivasi brothers, four of whom had been married. While the four married brothers worked in their fields, the youngest, who was fond of dance and music, danced with his sisters-in-law around a *Karma* tree planted in front of their house. The dancers were so much absorbed in dancing that the women forgot to take the meals to their husbands working in the fields. The enraged husbands returned home only to find that their wives were dancing around a tree in the company of their bachelor brother. The brother was turned out of their house. He soon started a school of dancing and trained many Adivasis. He became rich while his four brothers became poor and took to begging. They wandered, but were finally reunited with their prosperous brother. The *Karma* dance symbolises this union of the five brothers.

THE EVIL OF DRINK

As recently as 1946, the *Karma* dance, staged all through the night, used to attract larger audiences than it does now-a-days. Both men and women who took the dance floor drank heavily. The evil of

Adivasis seen staging a duet.

ADIVASIS OF UTTAR PRADESH

drink led to piquant situations. Partners fell on the floor causing commotion. Sometimes the dancing partners eloped.

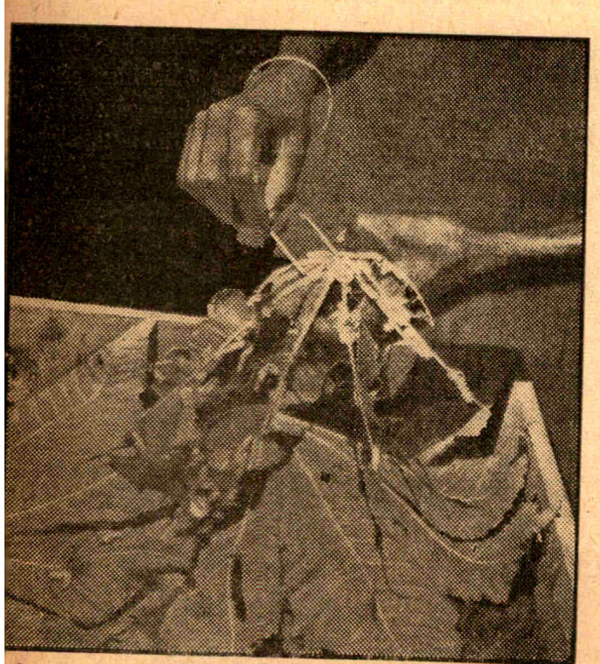
In the latter part of this century a social reformer, Rajmohini Mata, preached tirelessly against the practice of the *Karma* dance accompanied by drink. She pleaded for the retention of the *Karma* dance without drink. Dancing, she said, added to the joy of living but drinking was a soul-destroying vice which should be despised. Her advice had salutary effect. While the *Karma* dance retains its old vigour and form, the dancers stage it without liquor.

MODERN WAYS

Under the impact of modern ideas the Adivasis of Dudhi, while retaining all that is best in their tribal way of living, have shown themselves amenable to new ideas and scientific thinking. The Adivasis are now willing partners in the mighty enterprise of building the new India of our dreams. No longer do they cling to superstitions. The tribal gods are retreating. They are being replaced by the inventive genius of the modern man.

The Adivasis have taken to modern agricultural methods under the aegis of the Community Project Administration. They have built roads through voluntary labour. They feel the pulse of a new life in the multifold facets of the Community Development programme. The lac industry has proved a source of additional income to them. The urge to better his lot has bestirred the Adivasi into increased activity. Once sunk in sloth and slumber, the Adivasi now ceaselessly labours for his own good. He can be seen either at work in his field or pruning the branch of a lac tree or nurturing a silk worm.

The Adivasi boys and girls learn in common schools. The days of segregation and exploitation have ended for them. What was once called the 'little South Africa' of Uttar Pradesh, because of the ruthless segregation the tribal people were subjected to, has become a land of smiling fields shimmering with waving corn, through the ceaseless endeavours of the Adivasis themselves.



divasi separating silk worms from castor leaves

West Bengal To-Day

(Continued From Page 247)

mers, termed zamindars, resulting in commercialisation of agriculture, the growth of a disproportionately important middle class and the emergence of a very big salaried class, decay of the real agricultural classes and the development of industries to fulfil imperial needs—this is a pattern which developed most prominently in Bengal, particularly in West Bengal, amongst all the Indian provinces. Other provinces were slow to adopt this pattern; in fact, even now, other provinces do not show much of this pattern. It is, therefore, not unnatural that when the wheel would have a full turn and the crisis, inherent in capitalism, will overtake the society, that society would be the hardest hit which was the earliest to start along this path and had the most pronounced development on the colonial pattern. West Bengal is such a case.

NEED FOR SACRIFICE

But apart from this long-term view of history, there are also certain short-term facts to be considered. When we take into consideration the effects of the War, Famine and Partition and also of the influx of refugees, it is easily understood that West Bengal must pass through a critical period for some time.

Then again there are still certain other factors. The pattern of development now accepted by all progressive under-developed countries bears the seed of such crisis. The under-developed countries, including India and West Bengal, have now no time to go leisurely through the various normal phases of development. The pace must be quick and strides rapid. With the limited resources at their disposal and big capitalist countries often refusing adequate help, these countries have to put a good deal of pressure on the population for laying the foundations of a sound economy. Immediate needs are often ignored for future benefit; immense sacrifices have often to be made now for future improvement. This crisis cannot be avoided; only things that are to be keenly watched are that the foundations that are being laid are really sound and the sacrifices that are being made are not in vain.

West Bengal is now passing through such a crisis. Let us hope that she will emerge out of this crisis as a new West Bengal with new hopes, a new future, a new social system and a new economic life.

MILK AND ITS SOURCES

By P. K. CHANDRA, Ex-Professor, Bengal Veterinary College

IF any one is asked to say 'what is meant by food?' he would probably say that what is eaten is food. This answer, of course, is correct but I would add that a food when taken builds up the body, repairs its lost tissues and supplies it with materials for production of heat, energy and muscular activities. A true food, therefore, must be a tissue builder and at the same time a source of potential energy, to help the development of the body in general and supply the same with energy, strength and power to work.

In order to meet the various requirements of the body the food should contain some elements. A food without these elements may appease the hunger, but will not be called a food in proper sense of the term, as it would not help the body to fully function. These elements are (1) proteins, (2) carbohydrates, (3) fats, (4) mineral matters, (5) water and (6) vitamins.

(1) Proteins—These are most essential elements necessary for the maintenance of animal life, because they contribute to the formation and repair of body tissues and make the body strong and powerful by imparting strength and firmness to the musculature.

(2) Carbohydrates—Their main function is to supply the animal body with the required amount of heat and energy. It also helps in production of body fats.

(3) Fats—Their function is almost identical with that of carbohydrates narrated above.

(4) Mineral matters—This group includes calcium, potassium, sodium, magnesium, iron, phosphorus and several others. These salts, though they have different functions, collectively give tone to the body-cells and help the tissues in general to function normally.

(5) Water—Though this has practically no food value still it is considered as an essential part of the diet, because water, besides helping the digestion and assimilation of food, regulates the excretions of the body such as, faeces, urine, sweat, etc. and controls the temperature. Its another very important function is to maintain the fluidity of the vital fluid of the body,—the blood, which is essential for its free circulation.

(6) Vitamins—These are chemical substances of diverse nature found as accessory food materials in almost every food, irrespective of whether of animal or vegetable origin. These are usually represented by letters A B C D E etc. A very remarkable thing about these vitamins is that no marked change is noticed in animal body if there is no deficiency of them, whereas their deficiency will bring about various changes, that is disorders, which ultimately may lead to complete breakdown of the health or even cause death.

The above mentioned elements are seldom found together in any single food and that is why we are to take a combination of foods in order to help our bodies to obtain them. It may be noted that our system cannot get these substances directly from the food when taken, but is obtained only after the food is digested and broken up into different component parts it was composed of. Hence foods must be easily digestible.

As a single food milk is an ideal one, as it has all the elements such as, protein, carbohydrate, fat, mineral matters and vitamins either in the form of a solution, emulsion or suspension in the water the milk contains,—which renders their assimilation an easy task. In short, there is no other single food so tasteful, so easily digestible and so health giving and at the same time so well-balanced as milk, provided it is fresh, pure and obtained from healthy cow kept under best possible hygienic conditions and fed with well-balanced diet. Because of its high food value Nature has made provision in the udder of mothers of all species of mammals with this precious fluid to meet the food requirements of their newly born ones during the first few months of their lives. In fact, newly born mammals lay the foundation of their future body structures by consuming milk alone. They do not thrive well with any other food and if they manage to live for some time, they remain sickly and stunted, and suffer from various diseases till the end of their lives which, unfortunately, is usually a short one.

The composition of milk is same in every species of mammal, the only difference being in the proportions of its different constituents which, as is natural, is just in keeping with the requirements of individual young ones possessing individual body features and characters. The table below gives an idea about the composition of milk of some species of mammals including woman:—

Species of mammals	Specific gravity	Water	Protein	Carbo-hydrate	Mineral matters	Fat
Woman	1.0298	27.58	2.01	6.37	0.30	3.74
Cow	1.0313	87.27	3.39	4.94	0.72	3.68
Buffalo	1.030	82.22	4.37	4.82	0.94	7.65
Ass	1.032	90.12	1.85	6.19	0.47	1.37
Sheep	1.0355	83.57	5.15	4.17	0.93	6.18
Goat	1.0305	86.88	3.76	4.64	0.85	4.07
Sow	1.038	83.94	7.23	3.23	1.05	4.55
Mare	1.0347	90.58	2.05	5.87	0.36	1.14
Camel	1.042	86.57	4.00	5.59	0.77	3.07
Elephant	1.0313	79.13	2.51	8.59	0.50	9.10

Though it looks unbelievable yet it is a fact that because of its high value as a food the milk of most of the mammals listed in the table above is consumed by man.

It may be noted here that originally Nature provided the udders of the cows with just enough quantity of milk to meet the daily requirements of their sucklings and there was seldom any milk left in the udder after it was suckled. But by selective breeding and feeding with well-balanced ration based on researches man has so much improved the milk-yielding capacity of the cow that a large quantity of surplus milk remains in the udder for their use. Many of the readers would probably be surprised to learn what a wonderful perfection has been achieved in this respect by the people of Canada, England and many other western countries. According to the Statisticians the average milk yield is at present highest in England, it being 7,658 pounds per lactation, with Belgium, New Zealand, Denmark and America in successive positions with average milk yield of 6,362 pounds, 5,660 pounds, 5,291 pounds and 3,218 pounds respectively. In contrast to these figures India has an average of 341 pounds only.

Now I would enumerate in the table following

the per capita milk consumption by some countries including India as calculated by the Statisticians:—

Canada	— 56.8	ounces
Australia	— 44.4	"
Grt. Britain	— 40.7	"
Denmark	— 40.3	"
U.S.A.	— 35.6	"
India	— 6.26	"

It should be noted that the average of 6.26 ounces, as shown against India in the above table, has been calculated on all-India basis. Now if the milk yield of West Bengal in ratio to its population is singled out then the average of per capita consumption in this province would come to a mere trifle as will be evident from the table given below:—

Punjab	— 16.89	ounces
Uttar Pradesh	— 7.16	"
Delhi	— 5.53	"
Bihar	— 4.37	"
Madras	— 4.18	"
West Bengal	— 2.70	"

There is no wonder that the figure of per capita consumption of milk in West Bengal is so miserably low because the cattle of this province is of a very low type having very poor milk yield. A table showing the average milk yield per lactation of cows of some provinces of India including West Bengal is given below:—

Punjab	— 1,445	pounds
Delhi	— 1,270	"
Sourastra	— 1,000	"
Himachal Pradesh	— 900	"
Uttar Pradesh	— 625	"
Bihar	— 620	"
Madras	— 450	"
West Bengal	— 420	"

The readers should be warned not to take those better types of cows they see in Calcutta and other urban areas as representative of the indigenous breed of West Bengal. These animals are mostly imported from other provinces. One must visit some rural areas to see the breed of West Bengal.

CONDITION IN W. BENGAL

One would feel astonished to learn that most of the creatures called cattle in West Bengal are, figuratively, as good as dead, because excepting the few cows in milk and a few yokes the rest is never cared for by their owners. There is no grazing field in the true sense of the term in any village. The hungry animals wander about the whole day in search of food which, unfortunately, they seldom get. The only food they get sometimes is the dry stumps of paddy crops left behind in the fields after harvesting. And the most amazing and at the same time amusing fact, though very pathetic, is that the villagers call these fields as 'grazing grounds' and get consolation by uttering that their animals are out for grazing. However, after a whole day's tramping without food these animals are driven back to the villages in the evening and sheltered for the night in hellish byres. At this time some kind-hearted (?) owners give their animals something to eat which, however, they could go without, as the food given them is nothing but a few handfuls of dry paddy straw not sufficient to appease the hunger of even a single animal. Owners of animals, particularly of rural areas, may be accused of being indifferent to yet another very important matter. This is the unchecked and uncontrolled breeding by undersized and underaged precocious bulls which, in addition to the existing deplorable defects in housing and feeding, is yet another cause of degeneration of cattle of this province.

One frequently hears that poverty and ignorance of the people are the real causes of the present poor condition of the cattle in this State. There is no doubt that the mass is poor but the ground of poverty cannot be accepted as a true cause for the progressive deterioration of our cattle, because the real cause is their idleness and callousness which can be easily shaken off by sheer habit if they have a mind to and this would not cost them even the smallest of our new coins, a naya paisa. And now about the plea of ignorance. I do not think that any one at the present time requires preaching to make him conscious of the fact that to keep his animal well he must feed it well and house it well. That, of course, would cost him some money. But is there any sense or reason in keeping a large number of useless animals? Surely this costs them something, whatever may be the amount. Besides, this is an absolutely harmful practice. These animals, underfed and uncared for, become sickly and weak and their growth is checked resulting in a stunted appearance. Free breeding amongst such animals results in more sickly, more weak and more stunted generation of offsprings, free breeding amongst which again brings forth still worse type of progenies. In this way the breed becomes degenerated as it has already happened in West Bengal.

To remedy this each owner should reduce the number of animals* and keep only those which are really useful and serviceable and which he would be able to feed properly. Simultaneously he should build an improved type of byre for his animals which, after the elimination of a large number of useless animals, will be an easier task and expected to be within his means. Over and above these, free breeding amongst the animals must be stopped for good and selective breeding introduced instead.

In order to do this villagers should select a few bulls that are sturdy, agile and vivacious and are comparatively bigger in size, for each village and make all other unsuitable and useless male calves and bulls sterile by castration so that they may not carry on with the deleterious breeding to the detriment of the selected stock.

It is needless to say that these selected bulls must be well cared for, properly fed, housed well and kept fit by moderate exercise daily. To meet the expenses of these bulls' upkeep a reasonable fee may be levied for services rendered by them. It should be always remembered that the suggestion given above will bear no fruit if, on the one hand, the bulls are not properly looked after and on the other if the villagers, whether for sheer idleness or to save the expenses on account of the service fee or for any reason whatsoever, fail to utilize the services of the selected bulls and get their cows served by scrubby stray bulls.

The calves born of this selective breeding should be reared carefully till they wean, when another selection should be made to sort out all the good female calves and also to single out a number of very best bull calves to replace the old ones in due time, and the rest castrated. If this practice of breeding by selection is strictly adhered to and the selected animals are reared in the way suggested then we may safely expect that the present poor breed of this State, in course of time, would surely be raised to such a high standard, with, of course, a higher milk yield that may be comparable to that already attained

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* Of course slaughtering is the quickest way to reduce the number but this method may be objected to on religious ground. In that case the undesirable female animals should on no account be ever allowed to breed. This could easily be made possible by castrating all the scrub bulls and bull calves and by denying the selected bulls, referred to in the same paragraph, any access to these animals. In short, these female animals should be kept completely segregated till they die.

Automation: Its Advantages And Fears In Industries

By MRITYUNJOY BANERJEE

THE older editions of dictionaries including the Encyclopaedia Britannica do not contain the word 'Automation'. Instead they mention 'automaton', which is 'self-moving machine or one in which the principle of motion is contained within the mechanism itself.' Automation is a new term which—as John Diebold, an authority on the subject, points out—denotes both automatic operation and the process of making things automatic. P. F. Drucker, a management expert, has described it as 'a new industrial revolution', 'a science fiction which has become a reality', practically 'a technocrat's paradise in which no human decisions, no human responsibility, no human management are needed and in which the push button run by its own electric brain produces and distributes abundant wealth'. It generally refers to a system of production involving the use of machines with built-in controls which enable them to adjust to changing conditions of production, correct their own mistakes, inspect the product and even replace their own worn-out parts. Automation is not mere mechanisation of industry which has been going on for generations. "Mechanical energy has long since displaced the biologically generated energy of man and beast in the day's work of our economy. The hewer of wood and the drawer of water has become the machine tender and the processor of paper. It is, in fact, the nervous system, not the muscles of men and women, that our technology principally employs to-day. And it is the *nervous system* that is in process of replacement by *automatic control.*" Another author has hoped that 'just as the first industrial revolution was caused by the machines which replaced man's muscles, so may automatic controls, which replace his brains, be bringing about what Wiener has called the second industrial revolution'. Automation in simple language means the use of machines to run the machines.

As early as 1784, Oliver Evans established an automatic flour mill in Philadelphia. He used three types of power conveyors in a continuous production line. Grain brought in at one end of the mill came out entirely mechanically as flour the other end. In 1801 in Paris J. M. Jacquard exhibited an automatic loom controlled by punched paper cards. It became so popular that by 1812 there were 11,000 such looms operating in France alone. Henry Ford in U.S.A. set up the first automobile assembly line in 1909, transferring auto parts automatically from one machine to another. The first fully automatic factory was the A. O. Smith Co., in Milwaukee which in 1920 started producing automatically automobile body frames. Automation has been going on in full swing in U.S.A. It has already been profitably applied to such industries as chemicals, telephones, automobiles, steel casting and petroleum. More than one thousand firms are engaged wholly or partly in making automatic equipment. During the last few years automatic controls have been installed in some 100,000 plants. In 1955 the oil-processing industry allotted 15 per cent of its expenditure on capital improvements to automatic equipment. In 1956 in the aircraft industry one-fifth of all its funds for equipment was spent on self-operating machines. A third of the automobile-makers' investment for equipment went for automatic machine tools. A recent publication gives some practical examples of automation. At the Ford automobile plant in Cleveland, a rough engine casting is fed into a machine which finishes the top and bottom. Then an automatic lathe bores the cylinder block, the size of the bore is measured by a photoelectric cell, the block goes to the next stage of the machine and the complete motor block emerges within 15 minutes from the start—without being touched by a human hand. At the McMurrey Refinery in Tyler, Texas, production of fuels and petro-chemical products is regulated by three men seated at control panels, through hundreds of indicators, motor-driven valves, alarms and safety devices. The giant brains or electronic computers can handle data at the rate of 3,500 words per second. They collect, classify and store information in memory units which they can recall at a later stage at the rate of 25,000 characters a second. These machines can also perform mathematical calculations at a tremendous speed. A giant calculator built by I. B. M. can finish in 2 hours a financial statement which would keep a staff of accountants busy for 320 hours. A pair of 'smaller brains' made by Remington Rand can complete book-keeping inventories of a warehouse in 30 minutes against 240 hours required by human workers.

First, automation has led to many new industries and completely new products. Many articles have to be processed under conditions of speed, temperature, pressure and chemical exchange which cannot be brought about by human control. Utilisation of atomic energy for medical, commercial and other peaceful purposes would not be possible without precise, automatic equipment to handle the delicate processes by remote control. Electronic calculators are also helpful in solving the higher mathematics of the atomic age. Synthetic materials like polyethylene will be impossible to make without self-regulating controls. With automation, lighter materials, more durable fabrics and effective drugs will continue to appear.

Secondly, it has improved the quality of existing products and increased the productivity of labour. A machine may control more effectively because of its superior efficiency, precision, economy and reliability. In U.S.A. it has been estimated that production has risen by four or five per cent through automation. In the petroleum industry which has applied it largely, the cost of the finished product has come down from more than 28 cents to less than 24 cents per barrel from 1949 to 1955. On their automatic piston plant the Russians claim that direct labour has been reduced by three-quarters and unskilled work practically eliminated.

Thirdly, by raising productivity automation has made possible reduction of working hours. The average work week in U.S.A. which stood at 67 hours in 1870 came down to 42 in 1950 as a result of technological advance. Increasing application of automation brought it down to 40 in 1956. Some experts predict that with further automation it will become 36 hours by 1965. By providing abundant leisure automation has released human energy for

cultural and intellectual pursuits. The character of many jobs has been changed and man's work made easier, simpler and less arduous and monotonous. Lifting devices, transfer machines for moving heavy pieces and stamping and drilling machines that operate by remote control have lightened the burden of the worker. In the office automatic calculators ease mental strain and reduce human errors. This will increase the longevity of man, too.

Accordingly Frank G. Woolard has opined that 'with the aid of automation we shall enter a new phase of living'. R. H. Macmillan has claimed that 'this new branch of technology may eventually enable us to lift the curse of Adam from the shoulders of man'. President Reuther of the American Congress of Industrial Organisations has concluded that 'the world is entering a period when technology and science make it possible to meet mankind's basic needs. And having satisfied those needs, we can devote more time, energy asd resources to facilitating man's growth as a social. cultural and spiritual being'.

But while automation has brought in many benefits, it has created some new problems also. The foremost is the replacement of man by the machine and the resulting unemployment. The old man-versus-machine controversy has been revived in more serious proportions because automation is a very powerful productive weapon. So far as the advanced industrial countries are concerned, where unemployment is only meagre, this may be offset by progress in other directions—development of existing factories. In England when James Hargreaves constructed the first practical multiple spindle machine in 1767, one year later a mob of spinners invaded the mill and destroyed the new equipment. But for the next hundred years England did indeed prosper. Her labour force increased both in textiles and textile machinery and wage rates at the end of the nineteenth century were at least three times those at the beginning. In U.S.A. during the past thirty-five years employment in the oil refineries has increased 174 per cent and in the telephone companies, 130 per cent; yet both these industries have constantly added more automatic devices. Lord Halsbury may declare in England: 'Automation is essential to the continued maintenance of our position in the world. We cannot afford not to exploit it as intensively as we can', and Walter Reuther may claim in U.S.A.: "Economic abundance is now within our grasp if we but have the good sense to use our resources and technology", but backward underdeveloped countries, which are already faced with acute unemployment, cannot provide alternative jobs for those displaced by automation. It is true that production and maintenance of automatic equipments will themselves require some new hands but this will be insignificant. So Dr. Lillian M. Gilbreth who came to India through the U.S. Technical Co-operation Mission in one of her addresses cautioned, "Very definitely do not use these techniques to dispense with people. We very definitely do not instal new methods until we are able to see how the surplus people can be placed". As Mary C. Niles has also emphasised, "In India the fear of unemployment is ever present for the worker and for his neighbours. His increased productivity, therefore, must rest primarily on relieving his fear of unemployment".

Secondly, it is said that automatic technology will impoverish the quality of human life, robbing it of opportunities for individual creation, for pride of workmanship and for qualitative differentiation. The craftsman's skills are superseded by automatic machines that deprive him of the opportunity to make his own creative contribution. Man, the inventor and creator of the machine, will ultimately be surpassed and subdued by his own creation. Frankenstein will finally lay hands upon him.

Thirdly, it is feared that automation wi courage the concentration of political power. first industrial revolution brought about by t troduction of machinery, has lodged the indust in power, replacing the feudal lords. Autor will further strengthen their hands. Since the need much less men than before to operat machines, it means they will depend less on human workers. The bargaining power of emplo is increased by automation. Machines will w much more but will not be able to organise themsel into trade unions or to strike. That is why Sir Geor Thomson has gone so far as to suggest that it ma be possible to train monkeys to do the simple jobs that it is not economic to make automatic. Henry Ford has said that the ideal factory worker now would be a trained ape.

Whatever that may be, as P. F. Drucker has observed, "there can be little doubt that the industrial country that first understands automation and first applies it will lead in productivity and wealth during the second half of the twentieth century". In the race for industrialisation backward regions are already at least fifty years behind their more fortunate, advanced counterparts. Automation will widen the gap much more. Competition between the two regions or two worlds, as it were, will now be something unthinkable.

MILK AND ITS SOURCES

(Continued From Page 254)

by some States referred to in a table elsewhere in this article.

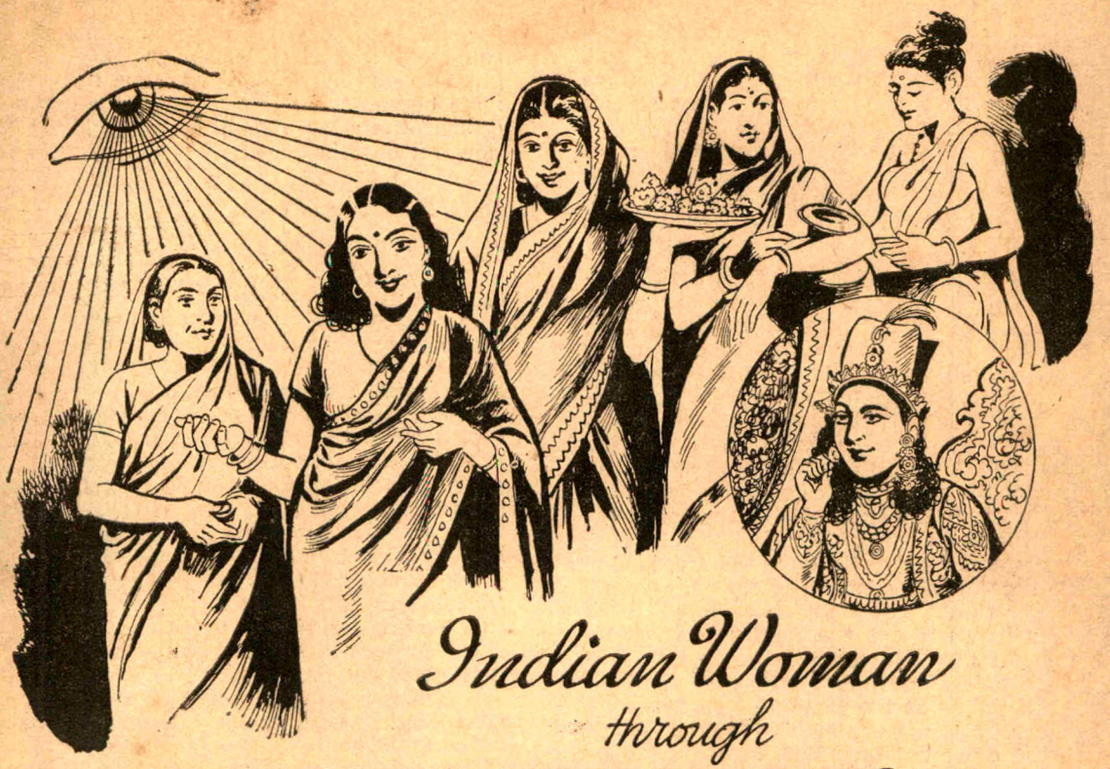
In my humble opinion the method suggested above for improving the local breed with a view to improve the milk supply is the best and at the same time the cheapest one. Improving the milk position by replacing the present stock or by upgrading the present local breed with the help of imported A type of bulls can neither be considered feasible nor sound, as both the above would entail a huge expenditure with a difference in degrees which, we may safely presume, will not be possible of being met from any source.**

Secondly, the better type of animals, because of their bigger size, would require more food to keep them fit. This too would not be possible because of already deficient supply of cattle food,—which will not be possible to improve for want of land for cultivation of cattle food in this extremely over-populated State.

Thirdly, the climate of West Bengal is not at all considered suitable for the better type of animals imported from non-humid upcountry areas.

And the last and main reason against importation of better type of animals is that the indigenous animals of this State have developed a high degree of tolerance or resistance by living in extreme adverse conditions and also have acquired an equal degree of immunity against the many contagious and infectious diseases that are very common in this region, which the improved animals would not possess. So if these animals are brought to this State, they shal have to face all these adverse conditions including feeding as well as the diseases which, without a doubt, cause their retrogression and ultimately bring them to the present low level, of course, if they survive.

** The average price of upcountry animals is Rs. 600/- per cow and Rs. 1000/- per bull.



Indian Woman through WESTERN EYES

By **INDIRA DEVI**

REAL understanding between individuals or between nations is assuredly a very desirable thing—the more as we are so often liable to misunderstand those whom, in our self-confidence, we claim to know out and out. India, indeed welcomes any approach of far countries when they want truly to understand her, and who will not agree that a mutual understanding between the East and the West based on real sympathy for each other's outlook can be of inestimable value to either? But, unfortunately for India, the West very often wants to judge her hastily instead of wanting to understand with sympathy. So India has to say and say strongly that she needs friends but not patrons. I use the word "strongly" because it is patent to all that in the West there *is* a tendency to patronise the East and specially India. We meet much too often with a condescending affection among Westerners for the "poor dear Indians!" It may, indeed, feel good to be charitable towards a nation one knows very little about, but it is, in the last analysis, rather childish. India, with her proud heritage of three thousand years of culture and refinement, can well afford to smile at her young friends.

MUCH MISUNDERSTOOD

When one looks at the world and its deep disharmonies one can hardly help wondering if there is not an innate reluctance in human nature to see the good in others and the question asks itself: should we not judge an individual by his better side, a nation by its best specimens? How remarkable are some of the feats of young America! It is a delight to meet such charming, warm-hearted and generous people. There is much for India to learn from the West. But we can only learn if we approach in an attitude of humility, accepting the fact that the West is more advanced than ourselves in many ways and that we ought to want to know, understand and learn a great deal from what she has achieved in many fields.

Likewise India, too, has many achievements to her credit. There is beauty, knowledge and happiness or, shall we say, the art of being happy even when the outward circumstances are anything but encouraging. Above all, there is the Indian woman, alas, the much-misunderstood Indian woman!

That she is misunderstood is regrettable from many points of view but chiefly, I should say, because apart from the spiritual men—the great saints and seers of India—if there is anything that has upheld India through a thousand years of foreign domination and even through her persistent misfortune and ordeal of poverty, it is the inner strength of the Indian woman.

Women all over the world play dominant part in promoting the progress and upbuilding of the basic character of a nation. The intellectual brilliance of the French woman, the tenacity and perseverance of the English, the tremendous vitality of the American, the grace and beauty of the Persian—one cannot help being impressed by these. These are all great qualities in their respective fields.

THE VILLAGE GIRL

Then one looks at the downcast eyes of the Indian village girl and wonders what she has to say to her wise *judges*. So much has been ventilated by the wonderful propagandists in the past few hun-

dred years about the status of the Indian woman, the poor down-trodden puppet of the mighty man, the ill-treated slave of the tyrant mother-in-law! All that is circulated is not false, that is why it is so readily believed. One usually needs no evidence to believe ill-reports about others: it is only when something good is said that proofs are demanded.

It is true that in India polygamy existed and, in rare cases still exists, it is also true that some mohers-in-law are hard. It is a fact that the science of family-planning is not known to most people. There is illiteracy and poverty, and the system of education as in most other countries is far from satisfactory. Yes, there is unfortunately, a mass material for adverse propaganda; nevertheless this is not the whole story.

The shy eyes, half veiled by the dark eyelashes, reveal a tremendous strength. Her silence on the judgment passed on her speaks of her glorious fulfilled past. She has not had to fight for every inch of freedom and power like her Western sisters. Her rights were given to her when she demanded them. It is true that there is not much fun or novelty in her life in the modern sense of the term. It is true that men do not always stand up when she enters the room, she carries her own coat, and does not walk on the right side of the road; but she walks on the right side of life.

As a girl she did not quite have the freedom to walk out on her parents clamouring that the young must have their rights. The right to be loved, to be treasured, was hers but not the right to do whatever she thought fit. She often does not have the training to use knives and forks, or to keep the conversational ball rolling at the table. But customs and manners differ. It is not contended that the one is better than the other but only that they are different. She was trained to respect her elders, to consider the happiness of others above her own, and brought this training as part of her dowry to her husband.

LOVE—NO LUXURY

Marriage is sacred to this simple daughter of the soil. The word 'sacred' sounds, perhaps, rather medieval, but a great part of India is still old-fashioned. It is a mixed blessing no doubt but so are so many of the boons of the modern age.

When a very modern lady asked in great contempt and astonishment: "How could I live with a man I did not choose myself? I fell in love with my man", the old-fashioned Indian wife replied: "Which of your husbands do you refer to?"

An Indian woman does not *fall* in love, she learns and *rises* to love. Love, with her, is not a luxury, neither is the home a convenience, it is her existence. The fascination of falling in and out of love, the pride of having numerous admirers, the excitement of grabbing tit-bits of happiness, the wonder of being either on the crests of rosy clouds or in the abysses of heartbreak are not commonly allotted to her. Yes, her life is rather dull, but she knows what the joy of giving is, and the joy of giving is more lasting than the ecstasies of acquiring.

She has the strength to stand back and let the man feel that he is the master, she knows that a man is much more dependent on a woman who serves rather than commands. She is strong for she is secure: in her love, in her home, in her emotions and in her life. This gives her a true sense of liberation much greater than the so-called freedom of the modern age.

It is difficult to know what is meant by the modern use of the word freedom. What is it that is implied when one says that a man has freedom or lacks freedom? Does it mean that to be free one must think only of one's own interests, to consider only what one gets out of one's family, society and life at large? To have no consideration for an other than one's personal desires? Does the fr of an individual mean the liberty to say and the spur of the moment as one's mood direct as long as one is clever enough to stay on the side of the law? Does the freedom of a nation the liberty to suppress other nations so long can be justified by diplomacy? Does the fr given to one by society make one truly free? more blessed to be free to indulge a desire or t comparatively rid of a desire? Should freedom m one feel unstable and afraid, or should it brin sense of security?

INNER SECURITY

The Indian woman probably does not h much freedom in this sense, but she certainly has sense of inner security which makes her relatio ship with others substantially fearless and fr There is less chance of her losing her heart to t first handsome man she sees and thus of losing h hearth and home and happiness.

Life is not a bed of roses for her. She oft enough lives in poverty, but she takes life caln and perhaps gratefully. She knows that those arou her love, esteem and need her, and then there almost a spontaneous faith in God. Maybe she "superstitious" but then if even in an enlighten country like America hotels will avoid the No. since no one will stay on the inauspicious 13th flo though they will if you call the same floor the 14t surely the poor Indian woman can be forgiven f being superstitious and praying to her Lord for t welfare of her dear ones.

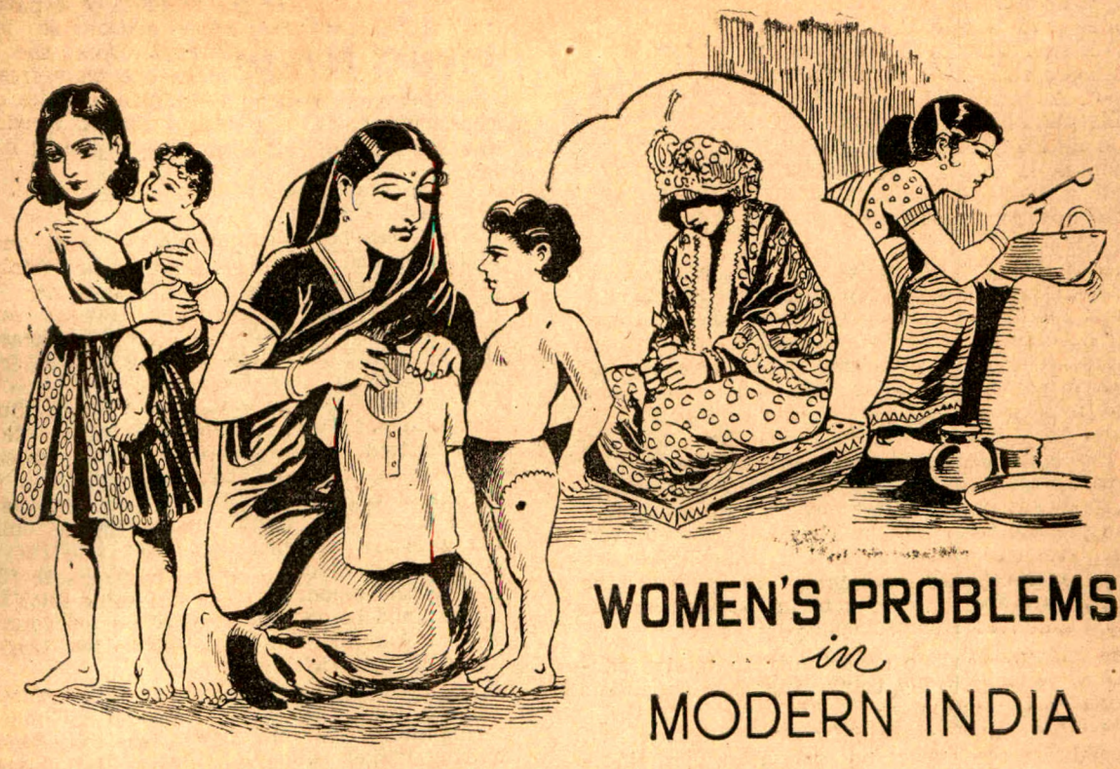
Though being a house-wife still remains t most cherished career for a woman in India she h not always confined herself to just that status. Sor of the greatest psalmists in the Vedic ages ha been women. There have been holy personalities li Sita, Anusuya, Radha, Draupadi, Savitri and last the revolutionary poet-saint Mira Bai. There ha been great women generals like, Chand Bibi, Ahal Bai, Rani Lakshmi Bai, great Empresses like Nurj han and Razia Begum. The most striking featu about these has been their tremendous strength not merely the strength to die in a purple momer of brave inspiration for Truth, but to live from da to day for Truth, counting no cost, disregarding a consequences of swimming against the currents c vogue, opinions—and sometimes even against the ac cepted codes of morality. They have not written c preached India's great philosophy, but they lived i

In the present times the Indian woman playe an important role in the fight for her country's free dom and this was gratefully recognised. She hold today some of the highest offices in the country.

What does the future hold for the Indian wo man? Was it by chance or by choice that she is to day that what she is? If the forces around her o her environments and opportunities have helped he to preserve these beautiful feminine qualities, wha will she do *now* when the scenes are changing s fast? The world seems so much smaller than it di a hundred years back, and comparisons are easy What we do not have appears much more enchantin than what we do have. Idealism, goodness and chas tity are all right, but will she be content to be lef behind when the whole world is rushing forward?

Why and whither is the world rushing forward Values change with time and in the modern age when there seems to be this tremendous confusio of values, what is more important? Career? Power Luxury? Gadgets? Success? Or a human heart, love kindness, nobility, and sacrifice?

What will she choose? What will her sisters al over the world choose? It is difficult to be sure o an answer. Time alone can tell.



WOMEN'S PROBLEMS *in* MODERN INDIA

By INDUMATI BHATTACHARYYA, M.A.

FROM the dawn of the Indo-Aryan civilisation women have played an important role in the cultural uplift and in the thought-movement of the Indian people. That their intellectual contribution to the betterment of the race is immense has been shown by different scholars versed in the Vedic and later Sanskrit literature, and we, modern Indians, are naturally proud of them.

The women of those days played their part in the then condition of the society. They faced the realities of those days and tried to solve their problems with boldness and intelligence and some succeeded and won immortal fame. Their achievements are a source of inspiration to all modern Indian women who think of their own problems and try their solution.

But the world changes and its conditions also must change. This is a basic truth. Modern India is not the India of the Vedic age or even of the time of Raja Rammohan Roy and Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar.

The problems of modern Indian women are mostly modern problems,—though some of them may be modern modifications of the unsolved problems of the past. We, modern women, gratefully remember, no doubt, the pioneering activities of some revered members of the male sex for the uplift of modern Indian women. But every woman now who can think the thought of her own and not the thought of others, will realise, and agree with me, that most of our problems are due not to any omissions or commissions on our part, but are created by the male sex, either due to its natural jealousy or its own folly.

The solvent of women's problems, like all other problems, is undoubtedly education, and the pioneers in the field like Drink Water Bethune realised this truth and worked to provide for it. These pioneers had to work uphill not only to start educational institutions for girls, but also to find students for them. The environments which impeded their activities, have changed for the better. They had to fight against superstitions, customs and blind prejudices. Read the lives of Raja Rammohan Roy, of the Great Pundit and of other pioneers and impartially judge the nature of each custom and each prejudice they had to contend with. Don't you realise it must have its origin and its long continuation in the society in the jealousy and folly of the male sex?

Female education has spread by leaps and bounds since the days of Drink Water Bethune. Attempts used to be made in those days to dissuade parents from sending their daughters to the Bethune College. But the table has now turned. The parents now have to dance attendance day after day upon the Headmistress of a girls' school or the Principal of a college to get their daughters admitted. But you will be sadly mistaken if you are to conclude from this change that man's folly, jealousy and prejudice no longer impede the cause of female education.

I deem it to be the duty of the Headmistress of a girls' school to be acquainted with the home-life of as many girls in her charge as practicable. On the basis of such an enquiry it is found that more than half the students have brothers and sisters numbering more than four and that nearly twenty per cent have from six to nine. Naturally, most

girls are lean and thin, and under-developed when they first come to school.

The Minister of Food and Agriculture supplies good seeds to the agriculturists. Schools are called "child-gardens" (Kindergarten) in German, but no Minister of Education, nay, nobody in the society, ever thinks of supplying good seeds to those who are in charge of our child-gardens.

But you cannot have a silk purse out of a sow's ear. If you want a mango of the "Langra" variety you must have a sapling of the langra tree. How can you develop the mind and body of your students if parental folly supplies weaklings only?

MOTHER'S INDIFFERENCE

This state of things is further aggravated by the age-long custom of neglecting the female child in most families. Whatever the condition of women might have been in the Vedic times, they have been for ages under the domination of the male sex and have been demoralised so much that in many families we find the mother herself is a greater impediment to her daughter's education than the indifference and neglect of the father. The mother may be all-attention to the comforts of her school-going sons, but hardly allows any time to her daughters to prepare their lessons. They are required every now and then to assist her in her domestic duties. When she is confined, which is too frequent, the daughters are required to remain at home and absent themselves from school.

The mother got no opportunity to receive education and she naturally thinks that her daughter's education is a superfluity.

The sons may get help from their tutors, but the daughters can expect no such help. This different treatment of the parents naturally fosters ill-feelings between the brothers and the sisters which cannot make a happy home.

Many parents, as has already been said, are now anxious to get their daughters educated, not that they appreciate female education, but that they expect easy and favourable terms from the bridegroom's party when their daughters are grown up and have got to be married. Many parents have actually avowed this to me to be the object of sending their daughters to school. When a father avows this sentiment, he certainly betrays his innate male jealousy and prejudice which have through ages restricted women's activities to the domestic sphere only.

Some parents are known to be very anxious to educate their daughters so that they may find some employment like their sons and be helpful in the maintenance of the family with their earnings. It is actually found that such parents are often unwilling to get their daughters married even when a suitable groom is available.

When education is given not for its own sake but is sought after with the sordid object of such material gain, it is no wonder, there should be so many failures.

A great English educationist was once asked, "When should a child's education begin?" The reply was, "At least two generations before the child is born."

We, modern women, begin our life with a low stock of vitality which does not allow proper development of the body and the mind and in an atmosphere which is not conducive to their healthy growth. This is a problem of the first magnitude and cannot be tackled by women alone.

Legislation in this respect is out of the question. Lust, selfishness and irresponsibility are innate in the male sex, for man's progenitors shifted the responsibility of bringing up the young on the female sex. Naturally, these vices developed in the male sex unchecked by any sense of responsibility for ages. Evils which are so deep-rooted cannot be easily eradicated.

COMPLEX PROBLEM

But women social workers can try to rouse the conscience of the nation so that parents may realise the necessity of self-cotrol and family planning.

The problem of educating our girls is so complex and so difficult of solution that no cut and dry method can be spoken of here. Great educationists and respected leaders of men have thought of the problem which is not particularly of women only but of the entire nation. Women must be given that type of education which may enable them to join in the general thought-movement of the nation. Any scheme to keep them isolated in a water-tight compartment will be outmoded and injurious to the well-being of the nation. At the same time it must be admitted that women have some special duties to perform. Consequently, their education should be so varied as to fit them for the performance of those duties intelligently and efficiently. As most of our girls are married very early before they have time to receive any college education, the curriculum of the secondary schools on subjects meant for girls should be so framed as to give them a comprehensive knowledge of the subjects essential to them in doing their life's duties.

As women in ever-increasing number are entering into newer and newer fields of activity requiring higher education, the need for greater facilities to our female students for such education is more acutely felt in recent years. Schools and colleges for girls are still too few; and where co-education prevails, many girl students are not admitted for want of accommodation. This happens year after year. Those who direct the education policy of the State are all males, and naturally the sub-conscious in them makes them indifferent to the educational needs of women. My educated sisters who have taken to politics as the field of their activity, should especially take note of this plague-spot in the body-politic and demand that the direction of the education policy of the State must not be a monopoly of males only, but that the women's point of view must be consulted. The State grants numerous stipends and especial scholarships to the refugee boys, tribal and scheduled caste boys. Are its grants and expenses for female education in proportion to the number of female students?

Another great problem that confronts educated women of modern India is the problem of marriage. In spite of the law to the contrary, early marriage prevails everywhere. Even in educated families, when a girl is beautiful, the parents easily find a groom for her, and she is married even at the age when her body and mind are still undeveloped; and then the benign husband inflicts on her a new birth every two years or even earlier. The result is she becomes a physical wreck in no time.

The father's selfishness and the husband's lust and folly not only bring about her ruin but aggravate the national problem of dealing with children of low vitality. Huge sums of money are being spent for the health centres, medical schools and colleges, hospitals and different clinics. This is useful, no doubt. But when you do not look to this social gangrene, but give a chance of life to the physically and mentally unfit, it is not conducive to the well-being

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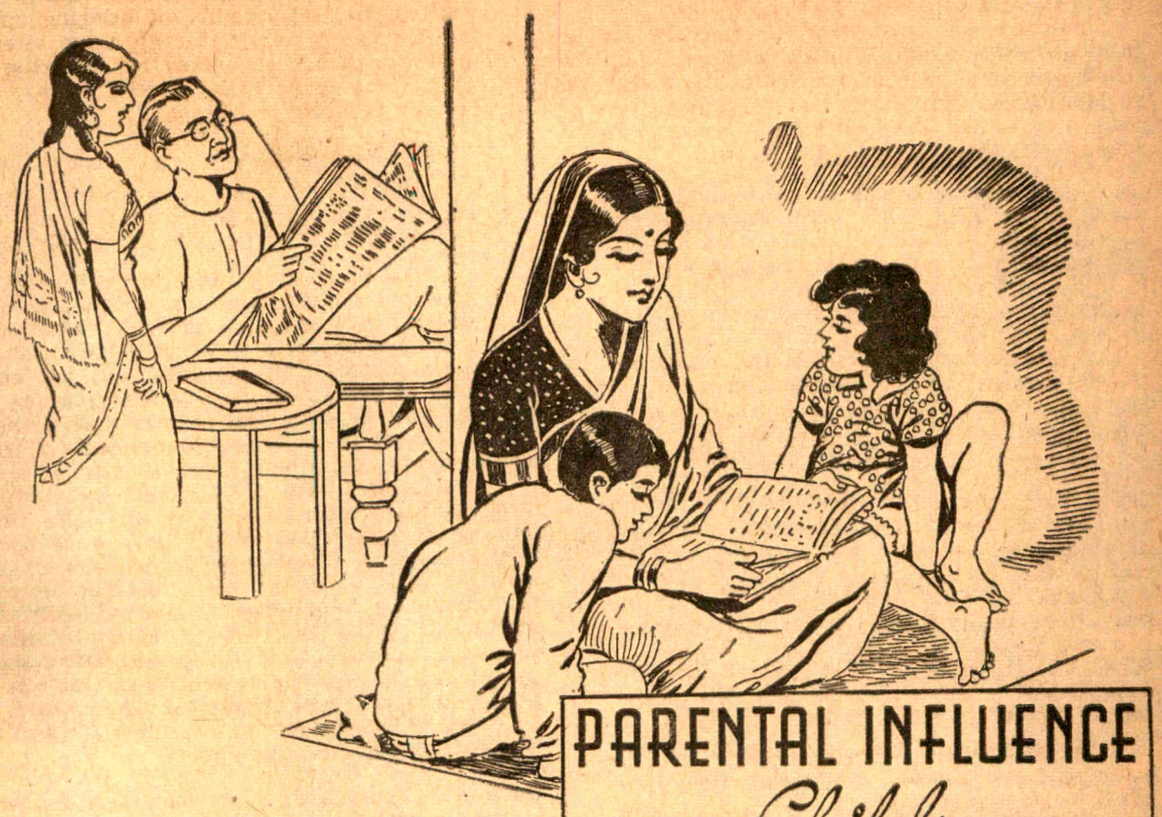

PARENTAL INFLUENCE on Children

By LEENA NANDI, M.A.

THE know-how and technicalities of child psychology are much valued now - a - days. A modern mother would go a long way in building up the future of a child on a scientific line. She is determined to assess the requirements for a healthy growth of her child. It is a common experience in the western world to have the child clinically examined in a Psychological Clinic before any programme is undertaken for its keep-up and education. The I. Q. of a child is gauged and assessed and its ultimate determination determines the future career of the child. Good nurseries manned by good teachers are chosen. Influence of teachers is of great value to the pupils. When we in India casually select and appoint teachers, they in the West look for and appoint qualified men and women after a careful and long scrutiny. Children have to be put in nurseries for the necessity of a good environment and a good influence on child's mind has been acknowledged by all. The West is busy; both man and wife have to work. So the child is left to the care of professional child trainers. In this context we must try to evaluate parental influence on child's mind.

The modern nurseries and kindergartens, though affording a good avenue for child training, nevertheless are unable to offer the best type of training for children, as envisaged by eminent educationists. First, we must remember that nurseries and kindergartens of the prevailing type encourage regimentation. A particular pattern of training is being imparted to a number of children in complete disregard of their propensities and tastes. A child is a lover of unique individuality. This love of unique individuality of a child has been stressed upon by Bosanquet, the eminent philosopher. This love for unique individuality inspires the child not to accept a substitute for a doll that it has broken. The crying baby hardly accepts the rational offer of its mother for a substitute and this fact points to the child's love for individuality. But this love is stifled and it does not expand and grow in the mechanical handling of a child in the modern kindergartens or nurseries.

REGIMENTATION IS BAD

This leads to regimentation. Regimentation is a principle bad in theory and practice. It overlooks the inner potentialities of children and this does not help the healthy growth of a child's mind. Secondly, the teachers must have their own prejudices and preconceived ideas. They might be believing in particular theocratic principles, political ideas and moral precepts. These are imposed on children knowingly or unknowingly. Sometimes they prove disastrous to the children and their parents as well. It is not very uncommon to find agnostic children of a 'God-intoxicated man' and peace of the family is completly jeopardised and ultimately ruined on mere religious grounds. Similarly there are cases of political indoctrination. Pupils imbibe political ideas from the teachers in due course and in many cases they are not liked by the parents of the children and this phenomenon leads to unrest in many homes resulting in the rift between the parents and of the offsprings. These facts have been brought to light by recent surveys done in the West.

Now the question naturally arises how to combat

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WOMEN'S PROBLEMS IN MODERN INDIA

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of the nation. The State should spend more money for universal education to ensure mental and physical health.

INTER CASTE MARRIAGE

Those girls who go to college or the university and receive higher education, often choose their own husband, not necessarily within their caste. Thus, inter-caste marriages are becoming more frequent. If a casteless society be our ideal, this modern tendency should not only be tolerated but actively supported, though the pioneers must be prepared to face lots of impediments in accommodating themselves in the orthodox society.

Those girls who are plain or do not receive higher education, remain unmarried for long, for their parents are often unable to find the dowry which only can induce young men to marry them. Such girls are often married to grooms of advanced age, more often to widowers, for very few parents like to keep their daughters unmarried for life.

Thus, these young women begin their married life with a feeling of frustration and dissatisfaction. This results in moral aberrations, and when they have children they impart these feelings to them. The children find that their parents do not love and respect each other, and naturally they grow up disrespectful to their parents. When you don't respect your parents, you can't obey them and you can have no respect for anybody else. Hence is the spirit of disrespect and disobedience rampant in the society. The nature of our homelife gives birth to it and this nature depends upon the nature of our marriage. My educated sisters will, I hope, realise the importance of this problem and discountenance marriages between unequals.

Those young women who have been fortunate enough to receive higher education and are disposed not to marry, find that they have very few openings of useful employment to live an independent life. In many advanced countries women have equal opportunities of finding employment for them. By persistent effort and agitation we can introduce this practice in our country also.

To achieve this end we want women's associations throughout the country where educated women may meet and discuss their common problems. When we have a thorough knowledge of our problems, then only we can move for their solution.

Generous men have, no doubt, sought from time to time to solve many of our problems. But there are some that can be solved not by men but by women only.

The women members of our legislature may do much to further this objective. If they visit their constituencies from time to time and induce the women voters to form their own organisation and discuss with them common problems, the women of our country may quickly become politically conscious and send more women members to the legislature to further their cause.

Lastly, the economic stress of modern times has compelled women to come out into the open and take to different gainful occupations, however few they may be. They have to compete with men in many fields, and naturally the latter do not show the same amount of respect as they used to do even in the recent past. In railway trains, trams, and buses, we find women jostling with men to find accommodation. The spirit of chivalry which characterised our young folk a generation ago is hardly in evidence now. The free movements of women are hampered at every step due to unmannerly behaviour of our men-folk. The free movements of women have led to many social problems which are well-known.

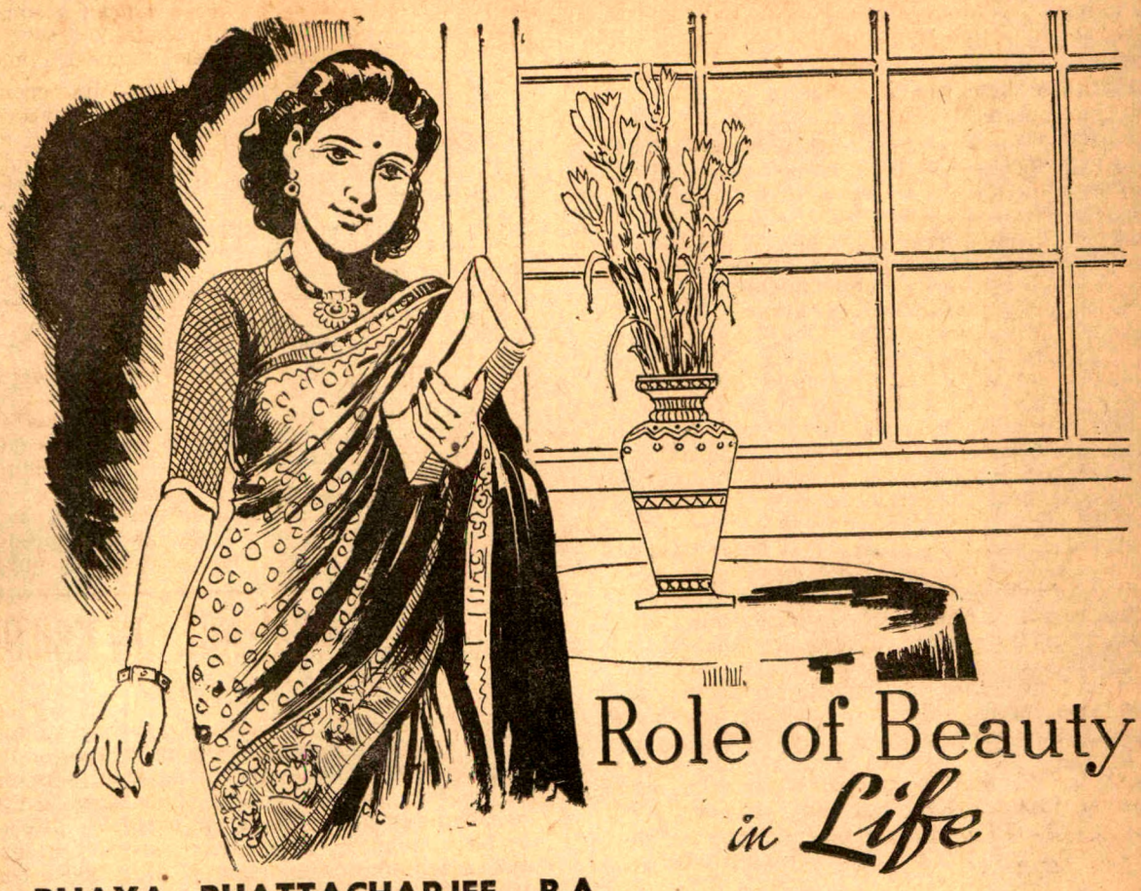
But the fact, that modern women have developed new problems, shows that they are on the move, and that the age-long inertia corroding the very existence of the nation is giving place to an active existence. This only can lead us away from the blind alley into which the nation stepped into in the dark period of successive foreign dominations.

PARENTAL INFLUENCE ON CHILDREN

(Continued From Previous Page)

these evils. The answer is there not very far to seek. If the parents do exercise a considerable influence on their children the problem does not arise in the present form. If parents of a child forego a little of their club activities and their out-door life and a little bit of their drawing room gossips and devote a little more time to their children, the problem becomes enormously easy. The teachers though trained and qualified, work for money and are recruited for a stereotyped work. They cannot always do full justice to the budding curiosity of a child's mind. Moreover, the growth of a child's personality must have ready inspiration from his parents because the hereditary traits of character might well blossom forth in the company of its parents.

The parental influence does undo the much lamented regimentation so much evident in the educational system of Russia and America. Educationists of those countries are much worried over this phenomenon of regimentation. This malady could be effectively cured if parents could take a little care of their children. We must remember that the teachers, however efficient they may be, are more or less mercenary beings and the affection that is naturally forthcoming from the parents must be wanting in the teachers. This affection makes all the difference in a child. The touch of this parental affection not only makes the education of the child easy and interesting but it also helps him build his character. If character building is the primary objective of an education system, we cannot afford to neglect the parental influence to be brought to bear on child's training. Parental influence and guidance therefrom keep the family tradition moving and distinctness in the traditions of different houses is thus maintained. Social life and intellectual life of a nation could thus become varied and colourful counteracting the forces of regimentation. That is a great phenomenon to be reckoned with and parental influence alone can save this phenomenon from the all consuming regimentation either of the Russian type or of the American type.



Role of Beauty in Life

By **BIJAYA BHATTACHARJEE, B.A.**

VERY often we regard art as something concerning only few people who live far away from the madding crowd and the humdrum life of ours. But this is an extremely erroneous view. Not only erroneous but also unfortunate, because this view makes our life all the more humdrum, monotonous, joyless without smile and colour. The essence of art is beauty and beauty is not a matter only for poets and painters who, many of us think, live in the dreamland of their imagination. Our own domestic life of chronic wants and privations can be a little enlivened by the introduction of beauty, a non-expensive value, into it.

What is art? What is beauty? Let the philosophers dealing with aesthetics answer these questions. We, the ordinary women, are not competent to define these apparently undefinable terms. It is easier to understand or describe these terms than to define them. A beautiful thing means to us a thing which gives a pleasing or soothing feeling to our mind. A full moon, a garden of roses, a sun-rise in the blue ocean or in snow-white mountain, the melodious songs of the birds at day-break—these are some of the beautiful things supplied to us by nature. Nature has many aspects and it is the aspect of beauty which has perhaps impressed man most. Being impressed by the beauty in nature man tries to create beauty himself. Thus man has produced a world of beauty consisting of poems, dances, paintings, sculptures, architecture etc. This world of beauty is not unrelated to the world of utilit created by man for his self-preservation. Man ca serve the purpose of expressing his ideas in plai and unpolished prose but he tries to make himse more effective by talking with elegance and thus h gives rise to the art of rhetoric. Addition of beaut to a thing makes it more effective, more attracti and more appealing. Ideas expressed through poem or painting or dancing are all the more effective an attractive because they touch not simply the intel lect but the heart also. One can serve the utilita rian purpose by writing anyhow but man has deve loped the art of calligraphy by writing more ele gantly, more beautifully and more attractively.

UTILITY & BEAUTY

The relation between utility and beauty is thu not an antithetical one. On the contrary one rein forces the other. Of course at a stage the pursuit beauty bears no direct relation with utilitarian con sideration and develops its own laws and dynamic The science of beauty or aesthetics has its pure ar abstract side. In this respect the pursuit of beau may be compared with the pursuit of knowledg Pursuit of knowledge begins with utilitarian cons derations but later on a stage comes when know ledge is pursued for its own sake. Similarly the e perts may run after beauty for its own sake. But our day to day life we are concerned with the a plied aesthetics, that is, beauty as applied to o household matters. One may not have read a sing book about the science of beauty but he will feel difficulty to appreciate the beauty applied to hous

hold matters just as one can appreciate the beauty of a rose without going through the books of aesthetics.

To make our ideas clear it is necessary to think of the qualities that go to constitute the value of beauty. Many thinkers have thought over this problem and our attempt will necessarily be far from satisfactory. Beautiful things, it has already been said, are those which produce a pleasing and soothing sensation to our mind. Beautiful picture pleases and soothes us through eyes, good music through ears, good smell through nose etc. By selecting a number of beautiful objects, given by nature or produced by man, and examining the attributes common to all of them we may form a rough idea about the qualities necessary to form the value of beauty. A beautiful object is characterised by cleanliness of its parts, harmony in relation between the parts, and by a sweetness and brightness of its own. All beautiful objects perhaps have these attributes in common. When in motion beauty must include a rhythm Without rhythm music will be noise and dance will be mere movement. When the moon moves through the sky it looks beautiful because there is a rhythm in it. A march of even the soldiers looks beautiful because of their rhythmic movement.

Once the qualities inherent in the value of beauty are roughly understood we may try to introduce it in our day to day life. Firstly, we are to make our mind beautiful because a beautiful mind alone can create and appreciate beauty in the outside world. What is beauty of the mind? A mind which is clean and free from all duplicity, which is well-balanced and not led astray by the preponderance of a momentary impulse and which can accept everything gracefully without being agitated and unduly perturbed may be termed a beautiful mind. He possesses above all things an equanimity of mind. Such a mind will always exercise a pleasing and soothing influence upon the man who possesses it. A beautiful mind expresses itself through beautiful manners and temper. A man with a beautiful temper will invariably delight everybody with whom he comes in contact. He will delight others not by eulogy but by the beauty of his temper. Straightforwardness and absence of all whimsicalities or eccentricities are the essential qualities of good temper. Further, a person with a good temper will radiate a sweetness all around him by his amiableness, grace, tolerance and refinement. He will never show an irritation of temper and will be uncourteous to none.

ETHICAL MAN

A man with beautiful mind and temper will necessarily be an ethical man. He cannot do anything obscene or immoral because that will cut him adrift from the fundamental mooring of his life. An immoral act is certainly harmful to some people and, therefore, it cannot have the sanction of the conscience And an act which goes against conscience can never have a pleasing and soothing effect upon our mind. In fact, ethics and aesthetics can be brought under a common denominator A votary of beauty will try to establish harmony not simply within himself but also within the social life Ethical values are necessary to maintain this harmony in the social life. Therefore, in the last analysis ethical values have also got an aesthetical connotation.

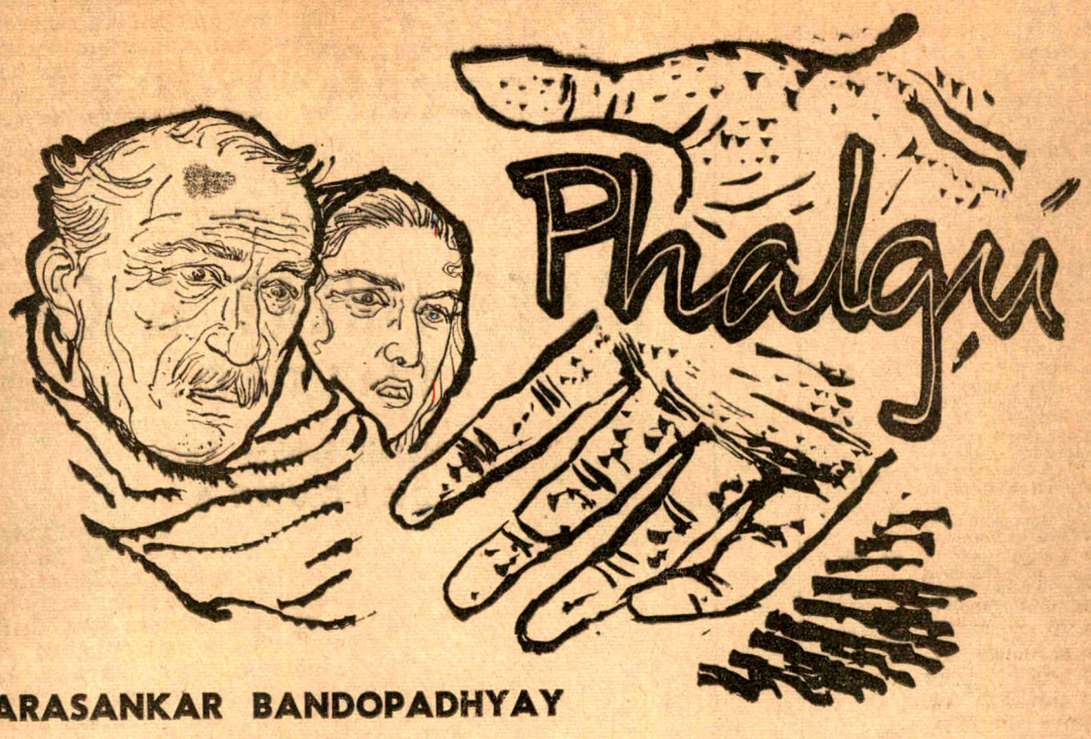
A person with a taste for beauty will try to have a beautiful surrounding. He will find himself uneasy in an ugly and disorderly environment. He will try to wear clean and neat dress but not any glamorous or ostentatious one. Beauty lies in cleanliness and never in glamour or ostentatiousness. A costly Banarasi sari with lots of gold ornaments in different parts of the body satisfies the desire of ostentatiousness but not of beauty. Beauty is not a costly luxury. A person with a sense of beauty will keep his house clean and properly arranged. His house may be made of mud and he may not have enough furniture. But what little he has he will keep them in good order. In this respect the house of a Santhal is worth seeing. Whatever he will eat, he will eat in a neat plate and with great joy. He will never gobble because this is ugly. When we take tea or other liquid, or say, curd or *payesh*, we generally create an ugly sound which is highly offensive to the ear. Had we a little sense of beauty, we could never make it. A man with an urge for beauty will live with other members of his family in a harmonious way without quarrel or conflict. A difference of opinion will not mean to him a quarrel because differences can be symmetrically blended but a quarrel is the topsy turvy of all harmony. Such a man will try to live peacefully with his neighbours and friends with goodwill towards all and malice towards none.

SOCIAL REFORMER

A man with a keen sense of beauty may ultimately turn to be a social reformer. As his outlook will expand he will revolt against all injustice and tyranny in the society which to him will appear ugly. Injustice and tyranny disturb the harmony of the social life and rob the society of its charm and sweetness. Therefore a true votary of beauty cannot remain indifferent to the evils of the society. This is why we find that a large number of artists such as Rabindranath, Tolstoy, Romain Roiland have ultimately thought of and fought for the birth of a new society which will come out of the ashes of the present ugly one. When a person turns to be a social reformer from aesthetic considerations, his efforts will be pure and free from all petty personal motives.

In this article I have tried to give an outline of what beauty is and how it can be applied to our daily life. We are generally indifferent to the considerations of beauty Our life is full of struggle and privation and all talks of beauty seem to many of us as idle. But this view, as already mentioned at the outset, is not only wrong but also harmful. We have got a mind and the health of the mind is to be maintained like the health of the body. Mental illness is no less serious than physical illness Moreover, it is now proved by science that many of the physical ailments result from mental illness Therefore, if we can maintain mental health, our medical expenditure may possibly be curtailed. And the best way to maintain mental health is to lead life beautifully.

It is imperative for us, the house-wives and mothers, to instil in our children an aesthetic urge not by precept but by practice at the first stage at any rate. If the children are once made beauty-conscious, they will naturally revolt against everything ugly and clumsy. Let us not forget that it was master philosopher Plato who prescribed music for the training of the mind. Truth, Good and Beauty—these are the three highest ideals invented by man for himself. Truth is the content of knowledge and knowledge mollified by beauty or beauty based upon knowledge alone can realise the ideal of "Good". Truth without beauty may be too harsh to be good and beauty without truth will be too dreamy to be real.



By TARASANKAR BANDOPADHYAY

KARTICK BABU strongly protested against the Non-cooperation Movement saying, "You will rule after driving away the British ? Fratricidal strife is in your very nature."

What he said thereafter could be classed with the cud already chewn; he had talked in that vein many a time. So the young group laughed in their sleeves. This did not pass him unnoticed. He continued in deep abhorrence, "Don't laugh, it is not a matter for laughter ! The English people are our brothers. We belong to the same family. They are Aryans, so are we. In our classical language, we call father, Pita — Pitar, they call father, Mata — Mother, Baba — Pappa, Ma — Mamma, Bhrata — Brother! Where is the difference? When we are frightened, we call out 'Hori Bole, Hori Bole' they — 'Horrible, horrible'. The difference is in the pigmentation of the skin — that too, due to climatic reasons. As we have it in our Vaishnavism, — 'far humbler than the grass', one should be lowly like the grass. Leaving it aside, you hold aloft the flag and shout "Bande Mataram' and 'Jhanda ucha rahe hamara'."

The boys brought out the procession on the occasion of a certain "Day". They did not argue and advanced forward. Kartick Babu felt gratified and said, "Yes, go home. Take to your studies attentively and be employed."

But the boys started singing —

"Rich with thy hurrying streams
Bright with thy orchard gleams
Cool thou art with thy southern winds—"

Kartick Babu cast his look at them and said, "An idle brain is the devil's workshop! Unemployed! The rotten lot of infants!"

The real secret story was — pension. Kartick Babu was a big officer in Government service. He was still enjoying a fat pension. Some of his family members were still in Government employment. The elderly Ramsundar, a former Naib of an old Zamindar family said, "The King is the all-pervasive Deity! Till now you can have auction by calling one, two, three but if you put in an application, their would be no auction. What is the order! What is the arrangement!"

Kartick Babu rejoined, "The youngest son of your Babu is superior to the rest by one degree! They say he is a leader of the Congress, full-fledged extremist, my God!"

Ramsundar awaited awhile and replied, "Why you repeat, Sir? He asserts further that he does not believe in God."

——Tell your Babu to marry his son. Let him marry him.

——Just tell me, can he afford to have a wife? Can he maintain his children as they will be forthcoming? This is why I am troubling you so often.

The Zamindar Babu had approached Kartick Babu through Ramsundar for the service of his son.

Kartick Babu heaved a deep sigh and said, "What a pity! It pains me greatly, Ramsundar, to see such a condition of such a big family. Specially we feel great sorrow on our part."

Ramsundar too heaved a deep sigh and replied, "That's quite natural. You are their relations —

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their own people. When others who are strangers feel for them, it cannot but specially affect you."

Kartick Babu was silent for a long time and went on, "Let it be accepted what happened. We could not control what fate ordained but if the *Karta* was not off his head then the family could be kept agoing. He is ruined by the doings of Dhiren."

Ramsundar shrugged his shoulder in refutation of that statement and said in reply, "No, Sir, his craziness has a long history. Be assured, Sir, it started long ago with the death of his first wife. At that time, the Kaviraj was occasionally sent for and they held whispering consultation. One day the Kaviraj confided to me, 'Look, how oddly the rich folk are apprehensive. He tells me to look into the palm of his hand as he suspects that it is affected with leprosy. And why?—Because it is reddish all over.' "

Kartick Babu shuddered with great consternation, "What do you say? Leprosy?"

——Where will you find leprosy, Sir? It is all an apprehension of the mind. To my mind, that is the starting point of his craziness. Every one bears a somewhat reddish palm of hand. And as for their family, it is quite a distinct matter. Their palms are smeared as if with red tint. Now it is gone. Babu has become bloodless, pale and whitish.

Kartick could not put any belief in it. He began to revolve the matter in his mind. Getting no reply, Ramsundar said again, "He is still under that obsession—since the transportation of Dhiren Babu that his left hand is affected with leprosy! That none of us can guess it but he does it perfectly. Formerly he maintained reticence over it and all his talkings were with the Kaviraj. Now it is publicised. Out of self-created shyness, he will not stir out of his room, nor will he do anything with his hand. He sits tongue-tied."

Dhiren was the eldest son of Mahabishnu Sarkar, the Zamindar. He was sentenced to transportation for life, six years ago, on a charge of murder.

Kartick Babu said, "Ramsundar, I feel delicacy to tell you and feel both shame and pain in it. Perhaps they might think that Kartick is not doing anything for them. But how can a man get service when his father is mad, brother is serving the sentence of transportation on a murder charge and he himself is anti-Government? At least Government service."

Ramsundar was the old Naib of the Sarkar family. At present that family had lost its property and Ramsundar was no longer a Naib. Still his life was mixed up in a deep bond of affection with the old family of his master. Still now he was anxiously moving in search of a boat that could carry their burden on the ocean of life. He was not satisfied with a mere boat. He secretly wished for a beflagged ship. He came of himself to request Kartick Babu for service. He falsely gave out the name of Mahabishnu Babu and his wife. None of them had any inkling of this matter. Tears would well up in his eyes whenever he remembered the pale face of the second wife of his master, so kind and Lakshmi-like.

* * *

The residential building of the Sarkar family built five generations ago was now a heap of brick and wood. On one side a banyan tree enmeshed it like a magical knot — like the fetters of snakes — and in the course of several years was going on shattering down the ribs of the building one by one in a spectacular manner by the pressure of the main encirclement. That side was now uninhabitable. At midnight, the wind blew through the big dents in lamentable tones. Plasterings or chunks of brick would come down occasionally — a piece of beam or rafter after an interval of two or three months. One side though worn-out was still habitable. In that part Mahabishnu Babu was living with his second wife and Niren, his youngest son. His first wife did not bear him any offspring but his second wife, Karunamoyee bore him two sons — Dhiren and Niren. It was strange that the nature of the two sons were in strong contrast like the day and night. In the true tradition of the Zamindar family, Dhiren was ferocious, haughty, hot-tempered and given to luxury. He wanted to lead his life like a storm and to maul down anybody who did not bend before him. His schooling was meagre. After taking leave of the school, he plunged himself into the affairs of the Estate. There was necessity for it, too. Long before Mahabishnu Babu had kept himself confined into his room where the Kaviraj would make occasional visits. He did not see anybody and would scarcely come out of his room. Dhiren's mother did not raise any specific objection — the manes up to the seventh generation would pour down their blessings if Dhiren could recoup the traditional prestige and prosperity of such a big family.

But one day there was a bolt from the blue. The young Dhirendra went to the Mahal and picked up a quarrel with the tenants. One day some leaders among the tenants came to him and threatened him, "Please don't send your chaprasis or men in the way,

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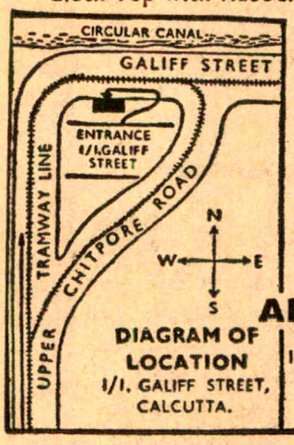

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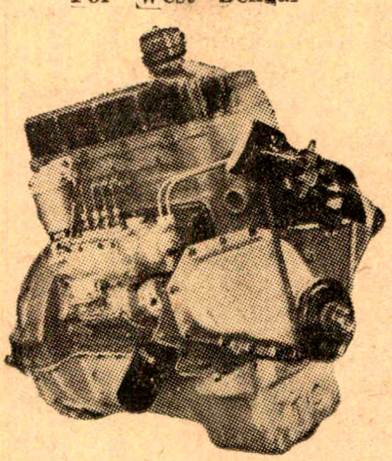

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you are doing. We do not like to curry any favour".

Dhiren's blood boiled outright. Like an angry boa-constrictor he breathed deeply and curtly replied, "Humph! Anything next?"

—We won't even pay rent. Never any increased interest.

— Next ?

— What is that again? If you go to excess, we would petition the Magistrate and would agitate.

— Any thing more?

The tenants could not find out anything further but their hearts were filled with distress when they felt themselves humbled before the vaulting aristrocracy of a lad of nineteen or twenty years. Under the stress of that distressful mood, one among them replied, "Such over-doing is no good, — please note, Sir. It is due to such sinfulness that your father is attacked with leprosy!" It seemed, all of a sudden, a thunder-bolt opened the crater and it erupted fire. There was a gun at hand — a big report reverberated in the surrounding air. The man fell down with a groaning sound. The ground was soaked with blood oozing from the wound. Dhirendra blew out the smoke in the barrel after unloosening it and surrendered himself in the Police Station with the gun in his hand.

Please note sir, it is due to such sinfulness that your father is attacked with leprosy!

He did not suppress anything. The Judge took a lenient view and passed a sentence for transportation for life instead of death sentence. Six years had elapsed in the meantime.

Now Niren was the hope of the family. He showed such promise. Indebtedness and the costs of litigation for Dhiren ruined the family property. It became difficult to meet the educational expenses of Niren. He was not granted any free-studentship in the school yet month by month his fees were being credited in the school account. The master told him to pay the arrears of fees when it suited him. He did not tell him that fees would not be required. At the time of the Matriculation Examination Ramsunder paid up the whole dues in a lump. The master accepted the money without demur. Niren secured a scholarship of fifteen rupees. The master presented him with new books written "To the best boy of my school — with my best wishes.".

Niren passed his I.A. and B.A. Examinations creditably. But at the time of his M.A. Examination he threw himself into the Swadeshi Movement, left his studies and came back home.

His mother pleaded, "Niren, my darling, don't ruin me further."

Niren threw his hand around the neck of his mother and said, "Can I ruin you?"

The mother did not allow herself to be deceived and with tearful eyes entreated, "Are you happy, Niru, to see tears in you mother's eyes?"

— Happy? Dont you know, mother, what Alexander said — 'one drop of tear of my mother' —.

— Don't lead me astray. Tell roundly what I can grasp.

— I can't afford to inflict pain on you. Just tell me what I am to do.

— Take a definite course. Just pass your M.A. Examination and study law. Babu fondly hoped that Dhiren would be a lawyer — and — .

Tears plentifully flowed down from the eyes of the mother.

Niren sat for the M. A. Examination in that year. He was prepared for it and passed the Examination. It was not up to expectation. Ramsundar was beside himself with joy and said, "Brother, pass the Law Examination this time. I shall bring cases for you. In that case I shall once have a rebuff ready for Kartick Babu."

* * *

The night was dark. Niren was sitting on the roof of the part of the building so full of dents and so worn-out. The breath of the soft wind was passing through the leaves of the banyan tree which produced a rustling sound as if some were speaking in undertone, whispering and laughing. Niren directed his eyes in that direction and perhaps he was in

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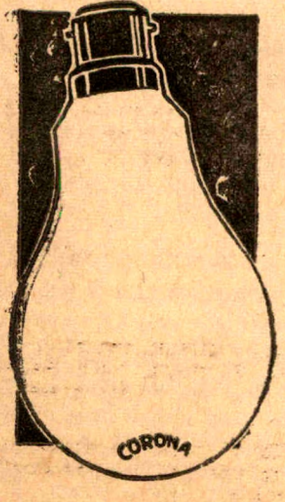

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cogitating mood. The mother found him out and called him, "Niren, come up".

Niren smiled and said, "Do you walk about smelling me? And find me out, too, correctly".

— Come up first.

Niren did not disobey and as he approached her passing over the broken roof carefully, his mother said, "Won't you let me off without ruining me? There is the cracked roof — there are furrowed holes all around — Yonder is the banyan tree — may I ask you what business you got there?"

Niren smiled and replied, "I was well enjoying it".

— Don't smile. I feel burning sensation all over my body when I see it. Don't you think for a moment, don't you feel sorrowful? Just remember what a big family it was, what a big house it had — and now, just think to what strait it has been reduced! The face of Niren was wreathed with self-same smile. Niren went on, "I am just thinking it, mother. I think — why I seem to see with my eyes — why 'mother has come to such a state.' Don't you remember 'Anandamath' mother? What mother was and what mother has become! In the midst of the dark night —in the midst of our dilapidated house — all over the country —".

The mother spoke, "I touch your feet — keep silent. Leave your country aside. Learn to be a bit devoted to your mother rather than to mere earth." Niren took the dust of her feet and replied, "You are too sentimental. Don't be angry with me any more. You are too malicious."

The mother spoke this time with firmness, "Wait, I shall get you married. I shall finish all your precocity!"

Niren raised a guffaw and seemed to dissolve into laughter.

Her whole frame burnt at the sight of it. Reproachfully she said, "Why do you laugh?"

— I am just elated at the talk of marriage.

She did not return any word but straightway made for her husband's room, pushed its door and heedfully burst into it. A lamp was burning on the lamp-stand. The apartment was well-dimensioned. The mild shine of the tiny lamp could not scatter itself in all directions and in all places. There was darkness, still and quiet, around the circumscribed periphery of light as if darkness was waiting for the last humming of the lamp. Above all, the room was weirdly calm and tranquil. In the serene chiaroscuro, it seemed to be overcast with mystical illusion. Mahabishnu Babu was sitting silently on his bed. His silhouette reflected an apparition-like figure. He was turning over his left hand and was observing it.

As soon as the mother of Niren entered into the room, he cast silent glances at her. They were eloquent glances. His wife came to his side and put in mildy, "Are you hungry?"

He thoughtfully passed his hand over his cheek and made a bland answer, "Yes".

— I am bringing your meal but I want to tell you one thing. It cannot be put off further.

— Just tell me.

— Call in Niren once and tell him plainly.

— I shall do it.

— Yes. Call him and say that we all look up to him. Let him just pass the Law Examination and

Are you hungry? He thoughtfully passed his hand over his cheek and made a bland answer, "yes".

join the Bar. We can no longer put up with the sufferings of want. Let him re-establish the family prestige.

— Has he not passed the M.A. Examination this year?

— Yes. If he is so-minded, nothing is impossible to him. But the cry of "my country" is sapping him. What obsession he has got — "my country", "my country."

— "Country?"

— Yes, "country" — "Native land" — "Bande Mataram".

— "Humph!"

He deeply cogitated and said, "Well, can you tell me what Sir Surendra Nath Banerjee is doing at present? — Oh, no — At present the leader is Gandhi".

So saying he began to shake his shoulder — as if every thing was clearly understood and he remembered all details.

"I am just calling in Niren. "So saying his wife turned towards the door. Mahabishnu Babu said, "Just listen."

— What?

— Are our wants heavy now-a-days?

— No, no! But if Niren joins the Bar, we shall

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Mahabishnu Babu said in a deep note, "Look here, what can I do! I cannot stir out for shame. Is it possible to be out before the public with the disease of leprosy".

— Where is your leprosy? That is another craze and obsession! What have the doctors and the Kavirajes said? Your blood was twice examined. Did any of them say that you are attacked with leprosy?

— It is here in this hand. There is nothing in it beside the disease. Look into it, have you ever seen such reddish hand? In such inflamed state?

He extended that shrunken and infirm hand before the indistinct light.

Niren's mother came out of the room leaving out a deep sigh behind.

It was no use to send Niren there, for Mahabishnu Babu would be talking nothing except his disease. Niren was in the room. On seeing his mother he interrogated, "Is his meal finished?"

The mother replied, "No. See your father tomorrow morning. He told me so."

— "Well".

Again he said, "I want to go to Calcutta tomorrow, mother. It is advisable to finish the Law course. I shall try for a job and meet my expenses somehow".

The mother was exceedingly happy.

Niren continued, "I went to Ramsundar Dada. He has told me that certain headman owes us sixty rupees. He will collect it and bring it tomorrow. If the headman fails, he will find the money and will credit it to his account after collecting it afterwards".

The mother tearfully said, "We live on the favour of even Ramsundar. Save us from this shame. My darling, do retrieve the family prestige."

On the next day Niren started for Calcutta.

* * *

Six months went by.

Niren's mother was surprised to hear the call of Niren at dead of night.

"Niren?" Simultaneously she felt that she dreamt a dream.

— Mother!

— Oh that call! It is Niren himself!

She went out expeditiously and opened the door.

— Why so suddenly, Niren? Where is the train now?

Niren laughed and said, "A boy from Haripur was in my company. He could not go home alone. I accompanied him there and now I came back. I got down at 8 P.M."

— But you have not dropped a line that you would come home.

— I felt uneasy as I remembered you. So I have come.

— Wash your hands and feet and take your seat. I just cook rice for you.

—Cooked rice?

Niren thought awhile and said, "Well, have it, I have not taken your prepared dishes for a long time. It is uncertain when I shall come back if I go away. I am going tomorrow".

The mother hastily started cooking.

— Well, let me fry something or do you want a curry in addition? Niren!

Niren was in profound sleep by this time on the verandah of the house. The mother smiled an affectionate smile—"He has even now retained his boyish nature. He does not discriminate even between the ground and the bed. Even now he will scramble for the rejected leavings of her mother's meal! I wonder how he keeps on in outside places".

— "Open the door, who is here?"

Who was there? Whose voice was heard? Who was dealing blows on the door with such angry vapourings and with such air of lordliness?

"Open the door".

Niren stood up and bade good-bye to his mother.

— What is this! What is that in your hand?

— Pistol!

— Pistol!

Niren's mother fell on him and gripped the pistol, "Leave it — leave it!"

Niren loosened his hold. The mother at once threw it down into the well in the courtyard. She simply uttered, "Niren!"

Niren replied, "I have shot down a Police officer."

The mother gazed at his face with a strange eye.

Niren went on, "I could not restrain myself. Other friends did not like to charge me with this task. I have assumed it of my own accord. I almost went mad — strange, your face did not flash before me at that time."

On that side, the bolt of the door gave way under the impact of terrible blows. The Police officers and the constables crowded the side of the house.

Niren bowed down to the feet of his mother and advanced forward, "I am surrendering myself".

Simultaneously piercing the depth of the midnight, a shrill piteous cry rose up and coursed up-

(Continued on page 279)

Niren's mother fell on him and gripped the pistol, "Leave it — Leave it!"

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New Horizon for Indian Film

By N. K. G.

THE long-looked-for thing has happened. Indian films have started out brilliantly on the way to adequate recognition in the eyes of the world easily ranking with the very "best" films of the world, as is betokened by the plethora of topmost honours with which our films are being laden at the international film festivals in amazing succession. Gone is the day when Indian producers were cramped with a kind of deep-seated despondency about the quality of their works and endeavours never really being able to make the world grade. A bright new vista of creative glory appears to have suddenly sprung up before their cheerless vision, now that two beautiful Indian films of great artistic design and execution and yet of charmingly simple and human dramatic contents have bagged the premier awards at the two internationally famous film festivals at Karlovy Vary and Venice,—Raj Kapoor's *Jagte Raho* and Satyajit Roy's *Aparajito*. Undoubtedly these two remarkable feats of two young Indian producers, one right after the other, have at once placed Indian films on the top of world and have proved beyond a shadow of doubt the great film-artistic potentialities of the cream of India's film dreamers.

SUCCESS AGAINST BAFFLING BARRIERS

The full implication of the great international honour bestowed on these two Indian films will not be realised till one cared to weigh their merits in the grimly realistic light of the baffling barriers with which Indian film-makers have to contend in the matter of the technical turnover of their assignments. The old and rickety equipment with which the Indian producers have to plod on in their task of creating motion picture spells of beauty, the grimy studios and half-fed technicians that wield them—these all signify a state of utterly poor financial resources in which hardly anything more than a cheap trashy is thought possible of being made except by the incurably "crazy" and lonesome bend of desperate film-dreamers who refuse to be cowed down by these conditions of adverse fortune and seem to gather a new impetus for a tireless pursuit of the goal. No better compliment could be paid to the heroic artistry of these brave Indian technicians than by that world-famed film architect Frank Capra, who found the work of Indian technicians, bred by no genuine training, to be simply, "amazing" considering the hopeless ramshackle with which they had to work.

GLORIOUS ACHIEVEMENTS

Possibly largely inspired by the superb creative artistry of Japanese pictures which despite their equally lean technical resources stepped into the forefront of the world by annexing the international trophies of honour, our Indian film enthusiasts had a new glint in the eye, a new heart put into their work and struggled heroically on to gain a footing on the map of the world. The two successive top awards of the Czechoslovak and Venice Film Festivals, backed worthily by previous international honours of only a few shades less luminosity, like the special award given at the Berlin Festival to *Kabuliwallah;* that other award of merit Roy's first great achievement *Pather Panchali* for its outstanding quality of a "human document"; the Seleznick Medal awarded to the same film again at the recently held Edinburgh Film Festival and the earlier badge of distinction handed over to that other great Indian producer-director Bimal Roy for his epoch-making creation of *Do Bigha Zamin* which, in many opinions, set Indian film makers seriously on the road to international glory; and then all the numerous international laurels snatched away by the beautifully artistic contributions of India to the "documentary" domain, earning the highest plaudits from the juries in their verdict, topped by the award to Bimal Roy's *Gotama The Buddha* at Cannes Festival. These all have wonderfully helped the Indian films to have their vision brightened up by a new horizon of expanding glory which may continually beckon them to newer and worthier perspectives of artistic endeavour with a speck of that "divine dissatisfaction" which breeds all great works of art.

NEED OF PUBLIC PATRONAGE

I do not propose to enter here into any hair-splitting and invidious argument of comparative notes as to which of the two top Indian winners at international level, *Aparajito* and *Jagte Raho,* is bathed in the flood-light of greater glory resulting from exacting and comparable standards. That can only create germs of unhealthy bickerings which can lead the Indian films nowhere except into warring parochial camps. The truest significance of these two resplendent films from the same land annexing the two important international awards in course of the same year shall lie in our broad appreciation of the high merits of both and in the eager stretching of our necks to both the film masters in expectation of further works of such creative shine. For that may keep India in line with the best film creators of the world from year to year and help the Indian production industry grow from strength to strength. I say this because the recognition of the superb artistic contents of such films despite all their pronounced lack of any accepted frills of "box-office" success should instil a new heart into our producers with which they may energetically fight the bogey of commercial failures. It should also serve to teach the large masses of Indian filmgoers a new lesson of what really constitutes illuminating and refreshing film entertainment in terms of creative art. For the box-office failure at home of every such Indian film snatching away the highest honours of the world at the level of international film festivals will mean a fresh slap in the face of the people whom the makers of these films seek to represent. A great responsibility, therefore, lies with the responsible and representative sections of the public opinion like the Press, the Government of the land and also educational and civic institutions to train the Indian

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INDIA ON THE MARCH

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her to make the necessary arrangements. That is how the problem was solved with comparative ease and within a limited period of time in the Western Zone. But no definite calculation is possible in case of the Eastern Zone, for the exodus is a comparatively slow process and there is no indication at all of any change of policy in East Bengal which might render migration unnecessary for the Hindus still living there.

Refusal of migration certificate—the ready-made solution adopted recently by the Government of India—is a cruel repudiation of India's moral obligation towards the victims of partition. And from a long-range point of view it is no solution at all. Desperate refugees will continue to cross the border without migration certificates or with forged migration certificates. If they are denied all prospects of officially controlled rehabilitation they will endanger the socio-economic structure of West Bengal by their lawless activities.

It has been suggested recently that India should complain to the U.N. against Pakistan for violation of the Nehru-Liaquat Agreement and other agreements regarding the position of the minority community in East Bengal. Such complaints may have some publicity value; they can hardly improve the lot of the Hindus in East Bengal. Our disappointment over the Kashmir issue should teach us not to expect much from Marathon speeches in New York. The only alternative before us is, either to assume responsibility for every migrant who chooses to come, or to close the border effectively and make a determined effort to rehabilitate those who have already arrived. It is hardly possible, even if it were desirable, to close the border effectively and permanently. In the long run it is pretty certain that we shall have to find room for the entire Hindu population of East Bengal.

As the refugee problem remains unsolved only in the Eastern Zone, there is the danger that to the rest of India it might appear now as a purely local problem. It is a local problem only in a geographical sense; it is an all-India problem because it is a direct consequence of the partition which was agreed upon on an all-India basis.

ECONOMIC ISSUES

The money spent on rehabilitation has undoubtedly put a strain on India's economy; what is more serious, however, is the necessity of absorbing a huge uprooted population in the socio-economic structure of the country. At present this pressure is practically local, for it is virtually confined to the truncated State of West Bengal. The neighbouring States—Assam, Bihar and Orissa—share her burden with some reluctance, and the Dandakaranya scheme is intended to divert a part of the burden to other regions.

Meanwhile we have been planning for prosperity. The First Five-Year Plan has been officially successful, but its blessings have been confined practically to the rural areas. As a result the Congress has consolidated its position and secured impressive victories in those areas in the last general elections, but in urban constituencies its position has deteriorated—at least in the industrialised State of West Bengal. The divergence between rural and urban areas is becoming more pronounced day by day, and ere long this new trend in our national life will create fresh socio-economic problems.

The emphasis of the Second Five-Year Plan is on industrialisation, and already there is a feeling that the comparative neglect of agriculture is partly responsible for the present food crisis. So far there is no reason to apprehend that the Plan will not succeed in achieving its main objectives despite the pruning which will be rendered necessary by lack of resources. From the psychological point of view, however, the Plan has not been a success at all. It created little enthusiasm in the country although top-ranking leaders left no stone unturned to attract the masses to its rosy promises. Rising prices meant a very unwelcome burden, and unemployment figures began to rise. If starvation is the price which the present generation must pay for raising the standard of living for future generations, the plain truth should have been placed before the people before the Plan was launched. The widespread distress which is now generally attributed to the Plan will naturally be utilised by the Opposition parties, and there will be further inroads into that national determination to make the Plan a success which is absolutely essential for the stabilisation of our economy to-day. Democratic planning cannot succeed if it fails to convince the *demos* that it is really for their benefit. Hope deferred maketh the heart sick.

The all-consuming system of taxation which has been introduced in the name of planning has been widely criticised from the tax-payer's point of view, and the sponsors of planning have justified it on the plea that the people must pay for their own progress. For several years after partition our Finance Ministers moved cautiously indeed and tried to create the impression—here as well as abroad—that India's economy is balanced and sound. They succeeded in creating a sense of financial security which was a source of strength, of self-confidence, and of hope. The climax was reached during the regime of Mr. C. D. Deshmukh who secured for us unprecedented financial prestige abroad. Since his resignation, however, we have been moving in the opposite direction. It would almost seem that we are determined to advertise our insolvency. Higher taxation, higher prices, growing scarcity—these are the principal features of our economic life to-day. Unable to feed the Plan by mopping up internal resources the Finance Minister is now going abroad for money. We have squandered away the Deshmukh legacy; we have sacrificed our financial reputation in foreign countries. We feel ourselves weak and embarrassed even though the Plan is officially prospering.

CO-EXISTENCE

Against this economic background is to be studied the possible consequences of the establishment of Communist rule in Kerala.

It must be remembered that Kerala offered a natural field for anti-Congress activities. The percentage of literacy being comparatively high, it was easy to make the people politically conscious. Poverty and unemployment being acute, it was easy to foment discontent. The rich plantations, owned mostly by foreigners, were easy targets. The Congress was divided, weak, almost leaderless; it had no root in the soil, for Princely rule did not tolerate political agitation before 1947.

After several years of political instability the Communists secured a working majority and the Congress, loyal to the principles of the Constitution, permitted them to take over the administration of the State. The new Government, in its turn, pledged its loyalty to the Constitution. Co-existence secured the President's blessing. It was generally expected

INDIA ON THE MARCH

that the Communists would gradually give up their radicalism in policy and in methods. There were some, however, who apprehended that they would utilise power in Kerala for the purpose of strengthening themselves on an all-India basis.

The Kerala Education Bill created new hopes and fears. Any crusade against a "vested interest" has a popular appeal, and when the Kerala Communists declared that they would fight against missionary control over education they found support in many quarters. At the same time the unbalanced Zeal for officialising education fostered the suspicion that teachers would be utilised for indoctrination in schools. Why should land reforms be postponed and education be taken up first ? However, the Bill has been placed on the Statute Book in the teeth of tremendous opposition. How the Kerala Government uses its sweeping powers will now be watched with interest.

The next phase of the struggle against "vested interests" will naturally be confined to the economic sphere. If the Communists succeed in relieving poverty in Kerala without infringing property rights recognised by the Constitution, it will be a solid achievement and a potential passport to power in some other States. If, on the other hand, they cannot provide food and employment for the suffering people of Kerala, they will in all probability blame the "reactionary" Constitution and its protector—the Congress Government at the Centre. That is the dilemma before the Congress to-day.

From the Congress point of view centralisation appears to be the key to national unity. The Constitution is federal in form but unitary in spirit. Congress Ministers are in power in all States except one —and even there the Education Bill requires the Centre's prior approval. Planning, initiated and controlled by the Centre, has the economic life of the country in its grip. Even education—a State subject in the eye of law—has practically become a Central subject, and the courses of studies in the schools throughout the country are now framed in New Delhi.

The unitary system has its advantages, but in a vast country like India the burden may be too heavy even for the most efficient administrative organisation or political body. Moreover, excessive pressure on the legal-*cum*-administrative link sometimes weakens that mental integration which is the true and enduring basis of national unity.

At present national unity is threatened from three different directions.

In certain parts of West Bengal and in Kashmir there are resourceful champions of the old Muslim League ideology who would not hesitate to act under instructions from the Pakistani *jehadists*. Whether the authorities keep their movements under close and constant watch we do not know; any official steps taken against them might raise delicate issues of inter-communal relations and provide for our Pakistani friends an excellent opportunity for anti-Indian propaganda abroad.

In the State of Madras the so-called Dravida movement deserves much more attention in Northern India than the authorities and public opinion have given it so far. It is a definitely separatist movement and it cannot be rendered harmless simply by asking the President to live at Hyderabad for a few weeks every year. The relation between the Dravida Kazagham and the Tamil Nad Congress has recently been the subject-matter of some political speculation.

"HINDI IMPERIALISM"

The last, but the most serious, threat to national unity comes from "Hindi Imperialism". Very few people really believe that the Hindi-speaking section of the Indian people is *deliberately* trying to establish their "imperialism" over their non-Hindi-speaking fellow citizens. But the irrational zeal and unseemly haste with which Hindi is being sought to be imposed over the country have created deep suspicions which might disintegrate India at any moment.

From the purely linguistic point of view it must be admitted that Hindi cannot serve as an adequate administrative and educational instrument for many years to come. A sentimental reluctance to use a foreign language, and an equally sentimental eagerness to develop a national language through constant and widespread use, appear to lie at the root of the programme for Hindi. The non-Hindi-speaking sections of the people can easily appreciate these sentiments, but they cannot forget that introduction of Hindi would place them practically at the mercy of their Hindi-speaking brethren so far as employment and education are concerned. It is a question of bread and butter, and compromise is difficult. Moreover, they cannot forget that while they are asked to learn Hindi, no Hindi-speaking State has asked its children to learn any Indian language other than Hindi. This is a problem which cannot be solved by occasional references to the necessity of developing all regional languages or by political adjustments. The Congress will betray its tradition and play with fire if it tries to sidetrack or stifle the voice of the non-Hindi-speaking people in this crisis.

NEW HORIZON FOR INDIAN FILM

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masses into the mood and aptitude for enjoying the true artistry of such worthwhile Indian films which should enable them to sturdily counterbalance the static and crusty old notions of film entertainment. After all, it is the great god the public that can nourish or ruin an art-industry with their zealous patronage, or the lack of the same, for the 'best' pieces of their own films. The different awards at State or international levels may at best suffuse the producers with a moral process of revitalizing energy but cannot serve the hard core of economic sustenance.

The Indian film has, to sum up, begun at the long last to spread out as an exquisite artistic medium of great universal appeal, great dramatic joy and great human liberation of the mind and spirits. The serious and energetic bid for the Grand Prix at the world film festivals by India's worthier film makers is only a happy human index to the new life that has animated the industry and its creative youth. If after years of mental slough the Indian producers have been able to shake off their despondency and artistic short-sight and create an aura of native beauty in terms of cinema which has charmed the world outside, let us nearer home not be found wanting in the cultivation of that truly cultured and artistic taste with which to pitch high our demand for and appreciation of such outstanding films aimed at universal joy. After all, is it not the good coins that can throw out the base coins?

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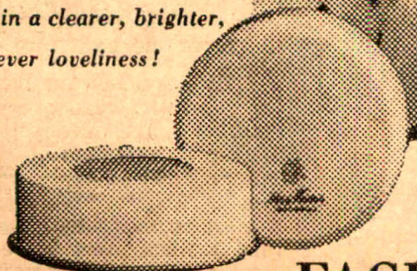

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PHALGU

(Continued from page 273)

wards to the higher world just like an arrow released from the bow-string. Niren's mother cried and groaned, lost her senses and dropped down on the ground.

* * *

Ramsundar gave up his food and sleep and hurried to Calcutta to look after the case against Niren.

Mahabishnu Babu too came to know it. He knew it on that very day. The Police entered his room to conduct the investigation.

He said to them, "It is Niren who has committed the murder and do you like to hang me along with him?"

One day Ramsundar entered his room and said. "You will have to go once. You will have to depose before the court."

— You mean me? Why, shall I be tried also?

— No. On the question being put by the Public Prosecutor, the Thana officer said that the brother of the accused also committed a murder. Our counsel utilised this statement and cross-examined him if the father of the accused was a mad man. The Thana officer admitted it. But we are to prove that you are mad long before the birth of Niren.

Mahabishnu replied, "But this leprosy — the case is somewhat better now but still it is leprosy."

The mother of Niren rejoined, "Ramsundar, don't drag him. He might suddenly die of heart failure, perhaps. Rather you find out some one from the village—."

Ramsundar replied, "It will mean immensely if Kartick Babu condescends to depose."

Niren's mother heaved a deep sigh and added, "Will it not do if our Kaviraj deposes? He knows it better than us."

— Let me see to it — it will be the best of the bad bargain.

Ramsundar had to come back, dejected. Mahabishnu Babu was pondering over something and suddenly asked him, "Well, Ramsundar!"

Ramsundar halted, "Yes, Sir".

— Well, let them hang me. He is my son and the guilt fastens on me.

Ramsundar silently lowered his head and departed. With tears in her eyes and wearing a smile, Niren's mother put in, "Don't worry. I am so told by Ramsundar. Niren will come out scot-free. If we can prove with the help of the Kaviraj that you are insane, Niren will be let off."

— Let off?

— Yes, he will be let off.

— Just send for the Kaviraj.

— You need not call him. Ramsundar himself as gone to him. He will never say 'No'.

— No, not for that, I think my disease is worsening. Let him look into my hand more carefully. Why don't you look into it if there are sores in the joints? This time it will be pestering.

Niren's mother observed some signs of wound in the joints of the fingers. He lacerated the joints picking them with his nails. She asked him not to lacerate them any more. She said, "These are all nail abrasions. Wait, I am paring off your nails." She sat down to pare the nails with scissors. For her, there was no means of escape by death, no scope to shed tears. It seemed there was an incessant call for her— "Look! Observe my fingers particularly. No — No. One cannot take food with such a hand. Rather feed me with your hand."

* * * *

Several months wore off. Niren would be hanged in the early morrow. Niren's mother was lying on her chest on her bed and was weeping in low tone. Mahabishnu Babu was sitting, stupefied, with the same look and in the same posture. Inside the room there was the same scanty light, the self-same still darkness surrounding the circumference of the shedding light.

Suddenly Mahabishnu Babu inquired, "Has Ramsundar gone to Calcutta?"

— Yes, by tomorrow evening, he will come back with Niren.

With extreme pain, she returned the reply. The matter was kept secret from Mahabishnu Babu.

Mahabishnu Babu shook his shoulder in sore dejection and said, "No. He will be hanged today. I know it, I have heard it. You were speaking —"

Now Niren's mother cried out bitterly. But Mahabishnu Babu remained seated in the same posture. She wept for a long time and said "It is all for the fault of my fate, the sin of my womb that you suffer so much for me!"

Mahabishnu Babu shook his neck slowly in the same manner as he did before, "No!" After a long silence, he uttered, "You don't know it. No one knows it, only God knows my sin — it is my guilty blood!" Like a ghost-like figure, he made slow movement of his hand, raised it and pointed his finger to a direction to the room saying, "It is there, in that very place that I strangled to death my first wife with these two hands."

Niren's mother remained gazing at the face of her husband with expanded eyes.

— I was an abandoned character. I suspected her fidelity. She was exceedingly beautiful! And she was always laughing.

Niren's mother covered his face, weeping, and said "No — no more of it. Don't say it!"

Mahabishnu Babu kept quiet for a long time and suddenly said, "When I sat on her chest and pressed her throat, she cursed me that my two hands would be attacked with leprosy but Dhiren and Niren would keep them whole — each hand — this one and that one. You have no guilt. After all, it is the blood of murder!"

In the world outside, the pipings of the birds proclaimed the dawn. Niren's mother shrieked with heart-breaking cries, "Niren — oh my Niren!"

Startled, Mahabishnu Babu said, "Ahh!"

Then he said, "Then it is dawn after all?"

He opened out the window, looked at the morning sky and stood there. From the eastern mountain the flood of light, crossing millions of miles in every moment was rushing on in streams. All sides were being printed in clear outline. All of a sudden, he extended his both hands in the light and exclaimed — "They have become whitish".

Hands that these reduced to the skin and bone bloodless, pale—.

(Translated by Satyendra Mohun Mookerjee)

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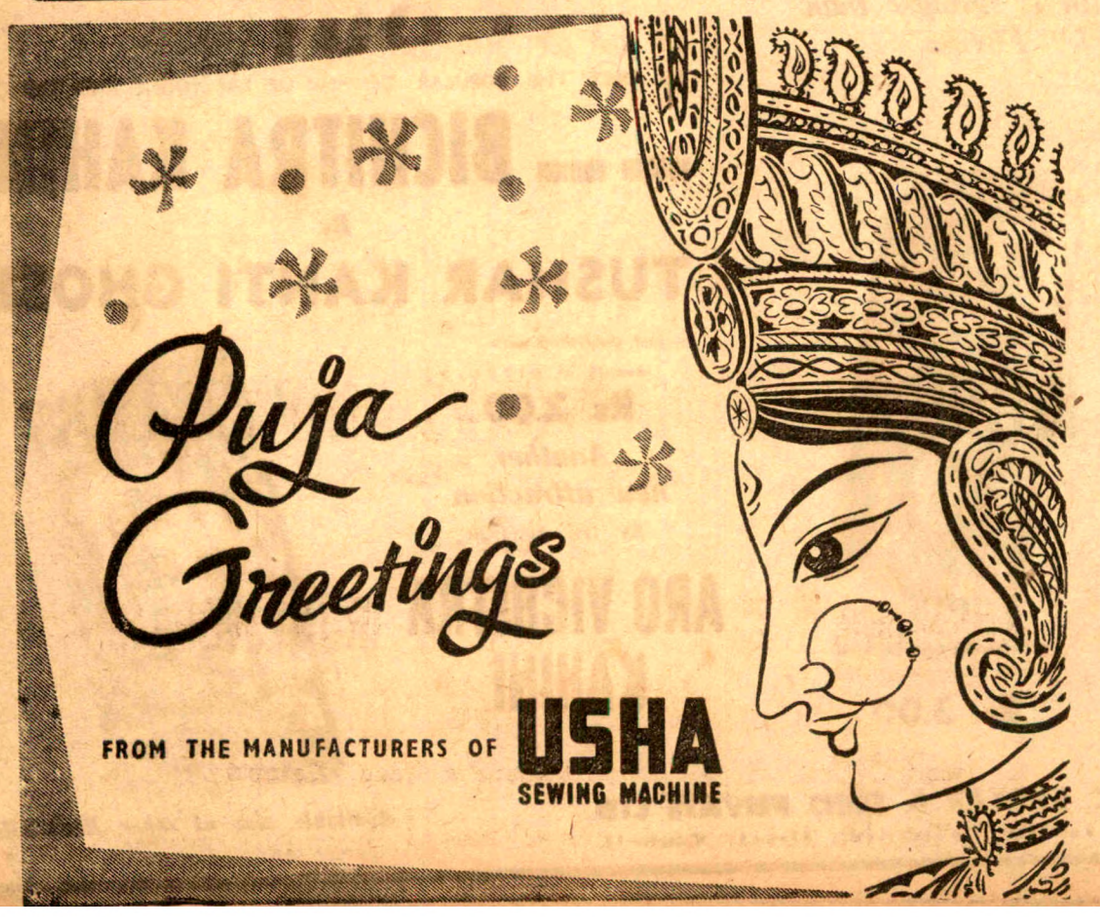

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ASHTA SAKTI

By MAHANAMBRATA BRAHMACHARI. M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt.

SAKTI—the Source, Support and End of all Existence and Life, is one and unique, but She does retain the potentiality of manifesting Herself in innumerable forms. Expressing, as She does, motherly affection, She is pre-eminently a Mother, so tender so benignant, but controlling, as She does, the destructive agencies, She is terrific and fierce. She is Kali of extremely black complexion. She is Uma of golden hue. Uma imparts highest knowledge to the enlightened *devas*. Kali devours her own sucklings and keeps them in bondage by the chain of *Maya*. All these contradictions find harmony in the all-embracing totality of *Saktis* that is *Mahasakti*.

Force is inherent in existence, so is *Sakti* in *Sada-Siva*, the eternal Brahman. The primordial *Sakti* is identical with Brahman, the Absolute. The objective universe is a projection of Her inner being. She is endowed with all-will, all-knowledge and all-action. She is *Mahadevi*. Multifarious are Her emanations and She is one-in-many.

ARJUNA'S PRAYER TO DURGA

At the beginning of *Bhisma Parva*, in the *Mahabharat*, Sri Krishna advises Arjuna to make an obeisance to Mahadevi Durga before the commencement of the battle and pray for victory. Arjuna his adoration of the Mother designated Her u many names, such as Kaumari, Kali Kapali, Kant basini, etc. The *Argala* hymn mentions Her ten expressions : Jayanti, Mangala, Kali, Bhadra Kapalini, Durga, Siva, Kshama, Dhatri, Swaha Swadha. They are all bestowers of good in life.

The hymn named *Devi Kabacha* speaks of N Durga, namely, Sailaputri, Brahmacharini, Char ghanta, Kaumari, Skanda Mata, Kalyani, Kalar Mahagouri and Siddhi-datri. They are the pro tive forces, offering safest shelter to all that seek

In the *Bhagavad Gita* Sri Krishna declares of eight-fold nature. They are earth, water, air, ether, mind, intellect and ego. They are in fact, material cause of the Universe. Kalidas, the P speaks, in his benedictory sloka in *Sakuntala*, eight images of the Lord Siva: earth, water, air, *akasha*, the sun, the moon and the doer. They almost similar to those of the *Gita*.

THE MYSTIC EIGHT

The eighth chapter of the *Saptasati Cha* throws abundance of light on the subject f another angle of vision. Let us begin from context.

Chanda and Munda, the two generals of demon king Sumbha, were beheaded by Chandika

BRAHMANI

MAHESWARI

KAUMARI

VAISHNAVI

BARAHI

NARASINCHI

AINDRI

CHANDIKA

ier dazzling sword, and when that information eached Sumbha, he was mad and very wrathfully ssued an order to all his battalions to proceed to the var front and fight their utmost to win. 'Pull that roud Durga by hair to my harem or finish her for ood'—was the standing order of the demon king.

The mighty army, headed by Raktabija, whose ach drop of blood could produce another Raktabija f equal valour, marched onward and Mahadevi cast significant glance at the enemy, stood erect, blew Her conch and threw down the gauntlet. The *devas* r heaven, however, were much troubled and alarmed. Their perturbation created a throbbing in their earts and out of the emotion came out of the *devas* heir respective *Saktis*.

These *Saktis* were in fact inherent in Mahadevi as an integral part of Her all-absorbing Being, ithertofore unmanifest and then incarnate.

And again, to anticipate the final stage, all would e found merging completely in the Supreme Personality of Mahadevi called Mahasaraswati in *Tantra*.

Seven matronly *Saktis* descended and one more ame forth out of her own person and thus the mystic number Eight was reached. To wit, Brahmani, Maheswari, Kaumari, Vaishnabi, Barahi, Narasinghi, Aindri and Chandika—they are known as Ashta-Sakti. A bit detailed description about them is being given below :

BRAHMANI

In the forefront of the retinues of Saktis stands out Brahmani, not merely a consort but the very essence of Brahma's creative genius. In and through Brahmani, Brahma would find His creational excellences fully manifest and without Her He would cease to function as Brahma.

Her physiological formation of the figure, ornamental decorations of the limbs, martial weapons and active tendencies — all were exact counterparts of those of Brahma himself. This was true of all the *Saktis* that were to follow.

Brahma is exoterically the creative energy of the Universe. But esoterically She is the *Sabda-Brahma*, the Logos of the Greek Philosophy.

Brahmani alighted from Her Swan-plane, the swan being a symbol of the realisation of identity between individual and universal Beings. The realisation constitutes the conveyance, the *Bahana* of the Logos. In Her beautiful hands, She carries a rosary in one and a jar in another, the former for uttering mantras and the latter for carrying the nectar of immortality and by sprinkling the same She animates the devotees with piety and love and also destroys the diabolical tendencies of the demons.

MAHESWARI

Brahmani is followed by Maheswari. She constitutes the essence of the energy of Siva. Her main activity consists in destructive affairs. She is seated on a bull, holds a trident in hand and carries a crescent on forehead which is a symbol of universal compassion. Two serpents, signifying attraction and repulsion of the forces, wind Her wrists.

KAUMARI

Kaumari, the third in the series, comprises all the energies of Kumara, the Commander-in-Chief of the gods. She is expert in all the arts and crafts of warfare. She holds an iron spear symbolising martial energy. She sits and moves about on the back of a peacock. Peacocks slay snakes that may bring death. Hence the peacock symbolizes conqueror of death, (*Mrityunjay*). Kaumari is an eternal maiden. No death or decay is known to Her and to Her *bhaktas*.

VAISHNABI

The Vaishnabi Sakti comes fourth in the line. In Her is embodied the total energy of Narayana who is the final refuge of all that is created. Garuda, the ruler of the feathered biped, is her carrier, being an emblem of spiritual height and penetrating insight. All-roundness of Her disposition is shown by Her four hands and the symbolic arms. The conch stands for *Sabda-Brahma*, disc for righteousness, the club for right judgement and the sword of knowledge for killing ignorance. The weapons help Her in Her constant work for peace and preservation of moral solidarity of this cosmic order.

BARAHI

Following the Vaishnabi Sakti, the Barahi Sakti steps in the scene. She is the innermost energy of the Divine Boar, who by his teeth lifted the earth and saved it from sinking in the abyss of unrighteousness. Hiranyaksha, literally, one who constantly puts his eyes on gold, was killed by the Boar by dint of the Barahi Sakti. One totally engrossed in sensuous pleasures must be done away with for the moral uplift of the world. This is precisely the function of *Yajna*. This is why She is called *Yajna Barahi*. A disc of *Karma* and a mace of *Dharma*, She carries in Her hands. Around Her head flashes the locks of fly brushes, indicating victory everywhere.

NARASINGHI

The next in the series is Narasinghi. Her person is very much akin to the body of the great man-lion, whose essential Sakti She embodies. Making the stars in the firmament trembling and shooting by the movement of Her mane, She makes Her august appearance. The first manifestation of the man-lion took place during the killing of Hiranyakashipu, literally meaning one lusting for gold—symbolising gross worldliness. The Sakti destroys object worldliness. Her eyes glow like melted iron. Her face is blazing. She has a stern look and a frowning forehead. Her breast is big but waist thin. Her body is covered with hair having moonlit lustre. She embodies horror and detestation in her person.

AINDRI

The seventh in the series is Aindri. She is the power-incarnate of Indra, the king of the *devas*. She manipulates the royal activities of the heaven. An elephant signifying royal dignity is Her carrier. Even as an Empress She possesses golden colour and valuable ornaments.

Indra is also the presiding deity of the *indriyas* (senses). The inner relation between eyes and light, ears and sound and so on is ordained and maintained by Indra. Aindri Sakti signifies this energy. She controls natural forces such as cloud etc. from without. She rules inner forces of mind and senses from within. She stands for virtues that are majestic. She lords it over all that is celestial.

CHANDIKA

The seven Saktis, spoken of, came from above. Chandika, the eighth and the last of Astha Saktis, manifested Herself from the very person of Mahadevi Herself. She is, so to say, the Sakti of the Saktis. She is otherwise named the unconquerable One. She is the emblem of dismay and dreadfulness. She remains surrounded by innumerable jackals, who

(*Continued On Page 14*)

"BESIDES THE FIVE SENSES"

By SRI PRAKASHA (Governor Of Bombay)

The author pleads for a code of conduct which will keep our body, mind and soul on a pedestal that would make us not only good citizens of our own land but true citizens of the world.

WE are all only too well aware of the five senses of sight and smell, touch and taste and hearing. They are doubtless very great and desirable gifts of God to man. The loss or even a slight defect in any, creates a void in the life of the individual sufferer, which he finds it almost impossible to fill; and still these blessings can easily be turned into curses if we use them wrongly, as so many of us are so often unfortunately inclined to do. If utilised for proper and useful purposes, they can give real joy and comfort to ourselves and to all around us. If misused for mere gross purposes, they can only lead to sorrow and suffering as they constantly do. In any case, they are always with us and it is for us to make what use we like of them.

It is, therefore, sometimes good to lift ourselves from the demands that these five senses are constantly making on us and think of other things and for a moment have appreciation of values in a way different to the one to which these senses have accustomed us. "The Sense of Decency", the subject prescribed for this article, is in a way intimately connected with all the five material senses of the body, but can still be regarded as something besides and beyond as well. It is true that in the ultimate, decency needs must also be judged by what our senses of seeing and hearing and smelling and tasting and touching have to say about it.

But the conception of it is not necessarily the result of the activities of the five senses. It is the outcome of a spiritual appreciation of the conditions and properties of life in general. It expresses the attempt of man in the course of his evolution, to find out with the help of a finer feeling within him, as to what would be a proper code of conduct for him to adopt in his relations with the world in which he lives—the world not only of fellowmen but also of the animals in the forest; the birds in the air; and the fishes in the water; and along with them, the forests, the skies and the waters themselves as well.

NOTHING ABSOLUTE

It so happens that as the world is constituted, almost everything is only relative. There can be nothing like absolute in our judgement of things. Decency, therefore, can also mean different things to different persons, and ideas about it certainly differ not only from place to place, but from group to group. There are two or three factors which if taken into consideration, would make it comparatively easy for us to understand the problems that the subject presents, and to come to correct and practical solutions of them. The first thing is that we must a very carefully and firmly hold fast to the simp truth that whatever we like is liked and whatever v dislike is also disliked by other members of the soci circles in which our lives are cast.

As an inevitable consequence of this, we shou see to it that we behave towards others exactly we would like others to behave towards us. W really should not wait to be told to do the right thi by the person concerned. We should, so to say, ant cipate what he would like us to do, and do it witho being asked. We can easily know what should done by simply asking ourselves as to what we wou have ourselves wanted the other person to do, if v had been in similar circumstances. Some frien would say that this is ordinary good manners, a has nothing special to do with any conception decency, as such. To my mind, good manners a the very essence of decency and a person who co ducts himself in life properly and well, is doubtle a decent person.

Then we must also make sure that we do n strain the matter too far. Members of any particul group might have their own very special conceptio of what is right and what is wrong; what is dece and what is not. Therefore, the individual has be careful lest in stressing his own ideas about d cency, he himself becomes guilty of improper a even indecent conduct. We all find ourselves different situations at different times and place What may be indecent in one setting, need not nece sarily be so in another setting for the self sam person. Whatever is improper at one place may n only be proper, but the not doing of it may b improper in other situations.

NO HARD AND FAST RULES

Like any other matter, we cannot have too har and fast rules regarding decency. In a few word the sense of decency is begotten by deliberately usin the processes of the mind to understand vario factors of social life. It then implies one to act in manner that is right and proper and is truly pleasin to all concerned. It should also be noted here tha a really decent and cultured individual would be s trained as to be able immediately to adjust himse to the ways of the members of any set among who he may find himself, even though their method conducting things may not be only different from bu even quite opposed to his own conception of thing A sense of decency would also engender in us a spiri of tolerance and understanding; and we would no regard other ways of thought and conduct, whic are not our own as necessarily indecent or impropе

Let us, for instance, take a simple illustration None of us can do without food; and so eating is very important factor in the lives of all. Roun about the process of eating have evolved innumer able ideas of culture, refinement and therefor decency. Let us not forget that we actually behav in life as we behave at table. In India, most of u

t with our fingers. That is not the way in Europe. ıe European may regard our system as indecent, as e might be inclined to regard his use of forks and ıives as such.

In different countries and in different classes and ades of society of Europe itself, however, there are fferent ideas of how to do things while at meals. India also there is a difference in the conception properties about what to eat and how to eat ıong different groups of persons. In some social rcles of England, for instance, it may be regarded indecent to make the least little sound with the outh as one eats or drinks. In other grades and ıuntries in Europe itself, that may not be so. Among me of us in India, it may be regarded as particularly ce and even necessary to make sound as one eats. r that may delight the host, and convince him that ıe food he has spread out, is really to the taste of ıe guest who expresses his joy by behaving as he ›es.

A person with a fine sense of delicacy and ecency would try to make himself at home in any rcles in which he finds himself by approximating s own conduct and manners to those of the people ound him and still appearing as if he is doing so aturally and that they are actually his own as well. ı any case, a decent man will have no evil thoughts garding persons who do not conduct themselves actly in the way he himself does.

ROPER CONDUCT

I have ventured to say in the very beginning that ecency for us cannot only refer to our behaviour ıong fellowmen. So long, however, I have dealt ith only the mutual relations of human beings. hat is obviously most important; and there our ınse of decency is being constantly put to the test. s we are all anxious that others should hold good ›inions of us, we would naturally be inclined to put ıe greatest stress on proper conduct among our-lves; but we human beings have a great responsi-lity towards other species of creation also and we ınnot neglect that.

Man has made himself, by the help of the brain ›wer of which he is possessed, practically the master the whole of nature's creation. Thus his sense of ecency should not be confined only to his own ›ecies. It must spread further and animals must ıso receive the consideration from him that is their ıe. So many of us are unnecessarily cruel to the ›wer creation. So many thoughtless folk take elight in teasing and torturing helpless animals. he sense of decency should prevent our doing that. ven if we should be convinced that man cannot do ithout the use of animal flesh for food, it is incum-ent upon him to see to it that the slaughter of ani-ıals for him is carried by the infliction of the mini-ıum amount of pain.

Human beings do not go about the world search-ıg for their food in this manner; animals do. They ave very definite codes of conduct in this behalf ıat they have prescribed for themselves. Animals, n the other hand, do not appear to be worried about ny particular code of decency; and they pounce pon their prey as best as they can, and eat it in the ıanner taught to them by their natural instinct and v ideas such as may have come down to them by eredity in their particular species. A decent man, herefore even when he feels compelled to inflict ain on others, for his behalf, must see to it that he ıflicts the least amount of it.

NO VANDALISM

We have also to think of the forests, the seas and he skies. Decency is not confined to our reactions nly on living creatures. A decent person has his own very particular and sympathetic approach to the beautiful trees that grow in the forests, the lovely hues that spread over the skies, the changing scenes that the waves of the sea present. These are there all the time, but the decent man and the ordinary person observe these in different ways.

We see what vandalism—what reckless cutting down of trees—is going on in our land today, destroying the beauty and the wealth of our forests. We are thoughtlessly vitiating the atmosphere under the canopy of the sky and soiling the waters of the seas around us that Nature has given to us for the enhancement and not the ruination of life. A genuine sense of decency will give us a true and sympathetic appreciation of values and help us to behave as to give joy and comfort to every object with which we come in contact.

Let us never labour under the false notion that all graces and beatics of life are meant only for the so-called flesh. It is something that is meant for us all, and in our own way—whether high or humble—every single one of us can help to maintain the decencies of life by being decent ourselves in our persons, in our speeches and in our actions. It is the non-realisation of this simple fact that is creating most of the troubles in the world and human beings are in a way making themselves worse than beasts because they have brains which they are misusing. And even though knowing that there is another and better way, they are refusing to adopt it.

May we hope that in the new India that is being born in the setting of our democratic freedom we would all have a real appreciation of values of things; and would so conduct ourselves that we would by our good behaviour among ourselves as human beings, by our true compassion towards the lower creation, by our proper utilisation of the forests, the seas and the skies, make truly decent men and women of ourselves, and show to the world that it is not difficult to be kind yet brave, courteous yet firm, simple yet dignified, sympathetic yet just, poor yet dutiful, humble yet refined and thus evolve a code of conduct which would keep our body, mind and soul on a pedestal that would make us not only good citizens of our land but true citizens of the world.

ASHTA SAKTI

(*Continued From Page 12*)

inhabit in graveyards and live on carcasses. In brief, Chandika stands for Death itself.

She sent Siva on an embassy to the opponent with the ultimatum that either Indra should have his heavenly throne back or the demon armies should perish and their flesh eaten up by her jackals. Thus Siva being Her messenger, She is called *Siva-duti* or Siva-envoy.

Chandika is essentially the transforming energy of Time, that energy which works from within and makes every object on the mundane plane attain maturity. Everything that is mortal is controlled and conditioned by the great time energy.

Chandika though dismal and indomitable has Siva, the goodness, her envoy, indicating thereby that all transformations aim at ultimate excellence. Death, though terrific in appearance, is in reality the single gateway to a realm of beautiful existence.

May the Ashta Sakti of the Great Mother protect us from eight directions, so that we may live in peace and have spiritual growth in harmony.

ROLE OF FAITH IN THE NATION'S DESTINY

By DR. HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB, Chief Minister, Orissa.

ON today October 2, ninety years ago, a great man came to the world and worked amongst his countrymen in the most trying circumstances. The circumstances were such that even the stoutest heart would have failed to achieve something tangible. Nevertheless, Gandhiji succeeded in achieving something which will go down to history as a miracle. Independence of India is admittedly the greatest event in modern history. Along with India, newly-created Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon which were all under the British domination came to their own and became independent. Gandhiji had his own conception of Swaraj in India. He had his own conception of the society which would not only sustain India's independence but also will set forth an ideal before the world. Both during the struggle for freedom and after it, we have been in the game all through. Under the pressure of circumstances, there is very little time to think and control events according to our will. Sometimes one feels as if the country is drifting. Things are happening by themselves and they are being put together to show as if these are our work.

CHANGE IN FRANCE

The events which are taking place not only in the world far away but round about our own country should compel us to think for a moment and see if things are going in the right direction. The change of Constitution in France is an event in history which should not be lost sight of. It is France which once inspired many other countries to work for independence and democracy. There again it is seen that the entire Constitution has been changed without recognition only in a few months with the support of the overwhelming majority of the population. Why did it so happen? Obviously the democracy France had did not produce the desired result. Many splinter groups worked at cross-purposes resulting in deterioration and degradation which France at last could not tolerate and it was bold enough to discard the whole system. The future alone will show what the result of the change will be. But there is no doubt the change in France has brought about a change in the whole situation in the West.

PAKISTAN & BURMA

Nearer home, we know what is happening in Pakistan. One would doubt whether there is any systematic administration in that country. While the politicians are vying amongst themselves, the Services probably are somehow carrying on the show. But it is presumed that the strength of the Army there is the determining factor. Events in Burma must have given a shock to a large number of thinking people all over the world, particularly in India. The Burmese Prime Minister, as a man, is highly respected not only in his own country but also in India. Whenever he has visited India, he has added to the number of his innumerable friends and admirers. Once he retired from the office for a year to judge things from outside, and collect wisdom to run the affairs of the State better. He came back to the office with more glory and popularity. At last faction started and he had to face an uncompromising Opposition in Parliament. Ultimately he thought it proper and wise to make over the administration to the Army in the interest of the State. How and why did it happen? If it happened there in Buma, why could it not happen elsewhere also?

The affairs of Ceylon are well-known. Although apparently the climax has not yet reached, yet ominous indications are visible.

WHY INDIA HAS FAILED

Here in India, in spite of the fact that we have got a great leader to conduct our affairs and in spite of the fact that development work on an unprecedented scale has been undertaken and is showing tangible results not only in the urban areas but also in the rural areas, popular discontent seems to be on the increase. When the Planning Minister, Sri Gulzarilal Nanda, as has been reported in the Press, said with a sigh in the Rajya Sabha the other day that Government have not yet been able to rouse the enthusiasm of the people for the execution of the Plan, he must have expressed his feelings with deep sorrow.

Why is it that the enthusiasm of the people

is not secured? Achievements in the direction of development of industries, expansion of education and health services, production of power and irrigation for the fields, have been so tangible in the course of these few years that they have no comparison in any other part of the world in similar circumstances as India is. Why do not these create confidence and enthusiasm to go further ahead? Obviously, the major political party, namely, the Indian National Congress, which has been running the show from the beginning of independence has failed somewhere. To explain away that failure by attributing it to internal faction is to over-simplify the problem.

HUMAN WEAKNESSES

In any organisation, big or small, there is bound to be differences inside. There is bound to be rivalry, jealousy etc. in all human institutions. These human weaknesses existed throughout history, even round about the greatest saints. These are common features in all political organisations throughout the world. These weaknesses exist even in the Communist Party which is reputed to be a highly organised and disciplined political institution. In an active political organisation, these weaknesses should be given a secondary place and be allowed to pass off as a matter of course. Instead these are put forth as the cause of the faiure of the major political party in India to produce the necessary enthusiasm for the development of the country. It may be that failure in some other directions is sought to be concealed by diverting the attention of the critics to a wrong direction.

SELF-ANALYSIS NEEDED

I think the time has come when each one of us from the highest to the lowest should make some self-analysis and be bold enough to say where any of us is wrong. It is now said that the Planning Commission went wrong. It should be found out how and why they went wrong. Then steps should be taken so that a similar wrong may not be committed in future. In all human affairs, mistakes are committed in spite of best efforts to prevent their recurrence. The crux of the problem is whether efforts are made to detect the mistakes and take steps against its recurrence. If it so happens that obvious mistakes are being committed and not only nobody listens to the critic who points out these mistakes but attempt is made to suppress criticism, then I think an explanation is available as to why popular enthusiasm is not forthcoming.

GANDHIJI'S LEADERSHIP

In this connection the life of Gandhiji ought to be an object lesson to all of us. Gandhiji was the most popular leader ever born in India. Even then he used to expose himself to bitter criticism of his own failures. He used to admit mistakes not in the fashion of displaying his greatness but in a humble manner commanding willing adherence of millions of people to his programme of work. As far as I know, during his days the All-India Congress Committee meetings and even the Open Sessions of the Congress were so lively that members and visitors used to throng them not for the show but for the debate. Each member used to come back more enlightened and more convinced. But it has to be considered whether the same kind of discussion and debate takes place now in the Congress Committee meetings.

PEOPLE LACK FAITH

I do not know whether the percentage of attendance in the A.I.C.C. meetings has ever been analysed. Even before the meetings are held one can forecast the resolutions which will be passed and the trend of the speeches which will be made. The atmosphere for free discussion somehow does not exist today. This may be the main reason for the major political party not being able to create necessary enthusiasm amongst the people. Or, it may be the Planning Commission is not in touch with the problems which the vast rural population faces. It is said euphemistically in many quarters that "Delhi is far away nowadays." One can cite a number of instances in support of this view also.

> *The poverty of the villages is beyond the conception of those who plan to improve the lot of the villagers. Texts are prepared by those who are born and bred up in cities for the villagers as to how the latter should behave in the villages. There is no wonder, therefore, that the villagers do not feel at home with whatever is being said or done for them. The distance between the villager's mind and that of the people at the top is very great today, perhaps greater than ever before. Or, it may be, the philosophy of life has been lost. It is not merely food and clothing, power and purse, which make the man interested in his life; Faith in some destination plays also an important role in a man's life.*

ROLE OF FAITH

In all the programmes of Gandhiji, beginning from the village sanitation to the fight for independence, Gandhiji kept up to the philosophy of life with which the bulk of the population is familiar for generations. Gandhiji created Faith in the people. That Faith led to the confidence in oneself, which in its turn brought about unprecedented enthusiasm.

The role of Faith in Marxist philosophy and in the Socialistic Realism which is being followed in countries like the U.S.S.R. and China is very great indeed. But for that Faith, the Communist Party in any country could not have undertaken the huge task they have done so far. Excepting Plans and Programmes, has any faith been inculcated in the people of India to strive for something which will be attained as a result of the efforts made? This Faith cannot be equated with the slogans such as fight against poverty, disease etc.

There may be many points of view to explain the present position, but it should be admitted on all hands that a time has come when we have to look round, see the events taking place elsewhere, analyse their causes and effects, examine our own position and take steps for any contingency that may arise in the process of building up the India of our dreams.

RATIONALE OF BHOODAN MOVEMENT

By JAYA PRAKASH NARAYAN

HE Bhoodan movement is an attempt to apply the principle and technique of non-violence—to apply this technique to the solution of social problems. I believe any such attempt at this period of history should be welcomed by all thinking persons; because this is an age *par excellence* of non-violence. Peace is the universal cry today. This is an age of probing into the outer space. In this very fast changing scientific age, if the human race has to survive, it must eschew violence, hatred and bloodshed. I think, it is a universal cry today that there should be no world war. That violence on a global scale would be suicidal is a proposition which no longer remains in doubt. Everyone agrees with that. What everyone is not agreed about is whether likewise violence on a small scale should also be eschewed. There is a contradiction in the mind of men today.

WORLD WAR MUST GO

A world war must be prevented whether they are fought on the streets of Calcutta or in Korea, Egypt, Indo-China or other places. Small wars such as these are not yet understood by us to be as dangerous to the existence and future of human race as a war of global dimension. I think it does not require much intelligence to appreciate that if it were not possible for human beings to remove violence of all kinds from human relationship, the danger of global war would always remain a possibility. No man can say that out of these smaller conflicts a large conflict cannot arise. Therefore, I made the statement that this attempt of Vinobaji and the handful of workers who are with him to apply the technique of non-violence to social problems should be universally welcomed for the success of all other such attempts that are made in any part of the world; because these attempts broaden the possibilities of the continued existence of human beings on this earth. Now throughout history, I believe, there have been attempts to apply the principle of love, the principle of peace and non-violence by Socialists, individuals and Communists. I think it was Mahatma Gandhi who made the first mass experiment in non-violence and he met with remarkable success. His success would have been more remarkable if the country were not partitioned. The fact that the country was partitioned detracts from the influence of Gandhian experiment. It is not his fault but our fault—those who applied the technique. We do not have enough understanding of or enough faith in the programme or in the policy; also in the princip that he preached and the result was this mixed ki of success. There is no doubt that if Gandhiji w alive, he would have continued his experiment w non-violence.

GANDHIJI'S TECHNIQUE

Gandhiji had great power and popularity. he had influence on the mass of the people even the intelligentsia of the country, people would h followed Gandhiji. Even in the political sph people would have followed him out of the Ass bly, out of the Ministry, into the field of work a that would have given Gandhiji a much hig start. Very few people knew Vinobaji. It is alm an accident that in 1941, when individual Sat graha started, Gandhiji selected Vinoba as first Satyagrahi. That brought Vinobaji to the fo front forcibly. He was one of the closest and tru ed friends of Gandhiji. He got a scientific mi He made experiments in the field of basic educati But the general public did not know much ab him.

Vinobaji started the movement. This movem had the concrete nature of the programme he pla before the country. The object of the movem was to change the mind of the people. It was extension or continuation of the same idea and same technique of Mahatma Gandhi. A program was placed before the country, which is related the concrete problems in society and meant change the attitude of the people, to change relationship among people, to change the social economic structure. But change first inside. programme of Bhoodan arose out of the single in the village of Telengana, and as the movem developed, many branches shot out of it. During last seven years the movement has grown out f that single root into so many branches.

SUCCESS REMARKABLE

The physical achievement of the movemen not much to brag of if one compares it with physical target. By the end of 1957, we often tal of the land problem being solved and target fulfil If we merely look at the cold figures, it will small. We have achieved 1|10th of what we st to be 5 crores of acres of land. That is one wa looking at it. In 1921 Gandhiji spoke of Swara one year—I have heard about it—but we got it years after that. Many factors helped the logi the programme. After all, without the help of tory, no leader could overthrow the Czarist reg

nat high target of Swaraj in one year would been brought within the grasp of possibility vould have been free before 1947.

If one looks at this movement not from the t of view of arithmetic but from the point of of what it has achieved in the field of changing minds of the people, in the sphere of evolution leas, I think, one will agree that the success of movement in comparison is really remarkable. ous thinkers and political parties give us, even o place before us, a picture of India that is to orn. In the last 7 years one great contribution is movement has been that it has made this re—not of the whole of the country, but of the part of the country, which is the big- part, 80% of the people live in the villages e picture of rural India more clear by this dan Movement. As for example, let us take the tion of land reforms. So many committees ed on it. Abolition of landlordism, and redistri- n of land, then land to the tiller, no inter- aries between the State and the tiller, uneconoceiling to be rent-free, co-operative farming— programmes political parties are talking about he last few years. Supposing all these were would all that added together solve the land lem? They would not. Land problem would remain and still be demanding its solution. es might differ about what the ceiling may be. Congress party may put the ceiling at 150 acres, lists 50, some other party less. some people far and still, some people will have lands and some e having no land, landlessness will remain.

LITION OF LAND-OWNERSHIP

Land is the chief sanction behind all social ige, social status in the rural society. Take the nunists who are in power in Kerala. They have uted a pool, which wishes to fix the ceiling of res double crop land for a family of 5. Where density of population is 1,500 per sq. mile and and man ratio is 34 per capita, 15 acres of double land—what would it solve? And the party calls volutionary. Take the idea of abolition of owner- of land. I suppose Communists and Socialists it which they hope to bring about ultimately. resent I do not think it possible for any party to about abolition of ownership of land by ation. Even the small farmer, who has got one of land, regards himself as owner of his land. efore, no party in the country has the courage me forward for they do not want to frighten ne. We do not want abolition by legislation. ie one hand there is legislative enactment. On other side, there is *Bhoodan* It has slowly oped into *Gramdan*. There are about 4,000 *dan* villages Village people do not really stand all that. They have surrendered their st to the village community When a *Gramdan* place all the existing land problems including nentation of land are solved, because the e community comes to acquire voluntarily the s of ownership over the lands of the villages and the community as a whole decides what should me, how land should be best utilized The best of land management is left to the community. he question is how land should be utilized best managed best in the interest of the people. We not enough land in this country to enable the e population to maintain itself on the produce e land.

TERN OF GRAMDAN

The pattern at present developed in *Gramdan* is ee-fold pattern. In some villages, very few in er, the whole village cultivates the whole village land collectively. That is an extreme form. On the other extreme, a portion of the village, 5 to 10% of the village land, is set apart for community purpose. When a community village is establisned, it is left to the community to decide about payment of tax. For school fees etc. 5 to 10% of the total land are kept apart. The community give their free labour on that communal land. There is a land-owner who has 50 acres of land, his share on the basis of the size of the family comes to 7 acres. The village community may decide for him 10 or 12 acres. The basis of redistribution is the size As for co-operation, official or non-official co-operatives are formed for financing, for marketing etc. Such functions are the functions of the village as a whole and not of the individuals who have been distributed the small plots of land In the redistribution the problem of fragmentation and consolidation is solved. There are 2 or 3 qualities of land. Every family would be given some part out of these 3 qualities of land.

RURAL UNEMPLOYMENT

About the management of the community, various economic questions also arise. In the village one likes that so much labour out of the available manpower you can utilize in agriculture. It does not seem possible to shift a large number of them to industrial areas. The rate of employment is not so fast as to absorb those who are unemployed today and those employable who are created every year. Two millions created every year of employable age have to be given employment. At present much labour force is idle. I do not think any pattern of industrialisation—large-scale industrialisation—is going to absorb surplus labour power.

The perennial sources of irrigation are not possible everywhere. At present 5% of the lands of the country are irrigated. Even summer crops are grown after winter crops are harvested There is no improved land because of the pressure on land available. Village industry is the only alternative left to them. There is a misconception that *Gramdan* is opposed to industry. We want industry in every home. We want mass scale industrialisation provided it gives employment to idle hands. So we have no alternative but the development of village industries. There is a snag—if products of the village industries brought to the market can compete with mill-made goods. Hand cannot compete with the machine except in the manufacture of artistic goods. All goods produced by village industries are not artistic. We drive at the proposition that State should subsidise these industries or tighten spheres for mill industry and spend for home or village industry. The State may or may not do this. The Central Government has allotted for the Second Plan period 200 crores of rupees for the development of village industries. Should the village industries be made to depend on State policies? No economist has put forward any solution; because they cannot. This movement has put forward a solution. If village people understood economics—their own problems—then they should decide—"We should manufacture things for ourselves." *Gram Sankalpa* means, "we should do for ourselves."

CLIMATE OF EQUALITY

After *Gramdan* villages are far greater than self-governing village republics. It creates a climate of equality. After *Gramdan* exploitation goes away. Ownership of land and money-lending are the means of exploitation. In *Gramdan* village co-operative shop and society take loan from the co-operative banks. Then even the village money-lender would have to come down. His rates would have to be reasonably proportionate if the village negotiate with him. The

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HINDI MAY WAIT INDEFINITELY

By SIR B. P. SINGH ROY

ANGUAGE no doubt plays an important part in the development of human society, its civilisation and culture. They mutually influence one another and with the advancement of society language also develops. There may be diverse races and communities in a nation each maintaining its own language, speciality of culture, religion, manners and customs. It is common experience that in a large country populated by different races and communities they do not entirely merge themselves in one community or lose their identity. But in spite of these diversities a nation consisting of different communities comes into being and their medium of intercourse amongst themselves is managed with the help of one or two common languages which develop through usage, common thinking and common environment.

Political frontiers are often historical and arbitrary. They do not always coincide with racial or cultural groupings which sometimes overlap and extend beyond the frontier of a country. A common language very often forms the basis of a common civilisation and, no doubt, language is a potent unifying factor. It inevitably plays an important part in education and as medium of communication of thought and ideas. The sense of nationality may be derived from one or more sources such as, a common homeland, common history and co-partnership in a common cultural tradition and sometimes a common religion as well as a common language. There may be languages of the majority and those of the minority communities in a country consisting of different races and communities, but politically brought together and living as people of one country. Such countries have often to develop multi-lingualism.

LINGUISTIC NATIONALITIES

In Europe, for instance, racial and political frontiers of different nationalities and linguistic frontiers seldom coincide. In France there are half a dozen linguistic nationalities, in Switzerland four different languages are spoken and all of them are designated as national languages. In Belgium there are three languages. In Spain there are three or four linguistic minorities. Even in the U.K. this problem of minority language is not non-existent. In Canada both English and French have been accepted as national languages. In these circumstances, more than one language has to be chosen as official language and as medium of instruction. Complete homogeneity of language and culture is only possible in small countries or regions and not in a sub-continent like India with its historical and cultural background—a countr which has absorbed many races and civilizatior during many centuries and has succeeded in evolvir a synthesis of racial culture and civilisation.

The idea of making Hindi the nation language was no doubt inspired by a strong desi to secure better national unity. The Languag Commission made its recommendations mainly with that object in view. In fact, however, the effo to make Hindi the national language, instead helping unity of the people inhabiting different par of the country, has proved to be a source of serio discord.

IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH

During the last few years the country had face several ugly situations in which our people ga exhibition of a spirit of intolerance and inability approach the language problem from a wider angl so that instead of unity it was disunity that w emphasised and demonstrated. A national langua can only be selected with the general approval the people; if, however, it is not possible to do so the common interest of the country it is better drop the idea altogether or to keep in abeyan till in the course of time we are in a position adjust our differences and to approach the proble in a truly national spirit Let us hope that with t efflux of time and functioning as an independe nation we shall prove more realistic and our sen of nationalism will also deepen bringing abo greater solidarity amongst the races and commun ties constituting the great Indian Nation. Once th happens, there should be no difficulty in adopti one of our important regional languages, it may Hindi or some other language as a nation language. For the time being, however, we shou maintain status quo, namely, keep English medium of all-India communication and t language for our Legislatures, Judiciary a medium of all technical education and instruction. English is to be retained for the purposes mention abo besides being the medium of internatior intercourse and communication a high proficiency English is not only desirable but essential. It shou be given sufficient importance in the curriculum our schools, colleges and Universities and Engli should be made compulsory beyond the prima stages of instruction.

UNITY SUFFERS A JOLT

Attempt to make Hindi the national a official language has given a great jolt to c national unity which is still in its infancy and is a nebulous state. Hindi is considered as much foreign language as English especially by the peo

in the South and its recognition and introduction as national language is looked upon with complete disfavour by people from the Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam speaking areas. It is considered as a symbol of domination of the North over the South—a feeling which is not only regrettable, but extremely harmful. Any attempt, therefore, to impose Hindi as a national language would not only weaken the process of the formation of our national solidarity but might completely undermine it and bring about disruption. Sentiment plays a great part in national unity which is no doubt a political necessity but it is a consummation to be achieved mainly through psychological evolution and not through legislative enactments or executive fiats. It is difficult, if not impossible, to induce people of different States in a country like ours, some of them having highly developed regional languages and possessing rich literature, to agree to surrender the claim of some of these languages to Hindi only because the percentage of people speaking the same is higher. The language question can never be settled on the basis of majority and minority. The problem is more complex than that. English was adopted as a medium of instruction not because it was the language of the people in any part of the country, but because leaders like Raja Ram Mohun Roy, the Christian missionaries of Serampore and educationists like Alexander Duff, David Hare, Lord Macaulay and others aimed at a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction embracing Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy and other useful sciences being adopted for the education of the youths of our country. Raja Ram Mohun Roy in a letter addressed to Lord Amherst conveyed his ideas and proposals to the Governor-General in this regard. This proposal being accepted by Government led to the establishment in each Province of a Department of Public Instruction for implementing the policy which received the highest official sanction in the famous despatch of 1854 of Sir Charles Wood. In it the establishment of universities and institutions for imparting vocational education on a generous scale was visualised in order to teach "the natives of India the marvellous results of the employment of labour and capital, to arouse them to emulate us (British people) in the development of the vast resources of their country, and gradually, but certainly to confer upon them all the advantages which should lead the country to a healthy increase of wealth and commerce".

NATIONALISM INSPIRED

It was the people themselves who pressed for a Western system of education with English as medium of instruction. Since the vernaculars did not possess the vocabulary necessary for the teaching of modern science, there was no practical alternative to the use of English as a medium of instruction. The value of English as a new lingua franca of a Continent inhabited by peoples speaking a great variety of tongues also soon came to be recognised inasmuch as the proceedings of all meetings and conferences in all parts of the Continent were adopted as a matter of course in English. This led to a large extent to the welding of the peoples of our country into one nation and the idea of nationalism was inspired in their minds by the study of English literature, English Constitution and English history. All these went a long way towards popularising English as medium of instruction as well as of official communication. It was also expected that English would "refine the vernacular dialects of the country" and by enriching them with the terms of science borrowed from the nomenclature of the West "render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population". (*Minutes of February 2nd, 1835—on the Introduction of the Western System of Education in this country*).

In this connection it may not be out of place to say something on the flowering of Indian languages with the help of English educated Indians. I may quote here the observations of the well-known Bengali litterateur and educationist, Rai Dinesh Chandra Sen Bahadur, who in course of a lecture on Bengalee prose style said, "Bengali prose in the hands of the pundits was a fantastic thing unintelligible and full of unmeaning vague pedantry". In the middle of the 19th century, however, there were pioneers in this new field of modern Bengali producing works on which their successors were able to build. Writers like Ishwar Chandra Gupta, Peary Chand Mitra, Dinobandhu Mitra, Akshay Kumar Dutta, Kishori Chand Mitra, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee contributed greatly to the refinement of Bengali prose and made it a powerful vehicle of thought, for communicating the views and ideas of the modern time, and for utilising the language for scientific treatise, dramas and vigorous and rich romance and fictions. The language reached its high-water-mark of perfection in the hands of Rabindra Nath Tagore.

REGIONAL CLAIMS

Each State appears to be determined to assert the claim of its regional language for being recognised as the official language of the State; barring the people of the Hindi speaking areas others are strongly against Hindi being given the status of a national language. Its lack of adequate vocabulary, legal, technical or scientific, the absence of a rich literature in Hindi, the handicap from which non-Hindi speaking people will suffer in acquiring sufficient knowledge and proficiency in that language offering unfair advantage to the Hindi speaking people in competitive examinations for public services are being strongly urged against English being substituted by Hindi as the official language of the country in spite of the fact that English will have to be retained in the curriculum of our universities because of its importance as the medium of international communication and correspondence.

In forging the unity of a nation language is no doubt an important element, but it is by no means always the decisive factor. This we know from our own experience. The Bengal anti-partition movement of 1906 was really inspired by the idea of linguistic unity but ultimately it proved illusory. The partition of India in 1947 was urged and welcomed by the majority of Moslems of our country on the basis of religion ignoring ethnological, linguistic or cultural unity.

The Language Commission has obviously failed to suggest a solution of the problems that would arise in implementing the provision of the Constitution in substituting Hindi for English within a perid of fifteen years, i.e., by 1965. On the other hand, there is no doubt whatsoever that a serious and determined endeavour to implement this provision of the Constitution will further accentuate the inter-State bitterness and might even jeopardise peace and unity of the country. In these circumstances it is desirable in the wider interests of the country to keep the attempt in abeyance indefinitely. It is futile to argue whether English should be accepted as National Language or not specially as there is no such proposal before the country nor is it a practical proposition for more reasons than one.

HUMAN FACTOR IN ECONOMIC PLANNING

By SURESH CHANDRA ROY, M.A., LL.B., (Sheriff Of Calcutta.)

OUR politicians and publicists often speak with pride of the glories of the past and of the high level of material civilization attained in our country in ancient times. Our sacred and secular literature, as well as folklore, attest with circumstantial detail to the existetnce of marvellous contrivances and even of flying machines in those times. Even if these are dismissed as the products of the fertile imagination of a later age, the myths and legends point to the survival in racial memory of the picture of a past when the arts of living were developed to a high level of excellence. Even if we classify stories of flying machines and fiery missiles along with the recent accounts of flying saucers as the pabulum of undisciplined imagination, the remarkable progress made by ancient India in steel-making, ship-building, in architecture, town-planning and irrigation is a matter of recorded history to which stray survivals of ancient achievements like the Allahabad iron pillar, and ruins of ancient dams and temples and ancient cities uncovered by the spade of the archaeologist bear mute witness. The art of steel-making and ship-building survived till very recent times.

STRIKING CONTRAST

All these indicate the existence of very highly developed technical knowledge in different fields of engineering and manufacture. The contrast between the abundance of technical competence of the past and the present poverty is indeed striking and its causes deserve special investigation. Now in every field, whether it is design of a dam or a steel plant or a ship or a factory, we depend on foreign consultants, foreign machines and foreign technicians to set them up. It is true that techniques have been revolutionised by the Industrial Revolution which bypassed India. But I am not so much concerned with the technical achievements themselves as with the quality of mind responsible for technical development. How has it come about that the spirit of intellectual enterprise, which is the inspiration for material achievements has completely disappeared and we are reduced today to build up our new industries with imported machines and foreign technicians?

RECORD IMPORT FIGURES

Statistics of India's foreign trade for 1957 show that imports of machinery and transport equipment accounted for nearly one-third of the total imports during the year which reached the record figure of Rs. 1025 crores. Imports of machinery other than electrical machinery accounted for Rs. 172 crores, electrical machinery for Rs. 61 crores and transport equipment for Rs. 76 crores. The balance of import mostly consisted of metals, chemicals and othe industrial raw materials and of foodgrains. Th high level of machinery imports may be regarde with some degree of satisfaction as an index of th strenuous efforts that are being made to industria lise the country. The foreign exchange crisis, whic now has the national economy in its grip is anothe indication of the same trend. These imports ar necessary to provide the essential equipment for th huge steel plants, power houses, oil refineries an numerous establishments manufacturing cement railway rolling stock, automobiles, diesel engines plastics, textile machinery, chemicals, fertilisers sugar and a host of light engineering goods no previously manufactured in the country.

SERIOUS DISQUIET

The Second Five Year Plan had originall allocated 14.4 per cent of the total outlay of R 4800 crores for industries and minerals. The allo cations have been revised in the course of the reap praisal made by the Planning Commission a fe months ago. The allocation for industries an minerals has been increased from 14.4 per cent t 18.4 per cent or in absolute figures from a total o Rs. 690 crores for the Centre and the States to total of Rs. 880 crores. This outlay on indus tries and minerals, is exclusive of the separat allocation of Rs. 1345 crores for transport and R 860 crores for irrigation and power. Developmer in these fields accounts for substantial quantities o machinery imports. While the progress that is thu being made in reinforcing the material foundation of economic development is to be welcomed, ther are also certain aspects of the forced industrialisa tion of the country which give room for seriou disquiet.

HUMAN FACTOR

While on the one hand we are mobilising a our resources of cash and credit in order to acquir the apparatus of modern industry, persons, who ar engaged in directing the process of industrialisatio at various levels, are increasingly assailed by doub whether adequate attention is being paid to th human factor in planning, and in training the huma material for the various complicated roles in utilisin the costly equipment, to the best advantage. It i the common experience of many of our big project to import not only the machines but also the mecha nics to assemble and instal the machines in th factories thus adding to the cost of the project In the case of the steel plants in the public secto the fees of consultants and salaries of technician employed by them account for a substantial amoun According to a report published in the *Capital*

August 21, 1958, fees to consultants for the three steel plants at Bhilai, Rourkela and Durgapur are estimated at Rs. 9.25 lakhs. In addition, expenses on account of foreign technical staff, not exceeding Rs. 70 lakhs in the case of Rourkela and about Rs. 4.5 crores in case of Bhilai have to be borne by Hindustan Steel Private Limited.

Schemes for training technicians and engineers in India and also abroad, with the assistance of organizations like the Ford Foundation, have not yet started yielding the expected results. And the schemes of training appear to be limited to training up technicians to mind the machines made and installed by others. The problem of training persons, who can design and manufacture their own machines or of creating the conditions in which persons with the inventive faculty can function, has received but scant attention.

TRAINING ABROAD

In this connexion it is also necessary to emphasize that the problems of personnel for industry will not be solved by training a select band of high-grade technicians and scientific workers. That can be done at some cost by sending bright young men for training in foreign countries. It is not the quality of the men at the top but the average level which will determine productive efficiency. When the bright young men return after training, they will find themselves misfits in a primitive environment. That is perhaps the reason why so many Indian technicians and scientists, who have gone abroad for training, appear reluctant to return, so that Government has been obliged to draw up special schemes to lure them back for service in their own country. We have always had a small number of first rate men, who had the benefit of foreign education. But over the course of a century and more they have not been able to lead the mass.

PRIORITY TO EDUCATION

An industrial society differs from a primitive agricultural or pastoral society in making greater demands on the talents of the people. Such a society requires a higher standard of alertness, general education and technical knowledge in the population for its effective functioning. We can see on every hand costly machinery going to rack and ruin for lack of proper maintenance or due to careless handling by ignorant workers. Ignorance can add substantially to the costs of planning and upset the assumptions on which the Second Plan estimates are based. But, unfortunately, the problem of raising the general educational level in the country has not been allotted the priority which should be assigned to it in any scheme for the economic development of the country under a system of central planning. I have referred earlier to the reappraisal of the Second Plan which has resulted in raising the allocation for industries from 14.4 per cent to 18.4 per cent. At the same time the Planning Commission has also reduced the allocation for social services, which includes education and public health, from 19.7 per cent to 18 per cent or from Rs. 943 crores to Rs. 863 crores.

PROBLEM OF ILLITERACY

It will be generally conceded that we have a lot of leeway to make up in the matter of elementary education. But the target date for compulsory primary education has been progressively receding into the distant future. Illiteracy has been practically totally eliminated in the progressive countries of the world. Many European countries, the U.S.A., and Australia, have stopped collecting data on illiteracy in their decennial censuses, as the number of illiterates in their populations is insignificant. India still remains in the group with a high percentage of illiteracy. The position in India in this respect is even worse than in neighbouring countries as can be seen from the following table:

India	..	82.1 per cent.
Burma	..	42.7 „
Ceylon	..	42.0 „
Thailand	..	46.3 „
Malaya	..	61.7 „
Turkey	..	65.4 „

The problem of raising the productive efficiency of the population is rather more complicated than merely one of raising the percentage of literates, though measures to impart knowledge of reading and writing are essential. Over the years covered by the life spans of persons now living, there is unmistakable evidence of a deterioration in the physical and mental level of the population, which requires careful investigation. As regards mental deterioration, one's assessment is likely to be influenced by subjective factors. But it is possible to be more definite about the physical deterioration and the causes are also not far to seek.

INADEQUATE FOOD SUPPLIES

It is generally accepted that food supplies in our country have not kept pace with the growth of population. In spite of more than a decade of Grow More Food campaigns, India still has to import two to three million tons every year to maintain a minimum ration of cereals and, according to the Asoka Mehta Committee, which recently reported on the problem of rising prices, this situation is likely to continue for a number of years. The underdeveloped state of our national economy is reflected in the poor nutritional status of the people and this in turn, stands in the way of efforts to develop the economy. The food available per capita is not only inadequate in quantity but it is also of poor quality. While the minimum calorific requirement for an adult in India has been estimated at 2750 calories, the actual availability in India of all categories of food items is only 1880 calories. The quantities of protective foods available are far below the minimum required to maintain physical efficiency. The figures given below will enable a comparison of the per capita availability of food supplies in India and in some other countries.

	Total Calories.	Protein in gms.
U. K.	.. 3,270	84
U. S A.	.. 3,100	93
Argentine	.. 2,950	104
Egypt	.. 2,560	73
Japan	.. 2.270	64
India	.. 1,880	51

Living on a sub-standard diet which is not sufficient even to maintain the basal rate of metabolism, it should not be surprising if the population as a whole shows signs of retarded development, which is reflected in the average intellectual capacity, sense of responsibility and the attitude to work.

ATTITUDE TO WORK

The last item, attitude to work, is of particular relevance when the nation is called upon to make an unprecedented effort to raise the level of output of goods and services. It is rare to come across a person in any establishment, who can be depended upon to do his work conscientiously except under supervision. The inner impulse to conscientious per-

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INDIVIDUAL AND THE STATE

By D. N. BHATTACHERJEE

WE all are members of a society and the individual in spite of the problems peculiar to himself is not an atomistic individual. What the State does and executes as an organ of society affects all of us vitally. An ordinary individual is not usually eager to investigate facts around him. In nearly every sphere of our social, economic and political life the changing facts are well ahead of popular thought concerning them. In other words, there is a lag between the situation at any given time, and our thought about the situation. There can be no individual or sectional solution to national problems but it is necessary to investigate how the problems of the common man in India stand in the context of the collective effort symbolised, for example, in India's Five-Year Plan. It is a basic question, for our Constitution in Art. 38 lays down: "The State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may a social order in which justice, social, economic and political, shall inform all the institutions of the national life."

PRIMARY NEEDS

Food, clothing, shelter and a home life—these constitute the primary needs of the individual man and woman. To satisfy the cultural and economic needs of the people it is necessary to provide for education and employment for the vast majority of the people. In an underdeveloped country like India all these problems have assumed an urgency not to be seen in the developed countries of Europe and America. Will it be possible to solve the problems of the average individual in India by increasing production rapidly, by raising the natonal income and promoting employment within a specified period by the adoption of certain methods of investment and financing?

The problems of an average individual in India cannot be properly understood unless we examine the *per capita* income, age-composition, family composition, health and housing conditions, social habits, patterns of employment and unemployment, fertility rates and social mobility or changes in social standards. It is patent that though the national income has risen by 17.5 p.c. in the course of the First Plan, there has been no appreciable improvement in real terms i.e. in relation to the higher cost of living, since 1931. The growth of population has resulted in a decline of cultivation per capita. This obviously means a diminution in the supply of food and other agricultural products. The reduction in the per capita availability of cultivated land has forced people to migrate from the rural areas to cities and towns in a frantic search for work. On the other hand, we notice that there has been no proportionate increase in the number of persons who derive their livelihood from industries and services—the so-called secondary and tertiary occupations. While opportunities for employment must have dwindled in a city like Calcutta, the number of jobseekers must have increased steadily, first, through the natural growth of the population and secondly, through the continuing influx of refugees from East Bengal.

AVERAGE FAMILY

How does the average individual stand in this picture? One clear fact is that an increasing proportion of the population is being thrown upon the earnings of a decreasing number of earners. Let us take the case of an average family. In Britain Rowntree in *The Human Needs of Labour* (1937) made a study based upon a detailed investigation of a large number of families. His conclusion was that a family of normal size (a man and wife with three dependent children) could be maintained in full health for a weekly wage of 53 s. in towns, and for 41 s. a week in country districts. Families with less than three children, or with none, will of course be better off. They will have a modest margin for saving, or for rational pleasures. This picture does not apply to India owing to the wide differences in the standard of living of the two countries. There is no system of social security in India. A family of three dependents is a rare phenomenon in India. There are always widows, orphans or old persons to be maintained and one earning member has to maintain so many non-earning dependents. The gap between earners and employable population is gradually widening. The father cannot educate his children because the cost of education when added to the cost of food and clothing, makes a deficit family budget. Recent investigations have shown that many students in Indian Universities are wretchedly poor, some not even getting enough to eat. This is particularly true of the middle classes in India who are now the most economically depressed classes. There is a high cost of living and there is the heavy burden of taxation. But it is the middle classes who do most of the organising and creative and inventive work. When I say the 'middle class' I mean the class that stretches from the clerk and salesman at one end to professional men at the other. And the tragedy is that it is this class that is compelled to keep up a standard of life to play their part in social life. The welfare of the industrial working class as also of the agricultural class has become the special care of the Central and State Governments. But there is an absolute lack of interest in the problems of the middle class.

POVERTY UNDERLINED

The National Sample Survey of January 1953 records that food in India accounts for 53% of the total national income. In rural areas food accounts for 66% of a person's total expenditure of his income. This high proportion of food expenditure shows the

poverty of the people and the underdeveloped character of the country's economy. In nutritional standard India lags far behind. Food estimates have revealed that in Soviet Union there are 4000 to 5000 calories per daily diet, in U.S.A. 3500 to 4000, in Britain 3000 to 3500, but in India 1300 calories to 1700 calories. In the greater part of Asia which contains about half the world's population, the diet is below the Indian standard.

India's population must be held. We must ignore the reassuring reading of statistics and accept the truth that no improvement is likely in the lot of the multitude if it goes on increasing with the present rate of five millions a year. A countrywide birth control propaganda and implementation programme if taken in hand now can certainly prevent the population exceeding 500 million mark. Control of births is as much a family responsibility as a national task. To quote the *Manchester Guardian* of April 26, 1951: "Mr. Nehru says that the Government of India is now studying the possibilities of birth control. The difficulties in a country with an illiterate and impoverished people are great. But what else can save India? Prosperity and education together might eventually cause in India as elsewhere, a falling birth-rate. But the death-rate also would fall. Until there is some decline in the number of new mouths, devouring every increase in the national income, prosperity will be a shocking and empty concept."

GROWTH OF POPULATION

The Planning Commission has assumed the following rates of population growth for the first two five-year plan periods and also for subsequent plan periods:

1951-60	.. ..	12.5 p.c. per decade
1961-70	.. ..	13.3 p.c. per decade
1971-80	.. ..	14.0 p.c. per decade

Under present conditions such a fast rate of population growth will decrease the per capita national income and there will be a serious effect on the employment front. Already the population is fighting a losing battle against unemployment and it is now admitted that the Second Plan will not reduce unemployment, but maintain the *status quo* despite the increase in population at the rate of 5 million per year out of which 40% or about 2 million are added to the labour force every year. The estimated birth-rate of India is 40 per thousand, while the estimated death rate is 27 per thousand. The Planning Commission estimates that by 1975-76 the proportion of the agricultural labour force to the total should come down to 60% from the present level of 70%. But this would require a fourfold increase in the numbers engaged in mining and factory establishments. And what is the picture of the cities? In the large cities of India the slum areas still grow up and they house the major portion of the low income groups. And it is just these areas which have the highest percentage of juvenile delinquency and crime. They are truly breeders of ill-health, warped family life and of both petty and vicious crimes. What I should like to propose is a gigantic programme of slum clearance, financed jointly by municipalities, State and the Union Governments which would tear out these slum areas and create decent housing for low-paid workers. The great achievements of Vienna in providing municipal housing should teach us how we can give to the poorest workers healthy living conditions, together with the amenities of life and the pooled advantage of collective living.

FIRST FIVE-YEAR PLAN

India's economic projects in the first five years came to $5.325 million, out of which 23% or $1.200 million was spent on social services. Results have not been as good as we would like them to be. The national income increased by 17.5% and the per capita income by 10.5%. And India is perhaps the most heavily taxed country in the world.

To me the plan appears to be an emergency measure designed rather to lay the foundation of our industrial future than to supply adequately and in balanced proportions the current needs of the consuming public. The plan is based on a far more rapid expansion of the heavy industries manufacturing producers' goods and of the extractive industries providing raw materials for the heavy industries than of the lighter trades which exist for the direct satisfaction of the consumer's needs. But we must recognise the indispensable necessity of doing something immediately to raise the standard of life of the common people. Why should the present generation undergo so much sacrifice for the supposed benefits that would come to future generations?

Greater attention must be paid to agricultural production. Raw materials of industries cannot be manufactured. They come from the soil In the 19th or early 20th century it was industrial production which determined the fate of agriculture. Today the position is reversed. It is agricultural production which determines the fate of industry. Moreover there should be a balanced price-structure for agricultural and industrial products.

EMPLOYMENT

What about the quantum of employment? In 1951 about 142 million people constituted our labour force—urban 22 million, rural 120 million. Of these 100 million were self-supporting, three million were unemployed in urban areas and 39 million unemployed for five to six months in the year in the rural areas. During the First Plan period, 9 million (1.8 million a year) were added to the labour force due to an increase in the population, but only 5 million new jobs were provided by the plan. Thus the backlog of unemployed in 1956-57 was much greater than in 1951. The Planning Commission's estimate was 15.3 million (including 2.5 million and 2.8 million unemployed in urban and rural areas respectively) unemployed at the start of the Second Plan. It should however be remembered that rapid industrialisation with particular emphasis on the development of basic and heavy industries will not lead to an equal extension of employment facilities.

In an underdeveloped economy the problem is not merely a problem of finding employment for the unemployed. It is also a problem of finding employment for the new additions to the labour force. The Second Plan is designed to create employment opportunities barely sufficient to absorb the expected increase in the labour force. And the disturbing factor of the shortage of foreign exchange resulting in a severe cut in imports have already hit hard many industrial establishments who are being forced to close down, thereby making thousands of people unemployed.

PROBLEM OF PRODUCTION

The real problem of production is to secure the full use and right apportionment to different industries and services of the available productive resources—men and things. The fundamental question here is the problem of incentives, of the relation of employer and the employee, the producer and the consumer, and in a mixed economy, between the Government and the private sector. To a great extent the Government should rely on persuasion rather than on control in order to ensure that particular industries follow the requirements of Government's economic policy. Sometimes Departments can offer inducements as a means of ensuring compliance with their requirements; for example, by making

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TOWN PLANNER'S PROBLEMS IN INDIA

By A. N. KERR, Engineer

BROADLY speaking, a town planner's job is to create order out of disorder and to make a pattern out of a multitude of divergent and straggling elements — a difficult proposition in the case of big cities in India. Each city has its own town planning bodies and there is a large measure of unanimity of fundamentals among them. Thus no serious differences of opinion exist on the question of traffic planning, the need for green "Lungs" in the city itself and the location of industries. In fact, in many fields the approach to those questions is the same in all big cities in India. One problem, of course.—and this is where the difficulties begin—is how far these ideas can be put into practice.

The composition of the capital from its smallest housing unit to blocks of houses and urban districts must result in a harmonious synthesis of the requirements of the individual and the community. The type of housing estate should not be one which concentrates exclusively on the tastes of kitchen garden enthusiasts, with comfortable side-walks and car facilities, because they are breeding places of petty bourgeois mentality and tend to stifle the healthy interest of the citizen in public affairs. Our aim should be to provide the utmost comfort for the individual and combine this with the creation of services and instructional centres making for a flourishing community life, such as clubs, children's nurseries and kindergartens, cinemas, schools, after-school clubs, sports grounds, departmental stores and playing fields etc.

BRITISH GOVT. MEASURES

To give an example, before the end of the World War II it had become absolutely clear that something very drastic would have to be done to deal with this problem. The British Government, therefore, instituted in 1943 a special Ministry to cope with it. This Ministry for Town and Country anning quickly set to work and proposed to Parliament a series of measures grouped under two laws, the Town and Country Planning Act, and the New Town Act. Between them the Acts embodied plans of building development for the whole of England and Wales, empowered the Government to acquire land for building of new towns and to go ahead with their intention of persuading manufacturers to build new factories in these new towns rather than in established industrial centres. Rightly the plans for these new towns are flexible and give plenty of room for adoption of conditions and local tastes. But they are all based on a fairly simple series of principles, designed to obviate the disadvantages which have accompanied the haphazard growth of urban areas in the past. Every town, it is stipulated, should be built within the framework of a highway system. Three of these highways should encircle the town, so as to enable through traffic to by-pass its centre, and others should radiate outwards from the central district. Between the uttermost and centre ring roads there should be what is known as green belt, where urban development, as a rule should not be allowed. Between the second ring road and the innermost ring road there should be an area of suburbs including different types of houses and flats etc. These are intelligently grouped amid pleasant surroundings and they are interspaced to make shopping as convenient as possible for the housewife.

It is important to note that within the suburban belt certain areas have been allocated for industrial development, so that workers will not have long distance to travel to and from their place of employment. It is no doubt one of the banes of modern industrial life. As for the area bended on its periphery by the innermost of the three ring roads, here is the hub of the town life. Buildings like Town Hall, the main post office, main fire station, Central Police Station, main hospital, departmental stores, office, etc., are suitably and conveniently grouped in a manner worthy of their civic dignity. Besides, the public services i.e., electricity supply, drainage, telephone services, street-lighting and transport facility were well under way. To give another emample,—just after the World War II the GDR Council of Ministers fixed the population figure for Berlin at 3.5 millions. But the plans of the Hitler Government envisaged a population of 12 millions.

This decision implies a clear break with the tendency to build giant towns. The limitation of Berlin's population figure is not more economic but a guarantee that the town's specific charm will be preserved.

Since the end of the World War II roughly 20 millions cubic meter of rubble, equivalent to the contents of twenty chops pyramids have been disposed of in the democratic sector of Berlin and approximately 126,000 dwellings have been built so far and 14,076,388 labour were contributed by Berlin citizens under the National Construction Programme in the year 1952-57 corresponding to a value of 50 million marks. It is clear from the above example, that without a comprehensive plan nothing could be achieved. So I believe it is a great task for the Indian town planners to determine the composition of town planning in the light of Indian experience generally suiting local, social and topographical conditions. I am sure it can be done easily if the Government and

other appropriate authorities put their heads together and combine their efforts in making a comprehensive plan for the purpose before starting working on an unplanned basis.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

In view of the rapid industrialization in India, it is indispensable to have such a comprehensive city or town planning programme. It is, however, deplorable that isolated items are being taken up in a piecemeal fashion instead. The growth of population, housing, traffic, transport and other problems connected with planning should be closely studied and taken into consideration in the preparation of a comprehensive town or city scheme.

The population growth is not confined to Calcutta, Delhi and Bombay. During the last 40 years population has doubled in many cities in India. Town planning has not kept pace with this phenomenon in urban areas, with the inevitable result that there are so many industrial and commercial slums today.

It goes without saying that private ownership of land is the biggest obstacle to any comprehensive and ambitious town planning project. Also the uncontrolled growth of an economy reflected in the haphazard and un-co-ordinated erection of factory plants and office buildings tends to defeat the efforts of a town planner. In this respect the system of economic planning, as far as town planning is concerned, has an aesthetic aspect in that it sets standards and limits. There is another problem connected with town planning, namely lack of public and official awareness of the needs for such planning. For instance, in a city like Calcutta there are so many problems relating to house building, traffic, transport and tremendous population growth, but no one seems to connect all these different items together and have a complete picture of the whole thing. Of course, the Calcutta Improvement Trust has been doing very good work but it is not in a position to take up the work of any comprehensive city planning or city development scheme. The main handicap is that there is no suitable law to enable a state to carry out town planning.

BOMBAY MASTER PLAN

In 1948 the Government of Bombay made a master plan of greater Bombay with the help of the special Engineer, Mr. Modak of Bombay Municipality and Mr. Albert Mayor, one of the leading American authorities on town planning. The document with all its charts and maps lies buried in the Municipal archives as a piece of highly imaginative and creative effort, on the part of two eminent experts, to remodel the city of Bombay, and its suburbs. The plan incorporated the most modern ideas, both European and American, of town planning, but it is good to find that these ideas have been modified in the light of Indian experience generally and to suit the local, social and topographical conditions.

The limitation of population densities was fundamental to the master plan especially in its relation to Bombay city. The population on the whole as covered by the master plan was 37 lakhs with a view to limiting population densities according to modern standards and this was distributed in the following manner, viz., in Bombay city 13 lakhs, in suburban areas 18, and 5 to 6 lakhs in satellite towns of greater Bombay. In the Bombay city density is 140 per acre, and in the greater Bombay 50 per acre including shopping centres, schools, parks, playgrounds, communtiy centres, etc.

The important point to note here is the limitation of population of Bombay city to 13 lakhs. Once this is achieved, most of the problems which made life so difficult and unpleasant in the city must almost automatically be solved. But the question which comes to one's mind is—have any steps been taken so far to give effect to them? To answer this question, if I am permitted to say so, I can only say that nearly ten years have already elapsed and the master plan is no more than a plan on paper. It has never been put into actual practice.

CALCUTTA'S PROBLEM

I agree that the town and city planning problem is a great problem of India today, particularly the old cities. It is extremely difficult in the State of West Bengal, one of the most densely populated States of the Indian Union with 806 persons per sq. mile as per 1951 Census. The density is the highest in Calcutta (78,900 people per sq. mile) as the greater Calcutta is the fifth largest city in the world with a population of 45,78,071 (1951 Census). Therefore it is essential to have a comprehensive city or town planning programme for Calcutta. In the absence of such programme one of the greatest cities of the world is fast becoming less and less beautiful. No attempt has ever been made either by the Government or by any other authorities like the Corporation and the Improvement Trust to tackle the city's problems in a comprehensive, planned manner. The city of Calcutta has many problems but the traffic problem is the biggest headache. To deal with it overall planning of the city as a whole is necessary and the modern method of highway should be adopted. I can suggest that all the highways be more spacious with traffic on three levels, for pedestrians, motor cars and railbound vehicles. Other problems could be solved by means of a comprehensive plan drawn up and translated into practice with the concerted efforts of various authorities like the Government, the Improvement Trust and the Corporation.

As long as there is acute housing shortage in Calcutta city—and it must exist so long as no effort is made to develop greater Calcutta and transfer some part of the city's population there—it will be difficult, indeed almost impossible, to prevent new building being erected on almost every inch of vacant land.

Today the population pressure on housing accommodation is so great that old, dilapidated houses are being repaired so that they may stand for another ten to fifteen years. In these circumstances it is difficult to foresee the time when any of the essential changes which the planners might contemplate could be brought about.

Now this is the time for the Government of West Bengal and other authorities like the Improvement Trust, the Calcutta Corporation, etc., to earnestly cooperate with each other and make a comprehensive plan and translate it into practice without allowing further growth of the industrial and commercial slums. I am not a pessimist by nature and I have no manner of doubt that the city of Calcutta will definitely find a concrete new shape in 30 to 40 years' time.

Every State in India should create its own town planning body and try to translate its plan into practice.

It is an old saying among town planners that a city is as good as its centre. It is my fervent hope that the new centres of all the towns and cities in India be so fashioned as to give the maximum of pleasure and satisfaction not only to our own people but also to the visitors.

WHEN SCIENCE WILL SERVE SOCIETY

By Dr. U. P. BASU,

D.Sc., P.R.S., F.N.I., Bengal Immunity Research Institute, Calcutta.

THE havoc caused by the atom bomb in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and again the sufferings of Japanese fishermen and the inhabitants of the Marshall Islands due to local fall-outs of radiant elements after the Bikini explosion of March 1954, have created an impression in the minds of the people that science, if so directed, would bring forth indescribable catastrophes and untold miseries to the world. A tree is known by the fruit it bears. If science mainfests itself by offering opportunities and services for the betterment of the society, the common man will adore science and the scientists. Naturally, the remedy lies in the hands of those who operate with science and use it as an instrument for human welfare. Unfortunately, scientists are often influenced by the social and political forces foreign to them. The background of those forces lies in the materialistic way of thinking. The great material achievements which we find in the European and American countries, and their supremacy in the control over nature, are undoubtedly due to the advancement of science. But the question arises whether the fulfilment of mere material aspects of life will bring real happiness to mankind. Here then we may need something to supplement the materialistic conception of life and that something is perhaps the philosophy of life as manifested in the East which may help in bringing about a synthesis of idealism mankind is striving to attain.

The first objective should be to establish a harmonious relationship and better understanding amongst all scientists, preferably all over the world. Attempts are being made towards the above direction under the aegis of U.N.E.S.C.O. In this respect too, India can claim to have conceived of the importance of an international exchange of ideas and thought long long ago. There would be no difficulty in the approach, if the operators of science bear in mind the basic function of science and note that verification of any hypothesis by logical deduction and/or by experimental observation, or development of technique in any field is not restricted to any group or class. The difficulty arises in achieving the objects in a harmonious way due to the fact that science is not equally developed in all countries. The result is that the most developed country tries to dominate over the less developed ones by the superior materialistic knowledge and it is here that the conflict starts.

SCIENCE AND FOOD

From eternity biological needs of human beings are mainly concerned with food, shelter, clothing and remedies for ailments. It is to be noted, however, that with the growth of population, the society not only lives but grows also. Nature may not adequately supply primary human needs with the result that newer approach is to be made to meet the deficiency. Here science comes in and scientists must be trained in a way that they may meet the needs of the people, and co-ordinate their activities in working for the benefit of the society.

A casual survey will show how the functioning of the society has changed ; previously it was in a position to satisfy adequately primary human needs. With the changes in the outlook, environments and economic system, a newer approach has become necessary. Thus, for example, with the growth of our population we are to satisfy more hungry mouths, although the resources from the cultivated lands are limited. Either we are to increase our food supply by increasing per acre productivity, or, we are to devise newer ways for production of food. In both cases, science must play its role. The country (India) can no more spend Rs. 125 crores to Rs. 200 crores annually for importing 2,000,000 tons to 3,000,000 tons of food per year. Suggestion is coming forth that we may curtail the production of cash crops like jute, oilseeds, sugar etc. and go for food production. Apart from the fact that the above crops bring forth some foreign exchange, they are useful in multifarious ways and their role in the economy of our society cannot be adequately elaborated in this short review.

SYNTHETIC FOOD

The scientific study of soil, plant, strain and of animal husbandry together with the production of artificial manures and synthetic fertilisers, has increased the productivity of food in different regions of the world. In India the production can be increased at least by 300% by modern methods of cultivation, increasing plenty of fertilizers and using improved seed. To a critical scientific mind, the question still arises how much of this production would go for feeding our people. A relatively small portion of the plant crops is eaten directly — the major part — straw, leaves, roots etc.—, is allowed to rot, or, at best is fed to animals in certain cases. Can science play a role in rationalising the traditional methods of producing foods? Give science a proper chance, and one may feel its impact. Natural oil, fat and ghee are our good food. Cannot "vanaspati" be now recorded in the above list to meet our calories as well as our palate to a certain extent? One may argue that for "vanaspati" we will have to go for cultivation in the fields. This is a challenge to the scientist. If it be remembered that our food is contained in the materials of the air, water and soil, and it is the sunlight that affords the energy for its production, there would be no difficulty in producing food materials or even food in factories instead of in fields. Yeast—a small micro-organism largely used in raising bread, has the power of converting inorganic nitrogen (just as present in ammonia or

ammonium sulphate that is being produced in tons from our Sindri fertiliser factory) into available protein quite suitable for consumption both by human and animal beings. If a ton of yeast be grown under optimum conditions, it may afford 102 tons of edible proteins within 24 hours. On the other hand it has been calculated that a ton of soyabean (one of the largest sources of protein by cultivation) when planted and harvested under favourable conditions, would afford a twenty-four hour protein output of 0.08 ton only.

The modern man is no longer dependent upon the natural resources for their housing, living and clothing. Would he remain dependent for food, solely on what the plant will afford by the customary agricultural methods? Cannot a scientist with his advanced knowledge cultivate a plant that will produce organic material suitable for consumption as a food? It is being reported that successful investigations are in progress to show that unicellular green algae (lower form of plant life) in presence of simple soluble inorganic salts, cabon dioxide, water and light may rapidly multiply. For optimum growth of these plants and multiplication of their cells a temperature between 64 degrees and 80 degrees is to be maintained. The green algae is a good foodstuff in that it has no disagreeable taste, is rich in edible protein and unsaturated fats. The protein again contains all the essential amino acids, and vitamins are also present in the plant. It appears that it will be easier to control this algal culture in a shed than the common plants growing in the field. As the chlorella cells are liable to spoilage by bacteria or moulds, the whole cultural operation is to be conducted under a proper controlled condition for which industrial and engineering skill has to be much developed. The above may constitute a great potentiality as a nutritive food material, and the government should provide necessary finances for relevant investigational work. For "synthetic rice" we will have to depend upon starchy materials which are again to be grown and for their production some land areas are to be put under cultivation. The cultivation of lower forms of plant life would not encroach upon the existing fertile land.

MARINE TREASURE-HOUSE

So long we have been dependent on food materials available or grown on earth surface. There are, however, approximately 300 million cubic miles of sea water, covering 71 per cent of the earth's surface. This vast marine treasure-house contains enough food in the form of fish, algae or edible seawoods to feed the population of the world and probably any future population. Seaweed manufactures nourishing carbohydrates, such as sugars and starches, twice as fast as trees do. We are yet to know more about ocean's animal life, and it is being estimated by experts that world's ocean fisheries could be increased as much as to afford 50 million tons of fish. Acre for acre ocean is more productive than land; moreover there is no danger of drought or flood and little danger of a disease. Our oceanologists and other scientists may tap the immense and practically inexhaustible resources that are lying for exploration in the vast marine treasure-house.

In placing all these materials for a thoughtful consideration of our planners it must be recorded that the traditional food habits, climatic and soil conditions, economic status of the people, genetic influence, resources etc., are the primary factors that must be given serious consideration in any planning for food production programme. One point is clear that palate has no bearing on the food habit; otherwise it would not have been possible to find the market flooded with tomatoes which even two decades ago were not touched upon by the people of the locality.

In a similar way science and scientists by this technical competence may help in the construction of housing, in offering newer types of clothing and in supplying remedies during ailments and disease. Everyone knows how iron, aluminium, cement, compressed fibre, plastic materials are helping in the construction of dwelling houses, yards and godowns. The different types of stainless steel and the Portland cement that resist a compression strength of 3000 lbs. per square inch after 24 hours, are further revolutionising our construction problem. In fulfilling the requirements of our clothing materials so many artificial fibres are now in the market that one may dream when we would no more need the natural fibre. It is believed that two-thirds of the dresses worn by American women are made wholly or partly by rayon yarn. Besides we are now finding other fibres like nylon, orlon, perlon, terrylene to offer us materials of diverse types, nature and strength. The output of man-made fibres is gradually increasing from year to year. These now cover about 22 per cent of total requirements. Several million lbs. of viscose as well as acetate yarn are coming off the spindles in India. Again in health problem everyone now feels the impact of sulfa drugs and antibiotics in the treatment of bacterial infections, has noted the part played by D.D.T. in eradicating malaria, or has been amazed to find the isoniazide controlling tuberculosis.

NEED FOR CO-OPERATION

In order to integrate the available knowledge and to apply the same for the benefit of mankind, co-operation at all levels would be essential. Many are of opinion that it is the scientific discovery and industrial outlook that have led to the disintegration of our society. This is true in one sense if one finds that living in an artificial and industrial society he fosters little feeling for his kinsmen or his neighbours as he is not required to depend upon them for his daily requisites. Looking deep into the problem one, on the contrary, will find that it is the co-ordination of different types of work and co-operation of numerous types of people from different nations, classes, and countries that helps in getting benefit of modern industrial civilisation. The morning newspaper, modern transport, the office phone or the television set are available for the integration of workmanship of men of different professions. Thousands of years have rolled by with a tremendous diversification of arts and crafts due to accumulated skills of mankind. The primitive man searched for his 'light' in the edge of a stone by solo effort, but it is the co-ordinated effort of scientists and technologists that has revealed a new source of energy which, according to its own definition, will never be lost, but will build up its future reserve while emitting heat, power or light. This is what we find in an atomic fission.

Science has a sacred mission which it can fulfil if it be wedded to a spiritual or human approach to life. Scientists have discovered that non-usable oil might be processed to afford a product of commercial use, but its actual application lies in the hands of those who control the political or purse string. Herein lies the difficulty which scientists may feel in offering their services for human welfare. The scientists must also remember that their own work or discovery may cause disaster. Thus, it is being found that many colours, preservatives or flavours added to food materials for enhancing their specialities and/or stabilities often act as carcinogens. Science reveals the truth and as such followers of that profession must also be true in body, spirit and mind in order to serve the society in proper perspective. On

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REFUGEE REHABILITATION: GERMAN WAY

By DR. KRISHNALAL SHRIDHARANI

HE room was modestly furnished, but modernistically full of light. The Screening Board of the Marienfelde Refugee Reception Camp in West Berlin was interviewing German fugitives from Communism who were seeking safety or jobs or civil liberties or all the three in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Berlin is the main gate through which German refugees enter. While everywhere else it is dangerous to cross the frontiers of Communism, the transit from East to West Berlin is relatively easy if one is prepared to leave behind his belongings and beloveds. While 25 per cent of refugees blaze their own trails, the rest trek to Marienfelde to get legal documents and placements. Each refugee spends about eight days at the reception centre before he moves to one of the 40 waiting camps of Berlin. The system of screening is instituted as a deterrent; West Germany wants Germans to remain where they are in order to foil the Communist plan of getting rid of certain groups. It is also instituted to weed out confirmed Communists who might have been sent as spies.

Around the oblong table sat four judges, all of them former refugees themselves. Before them lay files bearing the histories of the interviewees, and also secret reports on them; East and West Germany have their own information networks in each other's territories. I was allowed to sit with my interpreter very near the judges.

A middle aged, gaunt man was ushered in. He said he was a housekeeper in a block in the famed Stalin Alee of East Berlin.

"Why did you want to leave your home?" asked one of the judges.

"There is a school for housekeepers. One day last week the lecturer announced that they have abolished food ration cards. I laughed and remarked, 'That means we will have to pay higher prices.' That was the beginning of the end. Party workers visited me at night and asked me to apologize. I refused. So, when the pay time came there was no pay for me. The only course open to me was to apply to the Russians. I decided to leave East Berlin."

After a few more questions and answers, the middle aged, gaunt fugitive retired. The judges began to consult each other. One of them was prepared to admit that the man had the legal right to come to West Germany. The others were ready to accept him both on legal and humanitarian grounds. The man was called back. After a few more questions, he was given his legal papers. He wanted to go to the Saar.

It is the small things that are the salt of life. That man missed that salt in East Berlin. Many more cases, I was told, were much more serious. However, the next interview in my presence also highlighted the human craving for personal freedoms. A young, blonde girl with tired eyes with attractive but ample body, entered the hall.

She said she was working in a cable factory in East Berlin. She refused to join the Youth Organization. So she had no permanent job and she had to seek employment from place to place. There was another complication. Her fiance was in West Berlin. Party workers asked her to sign a pledge never to cross the border. She refused, left behind a job which brought her 380 East German Marks a month, crossed the border, and took a job in a West Berlin restaurant at 150 West German Marks. Now she wanted her legal papers and so she had come to the Reception Camp.

It is not this type of migration that bothers the East German authorities. It is the flight of doctors and scientists and engineers that worries them. On the average, around 250 such valuable economic assets leave for West Germany every month. Conversely, there is hardly any movement from the West to the East—living standards and civil liberties being much more attractive in the West. That is the reason why the East German authorities have lately tightened their grip. It is not so easy now as it used to be to enter the gate of freedom by leaving East Germany behind.

THE INDIAN ANALOGY

We Indians are naturally interested in the problem of refugees because we have a similar problem of our own. We are interested in the techniques of rehabilitation because, although we have done a good job we can always learn.

Apart from the flow of refugees from East Pakistan which still goes on (West Germany too continues to receive a similar influx), India had to resettle some 8½ million refugees from Pakistan. Germany, on the other hand, had to rehabilitate around 11 to 12 million fugitives. Thus a much smaller German population and country had to absorb a much larger number of refugees. While 22 per cent of the West German population consisted of refugees, only 2½ per cent of the Indian population was composed of refugees.

India dealt with, and is still dealing with, refugees as a distinct and specific problem. A separate Ministry of Rehabilitation had separate budgets and funds. In Germany, on the other hand, the refugee problem was tackled as "an integral aspect of general economic reconstruction." Perhaps it was natural because even the non-refugee population economically totally uprooted by the devastations of

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THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE STATE

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preferential allocations of raw materials. But the fiscal policy in India today is definitely retarding the free play of initiative and enterprise, though Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari in his reply to the discussion on the Wealth Tax Bill in the Rajya Sabha on September 5, 1957, eloquently spoke in favour of private enterprise: "We are not thinking in terms of doing away with their initiative. But that initiative will have to be exerted fully and freely subject to the over-all needs of society and that is all we are trying to do now. In fact, our socialism, if it really takes shape in the next few years or perhaps in decades, is such that it will allow private enterprise, so long as it plays the ball, and it will play the ball. There is place for the private enterprise in a society where fresh blood will be coming up, right at the top..... Coming back to this question of private sector, we do believe it will exist. It will exist in varying forms. Its scope will change, but it will not be destroyed. So we would like to leave the initiative to it. The initiative is still there for any person interested in industry."

DANGERS OF TRANSITION

There is a considerable section of opinion in the country which maintained that the heavy taxes on higher income groups and business interests will raise resources for collective investment in industries and services which will provide employment and increase the national production of goods. Many envisage a gradual transition from this method from a capitalist to a socialist economic system. It is assumed that the State instead of the private investor will provide new capital for industry. This is theoretically possible but there are great difficulties and dangers in this transition. The sources of private investment will dry up, and in the vacuum that will be created an official bureaucratic aristocracy will emerge. In Britain the socialist experiment of the Labour Government has led to the growth of huge irresponsible public corporations and the extension of bureaucracy. Nationalisation has not succeeded in improving the lot of workers and the trade unions have become the stronghold of restrictive practices, limiting not merely industrial output but, far more important, liberties of individuals and those of minorities. We should take our lessons from the British experience and avoid the risk of abolishing the flexibility, diversity and incentives upon which the policy of plenty and a dynamic society must depend. The right way is to create incentives that lead to an increase in production. The resources of the Trade Union organisation should be at the disposal of the nation in a genuine endeavour to promote the regeneration of economic life, to capture new markets, to open new channels of trade and to modernise our methods of production and distribution.

PROFIT MOTIVE

There is no such thing as 'capitalism' in India today; but there is such a thing as 'profit-motive.' The pursuit of private profit is the driving force of industrial enterprise. Undoubtedly there are some modes of profit making which is indefensible and socially harmful. There are means of checking these illicit profits. Profit, however, is the reward for risk-taking. If it is at all eradicated, there will be a dangerous decrease of the energy that men throw into the work of production. Do we not have profit-sharing among workers as one of the methods that will stimulate them to enterprise? Socialists draw a contrast between 'production for profit' and 'production for use.' It is an unreal contrast. Production for profit always is production for use. An economic plan in the Indian context is like a watch which needs both a mainspring and a regulator. The mainspring which will make it go is freedom of enterprise. The regulator should be supplied by the State. The regulator cannot play the part of the mainspring.

SOCIAL IDEAL

Our social ideal must be governed by two principles. The first is a belief in the sacredness of the individual human personality, the second is a belief that the State can create the conditions which will make a reasonable life possible, but that these conditions must be such as to encourage the maximum development of individual powers. The State, it must be emphasised, exists for the sake of the individual, not the individual for the sake of the State.

In my attempt to explain the meaning of the social ideal of our planned society I have been constrained to go into a great deal of detail from the standpoint of the problems of the individual. Regimentation and uniformity are the evils that an organized planned economy may generate and against these we should take deliberate measures. There should be opportunities for exceptional individuals within the framework of universal economic security.

GROWING DETERIORATION

Is it necessary for us to proceed along a path of increasing State control and diminishing individual responsibility? Already we see around us a growing deterioration of business confidence and the onset of apathy amongst private investors and entrepreneurs. This sapping of morale and of faith in the future is unfortunately reflected at every point of the industrial society. This is due to the rigours of the tax system, the enormous advantage enjoyed by the State-sponsored industrial organisations in comparison with those of private concerns, the indiscipline of labour force, the lack of foresight at the top level of administration, the waste of public funds on ill-conceived or ill-planned projects, a failure to recognise or appraise correctly the inexorable law of economic growth in a democratic set-up. Nobody wants the Plan to fail. But the pressures of the Plan are being demonstrated in the shortage of foreign exchange, the acute food crisis and the lack of employment opportunities. Are we getting back to stagnation and recession?

MISCONCEPTION TO BE REMOVED

The function of economic planning in India is to give to the average individual enough food, better housing, clothing, medical care and education, more enjoyment of culture and a little leisure. In our attempt to solve these problems we must avoid the dogmatic and mechanical doctrines that have won the allegiance of many in other countries of the world. It appears that official and political thinking in this country is coloured by some misconceptions. For instance, it is often assumed that the profit-motive is dishonourable, that profit is synonymous with profiteering, that entrepreneurs as a class are inefficient or dishonest, that about 3 p.c. net is a fair return on risk capital, that India's population problem will solve itself, that rationalisation means unemployment, that it is more important to impose a 92 p.c. tax on the higher income groups than to enrich the lower income groups, that a welfare State can be built without first creating the means to pay for it, that nationalisation creates additional wealth,

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FOUNDATION OF PEACE

By DR. B. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

GANDHI may die, but the Gandhian way of solving the problems of the world will remain. These might not be the exact words, but they represent the substance of what Gandhi himself had said, shortly before his end.

It was his ambition to make certain experiments to prove that the old teachings of applying force in order to induce a settlement of problems big or small, must be given up in favour of non-violent methods. Soon after his return to India from South Africa in 1915, he established his *asram* at Sabarmati and before the end of the year 1918, he had tried Satyagraha in Khaira, in Borsad, in Champaran and in Ahmedabad itself. In all the four experiments he met with profound success.

It is unnecessary to reiterate the details of these experiments, but we may broadly state how in Khaira, the enforced collection in full of taxes which had been suspended the previous year, together with those that fell due in 1916, the Police collusion in the dacoities in Borsad, the 64 illegal levies made by the European landlords on the indigo cultivating ryots of Champaran and finally the grievances of the labourers of the Ahmedabad textile mills, were all settled in favour of those that toiled and moiled the whole day and yet were put to the utmost difficulties. The last of these was a notable triumph achieved through Gandhi's fast unto death, which was not, however, allowed to continue after the 6th day through the good sense of the mill owners.

A like experiment was the third of the series undertaken on the 20th September of the year 1932, started after due notice given at the second Round Table Conference in November 1931 in London and repeated orally in the city of Bombay on the Azad maidan on the 28th December, 1931 and in writing on March 20, 1932 from his place in the Yerawada Jail. This shook the Empire in less than a week in which the members of the British Cabinet scattered over different parts of the world were summoned together in order to cancel the award given by Sir Samuel Hoare, separating the Harijans from the general list of voters and maintaining separate list of voters and separate electorates for them.

Gandhi's fourth and final fast unto death was undertaken shortly before his assassination on the 30th January, 1948, in order to secure the reversal of certain decisions reached by the Congress Cabinet, the most notable of which was the payment o crores of rupees to Pakistan by Hindusthan between the first of these fasts unto death in and the last of the series in 1948, Ga carried on the preaching of his gospel of non-vio though not always with the same measure of suc

PATH OF TRUTH & NON-VIOLENCE

Gandhi's experiences of the second Round T Conference, with the Muslims claiming comm representation with separate voters' registers weightage in representation, and the Mode standing in the way of complete independ having proved highly disappointing he made up mind on his return to India to do away with sp or separate representation for any commu whether Muslims, non-Brahmins or Harijans. concessions he realised were the very negation of violence. On his return to the Congress sessio Bombay he ceased to be a four-anna member resolved to effect a change in the creed of the gress by substituting the words "By Truth and Violence" for the words "All Peaceful and Legiti Means."

Here he was defeated in the Subjects Comm People challenged him to say how he would sup such an amendment after having asked for the to bear and use arms as the eleventh and the of the eleven points presented at first to Lord I and then repeated in the note given to Mr. Sloco correspondent of the *Daily Herald* who visited in the summer of 1930 while salt satyagraha going on rigorously. Later, on the 14th January when France fell in the Second World War, Gandhi said there was no alternative to com non-violence, he was asked as on the previous sions as to how he could make such an out demand, after having failed in the Bombay se in 1934, to replace the words "Peaceful and L mate Means" by the words "Truth and Non-Viole

On all these occasions Gandhi admitted, challenged on the subject of the police formi part of the day-to-day administration in S Governments, that he had reconciled himself to practice of a certain measure of force in the vinces, while he owned that he was not as yet position to determine his attitude on the que of the military in the Central Government. Fi when France fell—France with her best orga and best equipped land forces he lost all faith i power of arms at any time or of new strength

herefore proposed complete non-violence as the nly means of escape from the brutalities of the resent day world.

NEED OF PEACE ARMY

It had been from the very beginning Gandhi's lan and faith that there should be a Peace Army rained and composed of men of faith and character vho would interpose themselves between two militant roups arrayed in battle against each other. That his was not an altogether fantastic plan or view was nade clear during Gandhiji's own life-time by an incident that occurred in the Punjab. Two families losely related to each other came from words to lows in the course of one of those unusual outbreaks hat occur between even such groups. When the empo of the quarrel reached a high pitch, a young irl of twelve seeing that it was her parents and uncles, her cousins and cater-cousins that were about o strike one another, jumped in between the warring roups and fell a victim by accident to one of those atal blows not certainly meant for her. When this nnocent soul had sacrificed herself, the elders ecovered balance and were restored to their senses. The spectacle of such a voluntary and unselfish acrifice helped to restore wisdom and balance to the elligerent parties. Events of such disinterested sac-ifice are not altogether rare in their occurrence, and ve may well hope for the effective part which a Peace Army may be calculated to play in subduing violence as a means of war.

When we seek to realign the foundations of peace, it behoves us first to look into the causes that enerally disturb them. Most recent wars have risen from the operation of greed urging people to seek the benefits of trade or territory. 'Greed' it s said is the essence of capitalism. When one ntertains ambition or greed he is overpowered by a ense of fear that his aims and ambitions may not e fulfilled. Anger follows fear and both these onstitute the obverse and the reverse of the coin of reed. So often do we gain our ends but the very rocesses of the gain carry with them the conclusion hat the end gained by any and every means leads o fresh sources of dispute, degradation and disunity. t being granted, therefore, that the end as actually chieved always partakes of the nature of the means mployed, indifference towards the means employed as not always been justified by the end that is ttained. Every one was holding aloft the truth that justice and liberty would be the end of all wars—and notably in this century, of the first World War, ut the means employed having fallen short of the deal produced a treaty like that of Versailles and a housand evils that came in its train. Therefore, if the basic foundations of peace should be abiding, it would be wrong to deviate from the Gandhian pproach which attaches equal weight to ends as well s means. Mahatmaji's teachings reached their full eight during the sittings of the first Asian Confer-nce in the month of March 1947, in Purana Quilla n Delhi.

In the month of April delegates from Egypt and Tibet, Arab and Jewish delegates approached him. He asked the Tibetans to revive the immortal message of the Buddha. He sympathized with the Arabs but asked them to treat the Jews with love and understanding. So the advice to the Jews was to adjure terrorist methods. He sympathized with their aspirations for a National Home, but it was a spiritual ideal as they claimed it to be. It had to be realized by cultivating the goodwill and friendship of the Arab not through the intervention of the Imperialist Powers, [illegible] the Indonesian and the Vietnamese he impressed that whatever was gained by the sword was likely to perish by the sword. Nothing permanent could be built by force.

PASSIVE RESISTANCE

When Gandhi preached non-co-operation, passive resistance and civil disobedience, people jumped with joy that at last a weapon was being forged with which to win Swaraj. There was an element of excitement, a stimulus to effort and sacrifice when a formula was uttered, but people did not understand the meaning of the adjective (civil) in their joy at the substantive (disobedience). Everyone was happy over non-co-operation, passive resistance and civil disobedience, but what civil disobedience implied they could not readily follow. It took time to realize that civil meant respectful to the limit of being non-violent, non-violent meant nothing negative, but something positive, aggressive, something really loving. It was the Jallianwala-Bagh massacre in which the blood of Hindus, Moslems and Sikhs flowed together that marked the beginning of India's non-violent fight for freedom—and this so strikingly that from the year 1919, the days between the 6th April and 13th April were observed as the National Week, which was done by fasting and prayer both on the opening and the closing day and by devoting the week to an intensive programme of constructive endeavour. This included corporate scavenging, service of the untouchability, communal unity and mass spinning. Referring to it in the course of his post-prayer speech on the 5th April, Gandhi repeatedly marked that the spinning wheel with all that it stood for was the only royal road to the deliverance of the country as well as to the realization of the peace in the heart.

He described how it had brought spiritual solace to several friends when every other method had failed them. He prophesied that if they continued to fight amongst themselves, the golden apple of Independence would slip from their hands. If Pakistan meant a land only for the Muslims, it would be a land gowing with poison. The India of his dreams was a land watered by rivers of love, he claimed that he knew the secret of the alchemy that could turn even poison into nectar. For this purpose, however, an active reagent was required namely non-violence which means love, and which forms the only foundation of peace never-failing and everlasting.

Individual And The State

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that centralised State enterprise and management is socialism.

I believe that if the private sector is freed from its present handicaps and uncertainties, it can certainly go a long way in securing a prosperous and sound economy for the country. In India it has always been the tradition of the well-to-do classes to undertake pioneering work in social, cultural and economic fields. The State in India has taken over these functions and the job is very badly done. I will not seriously suggest a return to complete laissez faire in economic matters. The State has to exercise general control over the economic activities of the country to prevent undesirable trends, to provide essential services within society's capacity to bear them and to protect the underprivileged. But the policy that is being pursued by the State should be more realistic and more suited to the requirements of the situation.

MAHISHAMARDINI

(Reproduced from 200-year old Painting).

Head for Violence

BY BRUNO FISCHER

A Suspense-Mystery

GEORGE phoned from the school. "I'm coming home for lunch, Molly".

"Don't tell me you got fired, darling," I said.

He laughed. "The Board of Education can't fire you just like that. I induced another teacher to take a study class in my place. If I hurry, I can spend twenty minutes at home."

"What's wrong ?"

"Nothing is wrong," he said. "I have just had a marvellous inspiration. Be seeing you."

George wouldn't have gotten anywhere as an actor. He was definitely worried about something, and he couldn't make his voice sound otherwise.

I was standing at the living-room window when George pulled up in his car. On the sidewalk he brushed back his unruly hair, lit his pipe and tried to appear nonchalant as he sauntered up to the porch. But, even at that distance, his honest gray eyes gave him away. I had never before seen George afraid, because there had been nothing to be afraid of. Now his fear was startling.

He kissed me and looked surprised at the lunch spread on the table. "What's this ? I've already eaten."

"You said you were coming home for lunch."

"Did I ?" He lit his pipe again, although it did not need lighting, and I saw that his hand was shaking a little.

I started to feel cold then, because George had always been as steady as a rock. He was a tall, loose-jointed man who was made for tweeds and a pipe; and between his wife and home and teaching high school kids mathematics he was placidly content. Up to now, nothing had ever greatly disturbed him.

"Molly," he said, "why don't you visit my mother in Virginia ? She's very lonely."

I frowned. "And leave you alone ? Why don't you invite her here ?"

"She's ailing. Look, sweetheart. You can make a sleeper at six o'clock. Pack your valise with the things you need right away. I'll send your trunk out tomorrow."

He wasn't looking at me as he spoke and he was trying hard to sound casual. I touched his arm.

"George, why do you want to get rid of me ?"

He assured me that he would miss me very much, but that his mother needed me. He was lying, of course, and George had always hated lies. Even if I hadn't known that his mother didn't particularly like me because I was the former wife of

Webster Cook, his quietly desperate manner made me suspicious.

I said : "Anyway, I refuse to be bundled off like that. We have all night to talk it over."

"But tonight may be too—" He checked himself.

"Too what ?" I asked.

"Oh, all right," he said. He looked at me a long time and his shoulders were tired. Then he kissed me fiercely and went out.

From the porch I watched his car turn the corner. Had he been about to say : "Tonight may be too late ?" Too late for what ?

And all of a sudden I knew, or thought I knew. It could be Webster Cook, though it wasn't yet time.

I was restless for the rest of that afternoon, especially when, an hour later, I noticed the man across the street.

George and I lived in a cosy cottage in the suburban section of the city, and in that neat quiet street any stranger was conspicuous. The first time I saw him he was leaning against the elm in front of the house across the street. He appeared to be waiting for somebody. Ten minutes later he was in front of my cottage, indolently strolling past.

Every few minutes after that I peeked out at him from behind the living-room curtain. He was never in the same place, but he was always in the street, with my cottage apparently his focal point. His suit was too tight over his broad, squat body, and the cigar in his fleshy mouth was ragged and dead.

After a while I went into the bedroom and took George's gun out of a dresser drawer. George had bought it when he had taught evenings at West Side High. He had to walk home late through a tough neighbourhood. After a couple of teachers had been attacked and robbed, I had persuaded him to carry a gun. He had given in to me, but had bought the smallest gun he could find so that it would not be much weight in his pocket. A toy, he called it.

The tiny Colt .25 caliber pistol didn't look like more than a toy. It had hardly any barrel and was only a trifle more than four inches long and weighed only thirteen ounces. George had joked about it, but both of us had had fun practising with it in the back yard. I became much better with it than he, and George used to wisecrack about me becoming his bodyguard. Then he had been transferred to respectable Washington High and the gun had been forgotten in the drawer.

I loaded the pistol. When I slid the magazine in, I suddenly realized what I was doing and started to tremble all over. I went into the living room and looked out of the window. A black sedan was parked in front of the house and Lieutenant Bolland was standing beside it, talking to the squat man in the too-tight clothes.

Five years ago was the last time I had seen Lieutenant Bolland. I had been married to Webster Cook then, and the lieutenant had come up to the apartment to question Webster. It seemed that Arnie Lehm, the racketeer, had just been murdered, and the police were interested in what Webster knew about it. That was the first I had suspected that Webster's profession might be more than the practice of criminal law.

Lieutenant Bolland left the squat man and started up the walk toward the cottage. He was a gray-haired man with a ramrod back and a granite face.

I glanced down at the gun in my hand and had a moment of panic. I was wearing a beige covert suit with broad patch pockets, and I dropped the tiny pistol into the righthand pocket. It fitted snugly. I went to the door.

Lieutenant Bolland removed his hat. "Good afternoon, Mrs. Hubbard," he said. The last time I had admitted him into my house, five years ago, he had said : "Good evening, Mrs. Cook."

I led him into the living room and offered him a drink. He shook his head and stood looking at me. Then he said : "Webster Cook is back in town."

"Oh," I said, and sat down. I had been right. Why else would George try to get me out of town. Then I said : "It isn't time yet."

"He was paroled. He showed up in town this morning."

I said : "Is that man outside a detective ?"

Lieutenant Bolland nodded. "Your husband phoned me. He's worried. Frankly, so am I".

"That's ridiculous," I protested. "Webster wouldn't harm me."

"He came pretty close to it once." The lieutenant ran his fingers over the sweatband of his hat. "How long were you married to Cook ?"

"Seven months."

I had married Webster when I was too young, though I suppose that wouldn't have made any difference. He was very handsome, very suave, very generous, and he was a highly successful criminal lawyer. I think that I never really loved him, certainly not the way I later loved George; but he had always been kind and had kept his business strictly out of his home.

When Arnie Lehm was murdered and Webster was questioned about it, I had had my first doubts. But Webster was glib. He explained that a criminal lawyer's job was to defend criminals, and Arnie Lehm, the racketeer, had simply been a client. The ethics had been too involved for me to bother my head over them.

"And you never suspected ?" Lieutenant Bolland asked.

"Not until he was arrested and then sent to jail for jury fixing. That was when I learned that he had really been Arnie Lehm's righthand man after all."

"And had Lehm rubbed out so that he could take over the various rackets," Bolland observed dryly. "Of course we couldn't prove that, but we had the gunsel cold who did the job. I doubt if Cook cared what happened to the gunsel, but he was afraid that the gunsel would implicate him if he failed to get him off. That's why Cook lost his head. He attempted to bribe a juror and we had him where we wanted him. Then you ran out on him."

"I divorced him because I found out what he really was."

"You did the right thing, Mrs. Hubbard. But your husband didn't think so, especially not when you married George Hubbard. He tried to tear the jail down. What got under his skin was that you threw him over for a high school mathematics teacher."

"For a man a hundred times better than he could ever be," I said.

"Sure. But it made Cook wild. You only knew him seven months, Mrs. Hubbard. I've known him for years. Smooth as silk, but deadlier than Arnie Lehm himself. Webster Cook swore he'd get you as soon as he got out, and now he's out."

I stood up. "Just words."

"May be." He reached forward and tapped the gun in my pocket. "You're not as confident as you sound."

"I didn't know the man outside was a detective. He made me nervous."

"Is that it ?" For a long minute he studied

gravely. "Webster Cook is a killer. On top of that, years in jail without a woman makes a man bitter against the wife he left and who wasn't waiting for him when he got out. Watch yourself."

"How ?"

He shrugged. "That's the worst of it. We can't put Cook back into jail or throw him out of town. All we can do is warn you and keep our eyes on him."

"Nothing will happen," I insisted.

"I hope not," Lieutenant Bolland said.

CHAPTER—II

WHEN George returned from the school, he was once more his usual placid self. He returned to his study to correct examination papers. I went in after him and stood beside his desk.

"Lieutenant Bolland was here," I told him.

George put down his pencil. "So you know that Cook's back? I didn't want you to worry."

"I'm not worried." But my hand brushed the gun in my pocket.

"After I left you this noon, I realized that visiting my mother would be no solution," George said. "He could follow you wherever you went. As a matter of fact, you're safest right here. Whatever else Cook might be, he is shrewd and calculating. He knows that if harm comes to you, the police will at once hold him responsible. Lieutenant Bolland told me as I left school that he's seen Cook and pointed that out to him."

"What did Webster say ?"

"That he'd lost his head when he tried to strangle you, but that now he has nothing against you. I can understand that. After all, he must still be very fond of you."

I said nothing For nearly a year I had been Webster's wife, but there had been a part of him I had never known. He had been kind and generous to me, but to others he had been cruel and ruthless. Arnie Lehm was not the only one he had murdered or caused to be murdered.

George chuckled softly. "In fact, Webster Cook finds himself in a peculiar predicament. If anything should happen to you—if a car should run over you or something like that — the police would blame him. It's in his interest to see that you are protected in order to protect himself."

George, as a mathematician, added two and two and arrived at the proper and logical answer. But would Webster, after five hate-filled, jealous years in jail, be in a state of mind to add in the same way ?

Evidently Lieutenant Bolland didn't think so. He had come here to warn me. He had stationed a detective outside the house. He knew what Webster Cook really was, and during the trial and the divorce I had found out too.

"Forget him, sweetheart," George said and turned back to his papers.

The tiny pistol remained in my pocket.

Immediately after supper George had to leave. "One of these dull parent-teacher meetings tonight," he said. "I'll try to get away early."

I followed him to the door and kissed him hard and held him tightly to me. George looked at me in astonishment.

"Your hands are cold, Molly. And you're trembling. You're not afraid of Cook ? I explained to you that he can't afford —"

"I'm not afraid," I lied. "You'll be late if you don't hurry."

After George was gone, I occupied myself by washing the dishes. Then they were out of the way and there was nothing to do. I tried to read and I couldn't. I listened to the radio; the comedian's jokes did not strike me as being funny. Too often I got up to make sure that the squat detective was still outside. He always was, and that should have made me feel better, but it didn't.

Webster loved me, I kept thinking. But that was just it. Love can breed violent hate. There was that time I visited him in prison to tell him that I was going to divorce him and marry George. It had required two prison guards to pull him off me. For a week the marks of his fingers had been on my throat. And in the years that passed the bitterness had grown in him until it seemed there was nothing else inside of him. He had made no secret of it.

I heard the back door open. It was almost ten o'clock; that would be George returning home. He had driven the car into the garage behind the house and was coming in the back way.

But I hadn't heard the car.

I was seated at a window. I turned my head and saw the detective a motionless shadow in the dark street. His presence was reassuring. But why hadn't I heard the car ? George's footsteps were coming from the kitchen.

If it was George.

I stood up. I took two steps toward the door and stopped. Webster Cook filled the doorway.

For one breathless moment I scarcely recognized him. He was old now and no longer handsome. His shoulders were bowed; his face was a death-like pallor. His eyes seemed to have receded deep in their sockets and they looked at me with bitter hunger.

Then he started toward me.

I moved backward until I knocked over a floor lamp. It fell with a crash. I glanced down at the battered shade and the broken bulb, and all at once I remembered the detective outside. One window was

pen a few inches from the bottom. I turned oward it.

"Take it easy, Molly," Webster said softly.

His hand was on my arm, not brutally, but rmly. His face grinned down at mine without irth. It was only then that I thought f the gun; but it was in my right hand ocket, and he was holding my right arm.

"What do you want?" I demanded.

"Why, to visit the girl who was my vife. How are you, Molly?"

His hand was on my arm, not brutally, but firmly. **His face grinned down at mine without mirth.**

I wondered what he would do if I called out. Too much time would pass before the detective could get into the house.

"Why did you sneak in the back way?" I asked. The answer was obvious; I was sparring for time.

He nodded toward the window. "Taylor would probably have tried to stop me."

"Taylor ?"

"That headquarters detective outside. I know the gentleman. In the past I had a run-in with him once or twice. I don't want to be interrupted."

How would he do it? Use a gun or knife? But he held a brief-case in his left hand and his right hand gripped my arm. Strangling would be his way. He had tried it once in prison, and here it would be the quiet method, without rousing the detective or the neighbourhood. But for that too he would have to put down the brief-case and release my arm in order to get his hands on me. Could I get out my gun in time?

"You needn't be scared of me, Molly. I went a little wild when I lost you, but all that is over. All I want from you now is a small favour."

He released my arm then. My hand dropped to my pocket, but I did not take out the gun. There was no menace in his attitude. He stepped away from me, turning his back, and walked across the room. For a long time he stood looking at the plaster head of me which stood on the mantle above the fireplace. Tensely I watched his bowed back, holding myself rigid, waiting.

"You returned everything to me when you divorced me," he said. "The jewelry and the clothes and the money in the bank and the furniture. But you didn't return this head."

A few months after our marriage, Webster had commissioned a well-known sculptor to make the head. He had insisted on plaster, probably because it was considerably cheaper than bronze or marble. I had always thought it flattered me, but Webster, and later George, assured me that it did not.

No, I hadn't returned the head to him along with everything else. It was too much myself. I might have broken it, but never let him have it as his personal possession. The break between us had to be complete.

I said: "I took nothing from you and wanted nothing, but you can't have that head."

He seemed not to hear me. Slowly, intimately,

he ran the fingers over the face, and I felt my flesh crawl, as if it were me he was touching.

"The police think I'm out for trouble, but I'm not," he said musingly. "Those were good months we had together. All I want is this memory of you."

"No. It belongs to me."

He turned to study me out of those sunken eyes. "I wonder if a court would agree. I paid for it."

"Then you'll compel me to destroy the head before the matter goes to court."

He started toward me. I stiffened again, but he did not come all the way to where I stood. There was a table between us; he stopped there and opened his briefcase.

"I know you're married to a school teacher, and teachers aren't paid much in this town," he said. "I paid the sculptor five hundred dollars to make that head. I'm willing to pay it again."

He took money out of the briefcase and spread it on the table. They were all twenty-dollar bills, and twenty-five of them covered half the table.

"No," I said.

Webster shrugged and dipped into the briefcase again. Tantalizingly he spread twenty-five more bills on the table, then looked up at me for his answer.

In some ways Webster was a fool. He could not realize that I would starve before accepting anything from him, and I was not starving. This was not a purchase; this was a bribe. He wanted that head so that he could still have part of me with him.

"You haven't enough money to buy it," I said.

Abruptly the mask dropped. His eyes blazed with naked fury, and I saw the man who had callously murdered to have his way and who would murder again.

"Damn you, Molly!" he cried.

Again he was coming toward me, both his arms swinging, and I knew that this time he would no stop until he reached me.

Somehow the little pistol was in my hand, an Webster was no longer in motion. He looked at th gun and then at the window at my back, beyon which the unsuspecting detective stood guard.

"All right, Molly," he said heavily. "That bit o plaster is mine. I tried to do the right thing an give you money for it. Now I'll get it in anothe way."

He went out through the front door.

With an effort I kept my legs from bucklin Groping to draw breath into my constricted lungs, saw that the thousand dollars was still on the tabl He had either forgotten it, or had deliberately left there to induce me to change my mind.

Shaking with anger, I stuffed the money bac into the briefcase and ran out of the house. Th detective would go with me to return the money t Webster.

But the detective was not outside. Possibly h was following Webster. I hurried up the street.

I went one block and then saw Webster's stoope back moving slowly along. For a moment, hesitated. It was late now and this suburban stree was always deserted. Then I put my hand over th gun in my pocket and hurried on.

Suddenly I no longer saw him. I had glance away for a moment, and he had vanished. H couldn't have turned the corner because he had no yet reached it. The houses were far apart here an there were lawns and gardens and driveways betwee them. He could have stepped between two house Perhaps he had seen me coming and was waiting...

CHAPTER—III

ALMOST in my ears somebody grunted hollowly. I saw nobody. I continued along the front hedge of a house; when I reached the end of the hedge a dark, motionless form lay on the grass.

"Webster?" I whispered.

I could not be sure. In the darkness the form was only a splotch on the grass. It could be Webster or any man. But whoever he was, he was hurt.

I had taken only a single step toward the man when a second shape flew at me. A fist struck my face. My head seemed to lift from my body; nausea twisted me. I do not remember myself falling, but I was lying on the sidewalk, fighting to get up. A foot dug into my ribs, knocking me down again.

I could not see the man who crouched over me, but I felt his hands fumble at me. A hand stopped at my suit pocket; he was lifting out my gun.

He's going to shoot me! I thought frantically.

I twisted toward him, as if by looking at him I could stop the bullets. He was moving away from me toward where the motionless man lay. The brief-case was under his left arm; he must have snatched it up immediately after knocking me down. He raised his other arm and then I heard the shots.

It couldn't be real. I lay on the sidewalk, my head lifted groggily, and watched him shoot the unconscious man with my gun. For an eternity, it seemed the shots went on and on, though it could not have been more than a few seconds at the most. Then the man's dark back was in flight toward the rear of the house.

Somebody in one of the adjoining houses shouted. I was rising to my feet, slowly, agonizingly, and found it odd that I myself had uttered little sound There had been no time.

In the house somebody yelled: "I tell you the were shots; phone the police!"

Lights went on. The glow flowing through window touched the man lying in the grass. He wa on his side and his face was turned toward me. dead face.

I cried out then. He was Webster Cook.

All at once I was more afraid than when Webste had faced me alive in my home. Even now I canno quite explain it. It was not fear of police or news papers or scandal. My mind was not clear enoug for anything so definite. It was that terrible, all-possessing fear of murder as such. It was the ins tinctive urge to flee from a horror so overwhelmin that it couldn't be faced.

People were talking and cars were rushing alon the street, but the heart of the tumult was weirdl distant. I awoke and looked around. With a shoc I realized that I had walked more than a bloc without having been aware of it. The murder wa behind me.

I walked on. Two men passed and hooted at me thinking I was drunk. I must have looked drunk; certainly I walked as if I were.

I don't know how much time passed. It must have been a good deal, because suddenly I found myself at my sister Ellen's house, and she lived two miles from me. I rang the bell. There was no answer; the door was locked. Ellen and her husband must

be out. They would be home soon. I sank down on the porch.

I slept.

Somebody shook me. I moaned and muttered: "Ellen? Where were you, Ellen?"

"It's George. Good lord, you know Ellen and the kids went to the country."

I opened my eyes. It was still night, but there was a street lamp not far off and I could see George's face anxiously peering down at me.

I laughed crazily. "I completely forgot that Ellen was away."

I rose to my feet. George put his arm about my waist and I leaned heavily against him. His fingers touched my cheek and I winced.

"Molly, what happened to your face?"

"Oh, that?" I said thickly. "I was walking along and fell over something or other and —"

"Molly, you needn't lie. Mr. Stockton says that it will be all right."

I turned my head and for the first time noticed Robert Stockton standing there in his short, plump, middle-aged dignity. He had been a close friend of my father's. He was a lawyer, but not the kind of lawyer Webster Cook had been. The criminals he defended were all respectable people!

"The police know all about it," Mr. Stockton said gravely.

"Know what?"

"That you shot and killed Cook."

George's arm about my waist tightened protectively. I fingered the numb bruise on my cheek and momentarily closed my eyes.

"I didn't do it," I said. "Webster was killed by a robber who was after a thousand dollars in his brief-case."

Mr. Stockton blinked at me. He looked very surprised at my words. "How did he get George's gun?"

"He took it from me."

They waited for me to go on. Resting in the crook of George's arm, I told them everything that had happened since Webster Cook had entered the cottage.

When I finished, there was a silence. I looked from one face to the other and my heart sank. Neither my husband nor my lawyer believed me.

George held me closer to him.

"Molly, you didn't commit any crime in shooting Webster Cook—not even legally. It was justifiable homicide. Isn't that right, Mr. Stockton?"

"Under the circumstances, certainly. Molly, I appreciate that you are frightened and upset, but I assure you that in this case the truth is the best course."

"But I've told you the truth," I said.

Mr. Stockton sighed. "That brief-case, with exactly a thousand dollars in it, was found next to Cook's body. A thief would have made sure to take it with him."

"But he did. It was under his left arm when he shot Webster. Then he ran—" I stopped. "He must have returned and dropped it near Webster's body."

"You said you didn't see him return."

"I didn't, but he could have, later."

Mr. Stockton clucked his tongue. "Let me try to follow you, Molly. Cook was unconscious or perhaps already dead. The thief had knocked you down and taken the gun from you, as well as the brief-case. All he had to do was to flee with the money. Yet, according to you, he dropped the brief-case next to Cook after having gone to all that trouble to get it. Furthermore, he deliberately roused the neighbourhood, before fleeing by shooting Cook, who was unable to harm him, and then left your gun there with the brief-case. I am afraid, my dear, that the police would not take you seriously."

"That's the way it happened," I muttered.

"There is one more glaring flaw," Mr. Stockton went on. "I've known Webster Cook for years. I cannot imagine him making the extravagant sentimental gesture of offering you one thousand dollars for a plaster head. The prosecutor will tear that to bits. And then, of course, the business of the brief-case picked up and then discarded with the money intact—no, Molly, it won't do."

I closed my eyes. Could I be sure what really had happened? It had been very much like a nightmare, and can you remember the exact details of a nightmare later?

Again I touched my cheek. At any rate, there was no doubt about the bruise.

"Look at this," I said. "Certainly you can't deny I was struck."

Mr. Stockton shrugged. "Wasn't it Webster Cook who struck you? Believe me, Molly, the truth is best. Wasn't what happened something like this? You were afraid of Cook. You carried your husband's gun with you. That was legitimate; you were entitled to protect yourself. Cook met you on the street. He struck you with his fist. He was going to kill you, or you thought he was. You shot in self-defence. I can promise you that the district attorney will not even ask for an indictment."

"It wasn't that way at all," I insisted. "Webster was in my house and—"

"Don't say that again!" Mr. Stockton cut in sharply. "What you're implying is that after Cook left your house, you followed him and shot him. That's the worst thing you can tell the police."

My voice was faint as I said: "So that's what you believe— that I followed Webster from the house in order to shoot him?"

Neither of them had an immediate answer. We stood there in the darkness of my sister Ellen's porch, and George's eyes were sick, looking down at me. I slid out of the crook of his arm.

"Molly!" George cried. "What matters is what the police will think if you tell them the same story you told us. I got there only a few minutes after the police did. I was driving home when I saw the crowd. Lieutenant Bolland was standing there with my gun in a handkerchief. He asked me if it was mine. I said I had one that looked somewhat like it. Then he smiled and told me not to worry. So you see, he's on your side."

"The idea is to keep him there," Stockton said. "We have one lucky break. Taylor, the detective who was guarding your house, didn't see Cook enter because Cook came in through the back door. And he didn't see Cook and then you leave because he had gone around the corner to the drugstore for a cup of coffee. By the time Taylor returned to the front of your house, he heard the shots in the other block. Taylor is in plenty of hot water for leaving his post, but it's a lucky break for us."

Dully I said: "I told you what happened."

"Molly, be reasonable," George pleaded. "Mr. Stockton knows best. You act as if we were trying to trap you into a confession."

That was it—my husband and my lawyer trying to persuade me into confessing a crime I didn't commit. The story they wanted me to tell might be best for my personal security, but I would be saying that I had shot and killed a man, and that wasn't true. I hadn't the blood of my former husband on my hands. They couldn't make me say that I had.

CHAPTER–IV

IT was noon when I awoke in Ellen's house. I had never in my life suffered from a hangover, but I suppose that people who do, feel the way I did then.

"George?" I called.

He did not answer. I told myself that probably he had gone out for food.

A shower cleared my head somewhat, but the heaviness remained in my limbs. And my face ached. When I looked at myself in a mirror, I saw that the place where the murderer had struck me was hideously discoloured. No amount of powder could completely cover it.

I dressed and went downstairs. Footsteps sounded on the porch. George was coming back.

But the round little figure that stepped into the foyer belonged to Mr. Stockton. He lifted his solemn eyes to me coming down the stairs and did not greet me.

"Where's George?" I asked.

"The damn fool!" he said. "He's a bigger idiot than you are. Read this." He took a folded newspaper from under his arm.

My eyes lifted to the glaring headlines

RACKETEER LAWYER MURDERED;
EX-WIFE'S HUSBAND CONFESSES

"Read the story," Mr. Stockton said grimly. I read:

> Webster Cook, the lawyer who took over the leadership of the notorious Arnie Lehm gang five years ago was murdered on Elm Road last night. His body was riddled by four. 25 caliber bullets.
>
> Before dawn, this morning, George Hubbard, mathematics teacher at Washington High School, who had married the former Molly Cook after her divorce, walked into Central Police Headquarters and confessed to the shooting.

"No!" I said. "This is madness. George had nothing to do with it".

Mr. Stockton gave a savage grunt.

There was more, columns and columns of type rehashing old history, but I had read enough.

"Why did he do it?" I said. "Neither of us shot Webster."

"Sentimental heroics!" Mr. Stockton snorted. "Taking the rap for his wife and all that nonsense."

"It's your fault," I said. "You persuaded George that I was lying."

"Your story was even crazier than George's. His might do if there had been a gun found in Cook's pocket, but there was none. There are other loose ends. My God, if you had to shoot Cook, why didn't you do it in your own home? That would have made everything simple-open-and-shut-defence."

I opened my mouth once more to utter a denial, but what was the use? I was tired of repeating the truth when it made no impression. Listlessly I started toward the door.

Mr. Stockton caught my arm. "Where are you going?"

"Where I should have gone last night—to the police."

"Listen to me, Molly," he said. "Your father was the closest friend I ever had. I'm not going to let you make it worse than it already is. By telling conflicting stories, both of them absolutely crazy, you'll only convince the police that you're trying to cover up each other. In other words, that there's something to hide. Let it ride the way it is."

"And let George take the blame for the murder?"

"It'll make it easier for both of you. George has everybody's sympathy, including the police and the newspapers. He's a hero for having saved his wife. In a few minutes he will be free and that will be the end of it."

"And if I tell the truth?"

"Then George's difficulties will only begin. Believe me, Molly, you can help George most by corroborating his story."

I was too tired to argue any more. Mr. Stockton was a lawyer and he ought to know what was best. All that mattered now was George.

"All right," I muttered.

* * *

Lieutenant Bolland greeted Mr. Stockton and me with his usual cordiality. He pulled up a chair for me and offered me a cigarette and all the time his gaze remained fixed on the bruise on my cheek. The sight of it seemed to disappoint him.

"We've been looking for you, Mrs. Hubbard," he said amiably. "The law does not approve of key murder witnesses vanishing."

"She lost touch with her husband after Cook was shot," Mr. Stockton answered for me. "Naturally she was greatly disturbed. She spent the night in her sister's house. This morning she came to me, and of course I brought her to you."

Bolland seated himself behind his desk and said carelessly: "Tell us exactly what happened last night, Mrs. Hubbard."

For the first time I noticed that a male stenographer was seated inconspicuously in the room. I cleared my throat and began.

"Last night I left my house to walk to Meecker Avenue to buy a magazine. Webster Cook stepped out from behind a hedge. He grabbed my arm. I struggled and he struck me across the cheek."

"Did you cry out?"

"I can't say. The blow stunned me. I fell to my knees. Then suddenly there was my husband George. Webster Cook was backing away from him, and as he did so he stuck his hand in his pocket."

"It was dark, wasn't it?"

"There was a light across the street."

"Oh, yes," he said. "Go on, please."

"I heard shots. Webster fell and then I saw the gun drop from George's hand. He said 'It'll be all right, Molly. Go home.' I was still dazed from the blow. I started home, then could not face being alone. I went to my sister's. When I got there, I remembered that she was away, but I had the key. I stayed there overnight."

I sank back in the chair, as exhausted as if I had run a long distance. Mr. Stockton gave me an approving smile.

Lieutenant Bolland said casually: "Do you always leave your house with all the lights on?"

"I intended to come back right away."

"And do you always leave the front door open? I don't mean unlocked. I mean wide open."

Almost imperceptibly Mr. Stockton stiffened in his chair. I took time to draw my breath. I had rushed out after Webster, in my haste forgetting to close the door after me.

"My husband always scolds me for being careless," I said, forcing a smile.

'Why would Cook reach for a gun he didn't have?"

"I don't know what he reached for. I said he put his hand in his pocket."

"While he was facing your irate husband?" Bol-

and said dryly. "I'd think he'd want to keep both his hands free."

Mr. Stockton came to my rescue. "Perhaps Cook's hand merely swung toward his pocket. Hubbard knew that Cook was a killer. He hadn't time to make sure. He had every justification for shooting."

Not a muscle moved in the lieutenant's granite face. "Except that it didn't happen that way at all. First Hubbard knocked Cook out with the gun. Then while Cook lay unconscious in the grass, he deliberately and cold-bloodedly pumped four bullets into him."

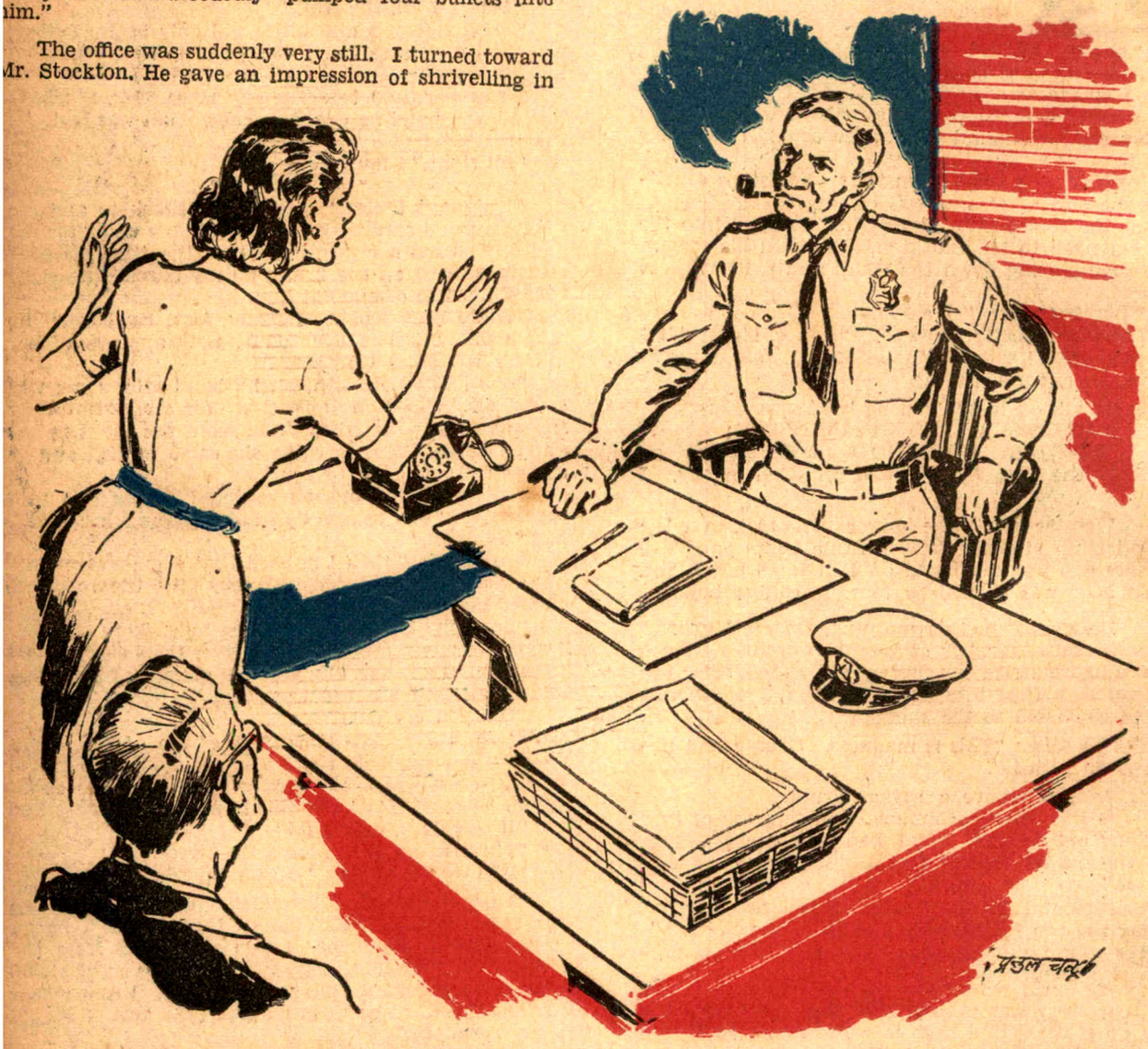
The office was suddenly very still. I turned toward Mr. Stockton. He gave an impression of shrivelling in his chair. Last night I had told him and George that the murderer had shot down into Webster's motionless body. But because they hadn't believed my story, they hadn't believed that part of it.

"I'll tell you what really happened, Mrs. Hubbard," Bolland said. "You left your house in a great hurry, but not before Cook was shot. It was after. You heard the tumult in the next block and went to see what it was about. A mob had already gathered and your husband was inconspicuous in it. He told you he had shot Cook and you left with him. A few minutes later he returned to the scene of the crime to see what was developing. Evidently he had already decided to plead self-defence, but he wanted time for you and him to agree to a story. That's why he didn't give himself up till hours later."

"How do you explain the bruise on her cheek?" Mr. Stockton said weakly.

Bolland dismissed it with a wave of his hand. "Her husband could have done it to make the story more convincing."

I stood up. Heavily I went to the desk and put my hands on it. "Molly!" Mr. Stockton warned, and then sighed. He couldn't stop me now. Nothing could.



"My husband didn't tell the truth. He had an absurd idea he was protecting me."

"My husband didn't tell the truth," I said. "He had an absurd idea he was protecting me. A thief murdered Webster Cook."

I told the lieutenant the rest of it. He interrupted once. "Cook was willing to shell out a thousand dollars for a plaster head?"

"He was more than willing," I said. "He was anxious."

"Cook didn't come out of jail a rich man. He was

broke. A thousand dollars would be every cent he could raise."

"I don't know about that," I told him stiffly. "Do you want to hear the truth?"

"Go on, Mrs. Hubbard."

When I finished, he looked past me at Mr. Stockton.

"I'm surprised, Stockton, that a lawyer of your ability couldn't advise either of them better."

Mr. Stockton protested: "But I had nothing to do with—"

"I believe you. You'd have made up a better yarn and made them stick to the same one."

I had to hold on to the edge of the desk to keep myself erect. I said desperately: "But I had the gun. You knew that."

"Uh-huh. Yesterday afternoon. Cook was shot hours later, after you had plenty of time to give it to your husband. My own idea is that Cook was headed for your house. Your husband saw him from his car. He drove a distance further and waited for him behind the hedge and knocked him out and then shot him."

"Wait!" I said. "Fingerprints on the gun."

Bolland shook his head. "It was wiped clean. Yo didn't see this thief who murdered for a thousan dollars and then left the money behind, stop to wip the gun?"

"No," I said. "He didn't even drop the gun or th brief-case. He ran with them."

"Yet they were there. I respect a woman wh tries to save her husband, but you're not up to it, Mrs Hubbard. Neither of your two stories nor you husband's stands up. Look, for instance, at th terrific coincidence. You happened to leave you house during those five minutes or less when Detectiv Taylor was drinking coffee. Your husband cam along at the precise moment when Cook supposedl accosted you. I realize that those are two differen stories, but there are so many it is hard to keep track."

So there it was. Neither the truth I told no the lie George told was believed. And George because of his lie, was a murderer in the eyes of the law, and there was nothing I could do about it.

CHAPTER—V

IT was some minutes after I entered my cottage before I realized that it had been searched by the police. They had gone through the motions of replacing everything, but my housewife's eye could tell the difference. I could not imagine what they had been looking for; probably it was routine to search the home of a murder suspect.

In the living room I lit a cigarette with weary hopelessness. The only way to save George was to find the real murderer, but he had been a mere shadow, a figment of a nightmare. I had seen him and yet not seen him. He might be young or old, tall or short, anybody or anything.

My eyes fell on the plaster head of myself on the mantel. Webster had brought the thousand dollars to buy the head from me. The murderer must have known that Webster had the money in the brief-case and had lain in wait for him behind the hedge. Then he had seen me come along with the brief-case.

Yet he hadn't taken the money after going to the trouble of knocking me down and snatching up the brief-case. Wait! That meant that he hadn't been after the money. He had expected to find something else in the brief-case—something so valuable that a thousand dollars in cash had been of no importance.

Webster had come for the head. Could that have been it? Nonsense! In the art market, the head was much less valuable than the money, and it certainly couldn't have fit into the brief-case. What, then?

My legs took me closer to the fireplace mantel. Suddenly I stopped moving, and my breathing stopped too. There were drapes over the doorway leading into George's study—and the drapes had stirred. Somebody was standing behind the drapes, watching me!

Careful! I warned myself. Walk into the hall as if you suspected nothing. Once in the hall, you can run out into the street and be safe.

Deliberately I turned my back to the drapes and forced myself to take the time to crush out my cigarette in an ashtray. Outside I heard a car pass and children calling to one another, but in the house itself the silence was intense. I started toward the hall.

The living-room carpet must have muffled his footsteps, for I did not hear him until he was right behind me. An arm whipped about me; a rough hand closed over my mouth. I tried to struggle, but he was enormously strong. Keeping his hand over my mouth, he turned me around to face him.

He was a very big man with tremendous shoulders and a fleshy, unshaven face. His eyes, glittering down at me, were small and mean.

"Take it easy, sister," he said. "One peep out of you and I'll break your neck."

He removed his hand from my mouth then, but kept his arm about my neck.

"What do you want?" I said hoarsely.

"You know. Where is it?"

"You mean the thousand dollars? The police have it."

His mouth twisted in annoyance. "Don't be nny, sister. You know what I mean. Cook came re for it. The way I see it, you couldn't give it to m and he couldn't afford to start a row. it you knew sooner or later he'd be back d get it, so you had your husband shoot him wn."

I looked up at him. "Then you're not e one who murdered Webster Cook?"

"Don't make me laugh. You know all ght who rubbed him out. Maybe you did it urself. You followed Cook out of the house d gave it to him, and your husband is tak- g the rap so he can cop a self-defence plea." is arm tightened about my neck. "I repeat, here is it? Do I have to get tough, sister?"

I couldn't breathe. It was not only the essure of the arm. My nerves and body uldn't stand much more. I remember start- g to slump. Then a gray mist formed in y brain, turning back and filling all of me til consciousness was gone.

When I opened my eyes, the darkness re- ained. I was in bed. I thought, and my perience with the big man had only been bad dream. Perhaps the rest of it, the mur- r of Webster and the imprisonment of eorge, had been part of the same dream.

Then I felt the pain in my arm and the ughness of the carpet under me, and I ew that it had all happened and that I was ing on the living-room floor. I raised my ad a little and could see the night against e windows. I had been unconscious for veral hours.

I stumbled up to my feet and groped my ay to the wall switch. Light poured down to the room. I turned and saw that the g man was still with me.

He was on his back only a few feet from here I had lain. His eyes were open, staring at the ceiling, and the handle of a big nife protruded from his heart.

I could not cry out. I lacked the strength. Even ifting my gaze from this hideously dead man emed taxing.

The room had changed since I had fainted. hoever had killed the big man had also searched ie place. The drapes had been yanked aside, and om where I stood I could see into the shadowy study. skirted around the dead man and turned on the udy light. The room was a shambles.

But I had nothing of value. They had the wrong otion of what Webster had come here for. Like erything else, this was a gigantic mistake.

Then in the house somebody called: "Molly?"

I stood rigid. Had the murderer come back?

"Molly, are you home?"

I knew that voice. It was not one to fear. I ent to the living room.

Mr. Stockton was coming through the hall door. His round figure stopped in the doorway. His eyes ere fixed with horror on the dead man on the floor, hen slowly they lifted to me.

"My God, Molly!" he said.

Mr. Stockton came all the way into the room.

"Phil Hotch," he muttered, more to himself than o me. "He ties in with Cook, of course."

I leaned against the table and watched him.

"Don't be funny sister. You know what I mean Cook came here for it.".....

Somehow the sight of the little lawyer had downed my rising hysteria.

"Whom did you say?" I asked.

"Phil Hotch. He was one of Arnie Lehm's gunmen. When Lehm was killed, Hotch transferred allegiance to Cook. But you must know that."

"Why should I?" I said testily. "I never saw him before in my life."

Mr. Stockton's grave eyes rested on my face. "Hotch was one of Cook's gangster associates. In some way that must be connected with the reason why you stuck that knife into him."

"I didn't kill him," I said, and I had to fight down the hysterical laughter which welled up inside of me. So often since last night I had repeated those words, and now I was saying them again about another man. Mr. Stockton hadn't believed me then and he wasn't believing me now.

"I suppose another mysterious assailant murdered him while you watched," he sneered.

"I didn't watch. Hotch wanted me to tell him

where something was and he hurt my arm and I fainted. When I recovered, he was dead."

"Something ?" Mr. Stockton's voice was suddenly eager. "What did he want ?"

"He didn't say."

Mr. Stockton sighed. "I don't understand you, Molly. Your imagination is too involved. I've tried to help you and George, and I'm trying to help you now, but you make it difficult. A simple self-defence plea would have explained both the murders to the satisfaction of the police. I believe it's not yet too late for that."

"No ! That wouldn't be the truth." I pushed myself away from the table. "Why are you so anxious to have me confess to murders I didn't commit ?"

"I'm trying to help you, Molly."

"I wonder." Horrifying, frightening thoughts swirled through my mind. "Would the murderer act any differently from you ? He would want me to confess to the murders."

His mouth fell open. "Good lord, you're not implying that I am—"

The ringing of the doorbell cut him off.

I stood very still, listening, waiting. Whoever entered the house would see the murdered man, and Lieutenant Bolland would come soon after and he would no more readily believe the truth than he had before.

The bell rang again.

Mr. Stockton said wearily : "You'd better answer it Molly, or I'll have to. I have my career to consider. I cannot afford—"

I went into the hall and opened the door. It wa not locked.

Detective Taylor stood there, his squat bod bulging the too-tight clothes. He swept off his ha and said good-evening.

I stepped a little to my left so that my bod blocked his view of the living room. I could not thin of words. There were too many choices: the trut or a self-defence plea or.....

"This call is strictly unofficial, Mrs. Hubbard, Taylor was saying. "I'm in the doghouse down a headquarters because I left the front of this hous for a couple of minutes last night. I read your state ment and I figure maybe there's something in it. I I could crack the case, everything would be all right.'

I hardly heard him. I was thinking : What wil the truth mean to him and the other people ? Wil it save George ?

Mr. Stockton joined us in the foyer. "Aren't yo asking the detective in, Molly ?" he said quietly.

There was nothing else I could do then. Mr Stockton was so anxious to protect his own skin tha he had taken the matter out of my hand. I turned and walked into the living room. I heard Taylor clos the door and follow me. Then he said, "Ah!" and brushed past me and knelt beside the dead man.

"Phil Hotch!" he grunted. "Right through the ticker." His eyes lifted to me. "This your knife?"

"It was in the kitchen drawer."

Taylor slid his hand around the knife and under the dead man's left shoulder and pulled out a heavy revolver. Then he stood up. "All right, Mrs. Hubbard. Why did you do it ?"

CHAPTER—VI

I TOLD him what had happened.

His face did not disbelieve me, nor believe me either. It showed nothing.

He turned to Mr. Stockton. "How do you come into this ?"

"I arrived only a minute or two ago. I was about to telephone the police when you rang the bell."

"Maybe". Taylor waved the dead gangster's gun. "Both of you sit down on the couch."

We obeyed. Taylor pulled a chair over to the table and sat down facing us. He took an automatic pistol out of his pocket and placed both guns in front of him on the table. Without hurry he lit a cigarette.

Mr. Stockton said : "What are you up to ? Your first duty is to notify the Homicide Bureau. The telephone is in the hall."

"Phil Hotch will keep a little while longer." He blew smoke in our direction. "Like I told Mrs. Hubbard, I'm in the doghouse. None of us is going anywhere till I get to the bottom of this and put myself right with Lieutenant Bolland. If I find out what Cook and Hotch were after, maybe I'll have what I need."

"This is outrageous!" Mr. Stockton protested, starting to rise.

Taylor touched one of the guns. "Sit down !" Mr. Stockton sat hurriedly.

"That's better," Taylor said. "Now, Mrs. Hubbard, it stands to reason it was something Cook left with you when he went to jail. Where is it?"

"He left nothing."

"You'll tell me." He glanced at the dead man. "I'm the first cop on the scene. I can make it self-defence or I can make it murder. Which do you want it to be ?"

My heart stopped beating. I stared at the detective. It was as if his words were a key which unlocked a door, and the door was suddenly wide open to show me the real truth.

"You are the first cop on the scene," I heard myself say in a voice that did not sound like my own. "You were also the first cop on the scene after Webster Cook was murdered. You were only a block away when you heard the shots—or said you heard them. You said you rushed right over. But you could have been even nearer than that."

The room became very quiet. I could hear two passing women talking outside in the street.

Taylor leaned against the table. "So what ?"

"Lieutenant Bolland mentioned the terrific coin-

He swung the gun on Taylor, fired hastily. Taylor cursed, his face went white, his gun dropped to the floor.....

cidence of my leaving the house last night exactly during those few minutes that you were gone," I said. "It wasn't coincidence. You were outside when Webster Cook left this house. You followed him. You got ahead of him and knocked him out when he passed the hedge. Then I came along with the brief-case. You thought whatever you wanted was in the brief-case. **Webster Cook** alive might be a menace to you, so you shot him with my gun."

Taylor laughed, but his forehead glistened with sweat. "I'd just had coffee around the corner."

"Not then," I said. "Perhaps the police didn't bother to check up with the drugstore. Perhaps you had been there a few minutes earlier and the clerk wouldn't remember the exact time. That's only a part of it. You...."

"Shut up, Molly!" Mr. Stockton cried.

He was leaning toward me with no colour in his

round face or blood in his lips. For all he meant to me at that moment, he might have been something in stone. I turned back to Taylor, my mind having closed over one single idea, the truth, which had to be said at last at all cost.

"I saw the murderer run off with the brief-case and gun," I went on. "Yet when the police came—which means you and then the rest—the brief-case was there and also the gun with the finger-prints wiped off. You were the only one who could have dropped them there when you came back. You didn't want the thousand dollars in the brief-case. You were after so much more that you could spare that much to help frame me for the murder."

"Molly, for God's sake!" Mr. Stockton wailed.

Taylor was watching me the way a cat watches a mouse.

I could not help myself. The story was spilling out by itself.

"This afternoon Phil Hotch came here for the same thing, whatever it is," I said. "He searched the house. When he couldn't find it, he tried to force me to tell him. Then you arrived, also to search for it. You killed Hotch. When you couldn't find it either, you waited outside for me to recover. You intended to intimidate me into telling you".

Taylor said tightly: "All right, I'm intimidating you. You're a smart woman, Mrs. Hubbard. Be smart and tell me".

Involuntarily my eyes lifted to the mantel behind him. That was something else I had learned since the door to the facts had been unlocked. Then I realized my mistake and dropped my gaze.

But not soon enough. Taylor made a sound in his throat and twisted in the chair. The back of his head was in line with the plaster head on the mantel.

He was grinning when he turned back at me. "I'm a dope. In the statement you made at headquarters you said Cook came here last night to buy that piece of sculpture from you. I thought it was something you made up, because there didn't seem any sense to it. But now I know better. We both do, don't we, Mrs. Hubbard?"

At my side Mr. Stockton moaned. And all at once I understood what I had done to Mr. Stockton and myself. What good would the truth be now?

Taylor picked up Hotch's revolver and rose to his feet. Without taking his eyes off us, he backed

toward the fireplace. For a moment I thought he would stumble over the dead man and wondered if I could reach the other gun on the table. But he avoided the obstacle and came back to the table with the plaster head. He turned it upside down.

"Plugged on the bottom," he said, pleased. "The sculptor didn't do it that way. These things come hollow, otherwise they'd crack. They make the figure out of clay and then cast it with a thin layer of plaster. Plenty of room inside".

He turned the head back on its base and struck it sharply with the stock of the revolver. The plaster cracked. Many times he smashed at it with the gun until the head fell apart.

Money lay among the shattered pieces. There were perhaps a hundred bills. It was enough money to make Taylor murder twice and murder again.

Sheer astonishment caused Mr. Stockton's moans to cease. "I see it now", he muttered. "Cook was supposed to be broke when he went to jail. He was careful not to leave his money around so that the Government could get him on an income tax evasion charge when he was released. While he was out on bail, he turned every cent he possessed into large bills and stuffed them into that head."

But he had been sure that the head and I would be waiting for him when he came out. He hadn't known that I would divorce him while he was in prison.

Taylor was gathering up the money, stuffing it into his pockets. "Cook was smart, but he made one mistake", he gloated. "Some of the boys, including Phil Hotch, met him yesterday morning. They had a few drinks. Cook boasted that he was well fixed. He told them that his former wife had kept his money for him in a safe hiding place in her house, and that he would have no trouble getting it."

The lines of his face tensed; sweat again appeared on his forehead. "It's your tough luck, Mrs. Hubbard, that I drew a blank the first time. Now it's me or you, and it won't be me".

"You can't do it!" Mr. Stockton moaned crazily. "I swear neither of us will ever tell."

"Not good enough. Why should I take the chance? Anyway, Mrs. Hubbard will talk plenty to save her husband. Too bad about you, Stockton, but it's not my fault you came in here."

"You'll be executed!" Mr. Stockton cried.

"Not the way I'll arrange it. I'll shoot her with Hotch's gun and you with my gun. I'm the first on the scene again. You stabbed Hotch and then used his gun to shoot Mrs. Hubbard. I came in in time to give it to you. The idea will be that you're the one who was after Cook's dough, but couldn't find it. Nobody will be able to find it because I'll have it."

I closed my eyes. Let it come. I was no longer afraid. Because when I died, George would live. Taylor's story would clear George.

"Good-bye, George, darling," I said, and waited.

A new voice came to my ears.

"Nice work, Taylor. No need to try to make Stockton confess. We've got the goods on him. I take back what I said — and I'm damn glad I gave you the chance to make good for that cup of coffee."

My eyes opened in astonishment. Lieutenant Bolland stood just inside the living room, a very erect, gray-haired man with a hand in one pocket. Taylor was looking at him and grinning.

"Thanks, boss," he said.

I screamed. Mr. Stockton was drawing a gun from his pocket, his face full of a fury I had never seen on human features before. He swung the gun on Taylor, fired hastily. Taylor cursed, his face went white, his gun dropped to the floor. He grabbed one bloody hand in the other and stood there, as though shocked into inaction. Lieutenant Bolland was jerking at his own pocket, but the gun he was trying to pull out was stuck. Mr. Stockton saw it too. He whirled toward me — fired.

Everything went black as I sank down. All I heard was the shot from Mr. Stockton's gun, then two more shots, heavier, more blasting. Then all faded out.

Voices seemed far away, and for a few seconds I didn't recognize them. Then I knew all at once that it was Lieutenant Bolland talking. "....most caught us both off guard that time. He was plenty slick, Taylor. But it's plain, now, that you were right in that one vital point; Stockton, being a lawyer while Cook was operating, was the only man who could have known, or guessed, that Webster Cook had money his shady operations had gotten him hidden away somewhere. He thought he had it when he killed Cook, then found out his mistake. So he had to try several times more...."

I opened my eyes. Stockton's body was lying on the floor, contorted in what certainly was death. My head was on Lieutenant Bolland's knee. Taylor was wrapping a handkerchief around his bleeding hand. I looked up at Lieutenant Bolland. "Is *that* the way it happened?" I asked.

"Yes," he said. "That's the way it happened. And he almost murdered all three of us and came out of it a hero — except that he couldn't shoot as fast and straight as he could figure!"

A CASE FOR THE PYJAMAS

By Kaun

IN his letter inviting me to send something for the Annual Number, the Editor suggested that "it should be topical and of general interest." What he meant was that he would like me to talk of either of two things, (a) the vanishing of the *hilsa* from the Ganga, and (b) the "pyjamas" question.

I have not the heart to talk "fish". What's the use? What's the use of remembering "kisses by hopeless fancy feigned on lips that are for others"? That was Tennyson. Confucius said the same thing in Chinese. "*Ilse* deferred maketh the heart sick." He knew. A great lover of *ilse* was the great Confucius.

That left me holding the pyjamas. Ladies' pyjamas,—if you wish to know. Actually, the ball was set rolling by two ladies in the "Women's Page" of this paper. "*Should Our Ladies Wear Pyjamas In The House*?" was the "bone" on the carpet. Two of the species said "Yes!" But others started mewling in a different key, and there was a *melange* of many voices after that.

Let me say outright,—without further fancy footwork on the parquet,—that I am with the "Ayes." For ladies in the house, pyjamas are the only wear.

Wait now. I have to settle this hubbub rising up a hundred oesophaguses at this point. "*What business is it of a man of my age to blather about ladies' toggery?*" Every business. It is only a man of my age who can handle ladies' pyjamas without slobbering in the mouth and looking like a lamb caught eating meat.

Myself, I have caught a "lamb" or two at "Eating" ladies' pyjamas. Lambs out of school. left school long ago.

And then: "*What Next? Put our mothers a grandmothers in pyjamas !!!* Is the man mad?"..a other noises. Oh yes, I can hear you alright. I a not deaf.

Now, don't start throwing a thousand fits y Pipe down. Take it easy. Who said anything abo putting grandmothers in pyjamas? Not I. I wou be the last person to try putting grandmothers pyjamas. I know the dear old souls,———friends *my* youth,———know the darlings too well to t anything so silly as that. They would bite your he off,———and keep it for lunch.

No. I woud let sleeping grandmothers lie. Nor a I talking to the mothers. My business is with n grand - daughters, and grand - daughters-in-la lassies of 30, 35, and thereabouts. To them I spea And, for heavens' sake, be patient till the last.

* * *

Let me clarify it a little more to plug the troubl makers' mouths. I am not suggesting the pyjamas f *all* hours and *all* times. Not, for instance, for brid wear. Nor for "socials" and ceremonies. There is a hour for pyjamas, and an hour for the sari. And a hour for playing. My sole point is, there is nothi to beat the pyjamas purely for house-work. That for ladies who work.

Take the "economics", first. Did you know th quality for quality, the "over-all" cost of pyjam would cost no more than saris? Stitched at hom two pairs of pyjamas would cost about the same two saris. And they would last for the same time a

f not longer than, the saris. I know what I am talking about. I have worn both.

So far, there is no saving, that is, in an "over-all" heck-up. I know. *But what about the "under-all"?* You see, the point for the pyjamas is that there is no 'under-all' to pyjamas. What they call the "petticoat." Work it out for yourself,———with a tape and a measurable model. See how much you save.

But this saving in base lucre is mere chicken-feed to the saving in trouble and time. The pro-pyjamites say that the sari is a nuisance for housework. They are perfectly right.

Take, to start with, the professional side. I am talking of the Bengalee woman's profession,——cooking. She does it, as you know, not standing,——as Bengalee *"ladies"* do,———but squatting on her heels. But can she just pop into the kitchen and get down to her heels? No, she can't. She has to prepare herself for the process.

She does a lot. She hitches up here and pulls down three,———feels all over the terrain to make sure that everything is in order before she starts to bend. Encased in pyjamas, she has to take none of this trouble. She just flops down,———without a thought, without a care. Work out the saving in time, trouble, and temper.

Supposing there is a box to get down from the loft, or a "dead" electric bulb pulled out of the pendent. What happens? True, there is a ladder. But does she clamber up the rungs like a good little girl and bring the thing down? No. I have to leave *my* couch and do it for her. Why? Why must she be at a male's mercy for little jobs like that?

In the interior, it is a standing grievance of the wives that the men would climb up to the top of the roof at the slightest sign of domestic disagreement with the sure knowledge that no sari can follow them there. In my 16 years' life up North, I never saw a single adult male on a roof. Need I say why?

I mention this for the special attention of the lady from Rourkela who wrote on the subject the other day that "even those brave women of our country who fought in the battle-fields and whose exploits are recorded in history used sari." But did she care to note the way they used the sari for the fighting?

What chance would the men have on the tree-tops at League Final matches once the women start wearing the sari as the "brave women of our country" wore them? But what's the sense in the camouflage? Why not make short work of the business and have the legs stitched up as we men do?

Only the other day, you read about a lady catching hold of another in a train because the latter was about to relieve a third lady of her necklace or something. The catcher caught the catchee by the end of her sari,———confident in her belief that she couldn't possibly run away leaving her sari behind.

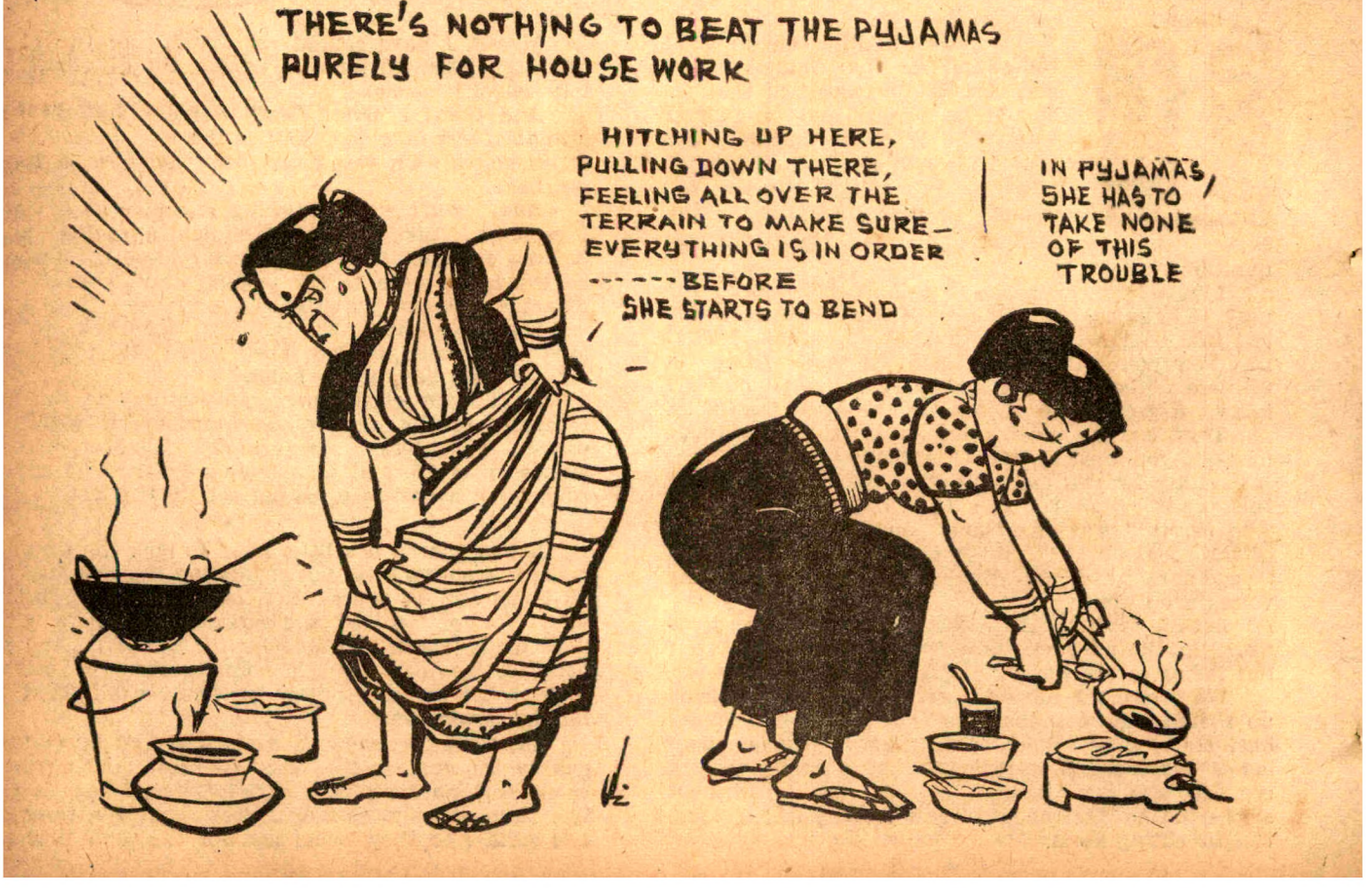
And that was exactly what she did. The catcher was left holding the sari whilst the catchee got away clad in the pyjamas she wore under the sari. Later, it transpired that every lady member of the Kepmari Klan wore pyjamas under the sari,———for emergencies like that. That shows, ———or doesn't it?

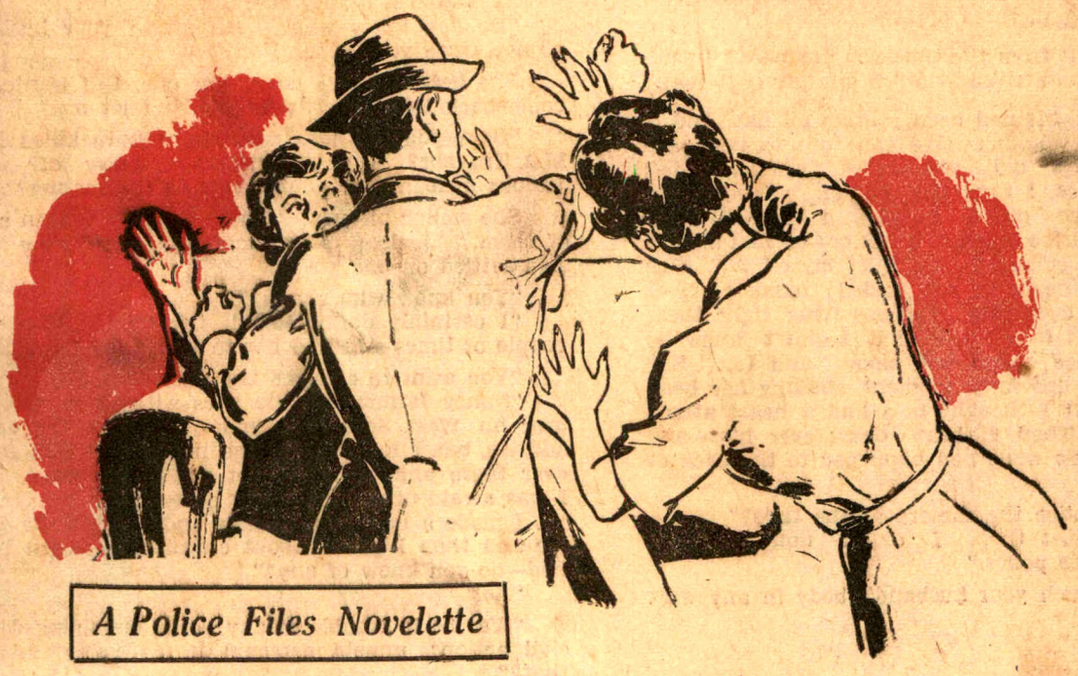
There is, of course, the aesthetic side. There is the view that say what I will, pyjamas are not for all stomachs. I agree. No use denying that there are stomachs *and* stomachs. I have seen both kinds. And not stomachs only. *"One should take an all round view to reach a correct decision."* By all means go all round before deciding. With a tape, as I said.

If the "over-all" is found too expansive,——drop the pyjamas at once. The idea, I mean.

But thus far and no further. For, this is approaching the lambs' pastures. What can I have to say about the aesthetics of the pyjamas? What, indeed? If you want the real dope, ask the lambs. Or, ask their leader, Chhichhitra. Could you ever dream of what our Chhichhitra had to show till she came out in Ava Gardner's pyjamas?

Get thee to a cinema, go, and listen to her airing her views. And what "views"!———and what an airing!.





A Police Files Novelette

MURDER with a CAMERA

By JONATHAN CRAIG

THE bedroom was small and hot and humid, and the unmade bed on which I sat had a slightly dank smell, as if the linens had not been changed for a long time. I crossed one knee over the other, took out my notebook, and glanced at the girl who sat on the straight chair near the window. She was facing me, but her eyes kept straying to the door that led to the living room, as if she were straining to hear every sound the technical laboratory men and the Assistant Medical Examiner made as they worked over her husband's body.

"You feel a little better now, Mrs. Traynor?" I asked.

Her eyes met mine for a moment, then strayed back to the door again. "Yes."

I studied her. She was somewhere in her middle twenties, an exceptionally pretty girl with blue eyes and dark brown hair. But there was something about her eyes and the set of her mouth that, even now, was almost hard.

"Would you mind telling me about it again?" I asked.

She moistened her lips, still looking at the door. "I've already told you. Mel didn't answer the door, so I let myself in with my key—and there he was."

"Did you phone him before you came over?"

"No."

"Why not?"

Her eyes swung back to mine. "He was still my husband, wasn't he? Since when do women have to make appointments to see their own husbands?"

"Just take it easy, Mrs. Traynor", I said gently. "I'm merely trying to—"

"Well, I didn't phone him. I'd been out walking and thinking things over, and I decided to stop by and talk to him. I do that a lot—walk in the rain, I mean." Her voice was even and unhurried, but very taut and thin, as if she were having trouble keeping a rein on her emotions.

"You've been separated—four months, was it?"

"That's right; four months. I left him in February."

"Why?"

"I thought it might jar some sense into him."

"In what way?"

"What way do you think?"

"Look, Mrs. Traynor", I said, "I don't like to press you at a time like this, but—"

"I left him because he couldn't remember he was married," she said. "Oh, I'm not saying it was all his fault. Mel was one of these men that women just naturally go for. They wouldn't let him alone; God knows why. He was nothing but a bum, and that's all he ever would have been—a bum."

"What line of work was Mr. Traynor in?"

"Work? Mel? You must be kidding. Mel Traynor quit his job two months after we were married, and he never worked another day. That was three years ago, and the only money he's had since was what I gave him and whatever he got from the other

women he fooled around with. All I ever gave him was enough for a bottle of whiskey and a couple of rolls of film a week. He got the rest of it from those other women. Can you imagine that? I'd give him money for film and then he'd turn right around and use it up taking pictures of other women."

"Let's take it from the time you got here," I said. "You told me you arrived at a few minutes past four."

She nodded. "It had been raining all day, and I knew that Mel wouldn't have gone out to take pictures. He always did, you know, whenever the weather was nice. I rang the buzzer a couple of times. When he didn't answer, I thought that may be he'd had too much to drink or—or that may be he had, well, company. So I let myself in." She paused staring down at her folded hands. "I—I almost tripped over him. He was lying right there by the door, just to one side of it. I didn't know he was dead. There wasn't any blood, and I..." She compressed her lips for a moment, shaking her head slowly. "At first I thought he'd had a heart attack or something. Then I bent down over him—and that's when I saw what had happened to the back of his head."

"Did you notice the camera at the time?"

"No. Not just then. I didn't notice it until after I called the police."

"Did you touch your husband's body in any way, Mrs. Traynor?"

"No."

"Or the camera?"

"No."

"What'd you do when you realised Mr. Traynor was dead?"

"I told you. I called the police."

"I mean before you called the police."

"Nothing. I went straight to the phone."

"You didn't go into any of the other rooms first? Back here to the bedroom, for instance?"

"No. Why in the world would I do a thing like that?"

"Well, for one thing it might have occurred to you that your husband's killer was still in the apartment."

She stared at me, her eyes rounding a little. "I—I never thought of that. I was too stunned."

"I see."

"If I'd thought anything like that, I'd have run out of the apartment and called from some place else."

"You say Mr. Traynor had no income, other than what he received from you and from other women?"

"That's right."

"You made the living for both of you?"

"Yes—I'm a beauty operator."

"Do you know who's been giving your husband money since your separation?"

She hesitated. "I have, for one. I—I wanted to come back to him, but he wouldn't let me."

"Have you any idea who might have killed him, Mrs. Traynor? Any enemies you know of? Any jealous husbands or boy friends in the picture?"

She smiled bitterly. "There must have been a lot of them. Jealous men, I meant. But lately Mel had settled on one girl."

"You know who she is?"

"I certainly do. I called her on the phone a couple of times and told her to stay away from him."

"You want to give me her name?"

"Nancy Hammond. She lives with her mother, over on West Seventy-second. I forget the exact address, but I have the phone number. I was going over there and read the riot act to her once, but I was afraid of what I might do to her."

I made a note of the name and number she gave me and then I said, "About enemies he might have had—do you know of any?"

"No."

"Was he in trouble of any kind? Gambling debts, civil actions, unpaid personal loans—anything like that?"

"No, not that I know of."

"He carry any insurance?"

She looked at me knowingly. "I was wondering when you'd get around to asking that one....No—he carried no insurance. All he had in the world was a few clothes and that camera I gave him. That Rollei."

"That what?"

"Rolleiflex. That's the kind of camera it is."

The door to the living room opened and my detective partner, Walt Logan, came in. Walt's one of these long, gaunt, scholarly-looking guys with a thin, pleasant face and a brush cut. He weighs in at about one-sixty, but every ounce of it is pure cop.

"The M. E. just finished up, Steve," he said.

I nodded and got to my feet. "Please wait here a few minutes, Mrs. Traynor," I said. "I'll be back with you as soon as I can."

CHAPTER—II

AFTER the door was shut behind us, I turned to Walt. "How close a fix have we got on the time of death?" I asked.

"The doc says it happened sometime between two and three o'clock this afternoon."

I glanced at my watch. It was a quarter of six. "Mrs. Traynor told me she got here a few minutes past four", I said. "The squeal came in at four-ten."

"Did she tell you where she was before she got here?" Walt asked.

"Yes. Walking around in the rain."

Walt smiled grimly. "She'll have to do better than that, Steve. Walking around in the rain! For God's sake."

I shrugged. "We'll see, Walt."

The Assistant Medical Examiner called to us from the far side of the living room and Walt and I walked over to where he knelt beside the dead man.

"He died from a blow or blows to the back of the head," the doc said.

"Offhand I'd say he was struck just once, but I can't be certain about that till after the autopsy. He took one beaut of a wallop, though—you don't need an autopsy to see that."

"Any doubt about the camera's being the murder weapon?" I asked.

He closed his instrument bag and snapped it shut. "Damn little, Steve. We'll have to run it through the lab, of course, but it'll be just so much lost time."

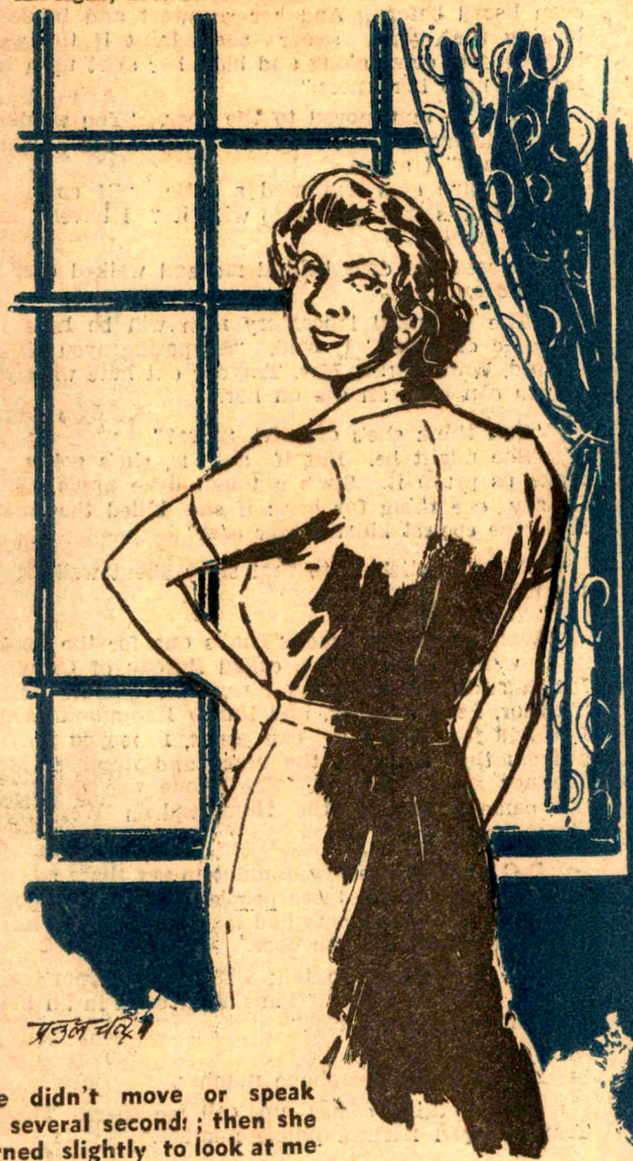
"Anything else you can tell us?" I asked.

"Did Walt give you the time limits on the time of death?"

"Yes."

"Well, that's just about all I can do for you. If I find out anything more at Bellevue, I'll let you know."

"All right, doc. Send the ambulance attendants in on your way past the wagon and I'll turn the body over to them."



She didn't move or speak for several seconds; then she turned slightly to look at me over her shoulder.....

I bent down to peer at the dead man once again. He had been about thirty-five, I guessed, a very handsome, muscular man with an unusually low forehead and a lot of thick, black hair just starting to turn grey at the temples. There was no blood on the floor, and very little on the back of his head, but there was no question about the force with which he'd been hit.

I straightened up and looked over toward the techs who were working on the camera. In its leather case, it seemed to be about six inches long and four inches wide, a sturdy, heavy reflex camera that, swung by its shoulder strap, would be capable of inflicting even more damage than Mel Traynor had suffered. If the camera had been used in that manner—swung in an arc at the end of the shoulder strap—the size and sex of the user wouldn't have made too much difference. A woman could have handled such a weapon easily, and effectively. On the other hand, if the camera had been grasped i the hand—as a brick might be grasped—the chance were that Mel Traynor's killer had been a man. doubted whether, using only the leverage of her arm a woman could have struck such a blow.

The ambulance attendants came in, put Traynor' body in a basket, signed a receipt for it, and carrie it away.

"Keep an eye on things for a while, Walt," I said "I'm going to have a couple more words with M Traynor."

Walt grinned wryly. "That's a great story sh got. 'Walking around in the rain,' Lord."

I went back into the bedroom and sat down the bed again. Mrs. Traynor had moved to t window, where she stood gazing out at the rain.

"I didn't catch your first name, Mrs. Traynor," said.

She didn't move or speak for several secon

en she turned slighty to look at me over her oulder. "Leda," she said.

"How long had you been walking around before u came here?"

She sighed and sank down on her chair again. ours," she said. "All afternoon."

"You have any idea where you were between two d three o'clock?"

She gave me that knowing look again. "Why don't u just come right out and accuse me?"

"Just a routine question, Mrs. Traynor."

"Oh, sure! Of course it is."

"Can you tell me where you were?"

She stared at me sullenly for a moment, then ked back once again at the door that led to the ing room.

"No," she said. "Not exactly. I walked along ntral Park West, and then I walked in the park a ile. I . . . . No, I can't tell you where I was ween two and three o'clock. But I can tell you e thing—I wasn't here."

"Were you in the habit of visiting your husband, s. Traynor?"

She took a deep breath and let out very slowly. es, I came by quite often. I don't know why; I just d to, that's all. I hated him, and still...Oh, I n't know just how I felt. All I know is that I uldn't stay away. I—I thought I could break off h him, but I just couldn't. He was that kind of rson—just like dope or something."

"You said Mr. Traynor was concentrating on just e girl," I said. "How do you know that ?"

"He told me so. It's funny, but you'd think a n like that would be able to lie his head off. But l couldn't. He couldn't lie at all—at least not to . He told me he wanted to marry Nancy Hammond, d that if I didn't give him a divorce he'd go out Nevada or somewhere and get one himself. That's y I called and told her to leave him alone. I ew he meant what he said, and I thought that if ould scare Nancy away from him I might have a nce of getting him back."

"Do you happen to know how Nancy felt about this?"

"She was crazy about him. I told you how he ected women. Well, this Nancy was so far gone t she wasn't even in her right mind. I walked on them once..." She paused. "God, I'll never get it. She heard Mel say my name, and realised who I was, and the first thing you know she's right on top of me with her fingernails going like a cat's. I shoved her off me, and Mel got between us, and then she just stood there calling me names I'd never even heard before. And her so sweet and innocent looking that you'd swear she'd faint if the wind happened to come along and blow her skirt up a few inches above her knees."

I got up and moved to the door. "You wouldn't mind sticking around the apartment for a while, would you?" I asked.

The blue eyes narrowed a little. "Of course I mind. What's that got to do with it ? I haven't any choice."

I closed the door behind me and walked over to Walt Logan.

"The technical laboratory men will be here for a couple of hours," I said. "Supposing you hang around, Walt. Bring Mrs. Traynor out here with you so you can keep an eye on her."

"You think she's our girl, Steve?"

"She might be. But if she is, she's going to make us prove it. She's a tough little apple, Walt. I'll say one thing for her : if she killed that man, she's the coolest killer I ever saw."

"She still sticking to that story about walking in the rain?"

"Yes."

Walt shook his head. "That's one for the book."

I went to the phone, called Bureau of Criminal Identification, and asked for run-throughs on Melvin Traynor, Leda Traynor, and Nancy Hammond. While I waited for B C I to call back, I looked up the address that matched the name and number Mrs. Traynor had given me. The phone was listed in the name of Mrs. Martha Hammond on West 72nd Street.

B C I called in a few minutes to say there was no record on any of the three people I had asked about. I thanked the officer who had made the search, hung up, and headed for the door.

"I'm going over to talk with Mr. Traynor's girl friend, Walt," I said. "If I'm not through in an hour or so, I'll give you a call."

"Check."

I gave him a telephone number.

"If anything comes up, call me there. That's Traynor's girl friend's phone number."

CHAPTER—III

I WALKED down the three flights of steps to the sidewalk and across the rain-swept street to the department sedan. As I started the motor, I glanced back at the five-story converted brownstone. Walt and I had, of course, talked to the other tenants. No one had seen or heard anything. And there was no desk, switchboard, elevator — which meant that anyone at all could er and leave unseen. All he or she would have do was push the buttons beneath a few of the ilboxes and wait for some careless tenant to ease the automatic butler. All the tenants had d, however, that they had not released the lock day.

I sat studying the house a moment longer; then ased the sedan away from the curb and started Nancy Hammond's place on 72nd Street.

The Hammond apartment was large and bright and everything in it seemed to be so new that you half expected to see a price tag here or there. It looked more like a furniture display room than it did a place to live in.

The woman who answered my ring was in her late thirties, a very blonde, very slender woman with wide-set gray eyes and full, almost pouting, lips.

I showed her my badge. "Detective Manning," I said. "Is Nancy Hammond here ?"

The woman shook her head slowly, still looking at my badge. "Why, no. She and a girl friend went to a movie."

"Do you expect her back soon?"

"Yes. Any minute now, in fact". Her eyes came up to meet mine. "I'm Nancy's mother. What did you want to see her about?"

"I wanted to ask her a few questions about a friend of hers."

"I see. . . . Well, won't you sit down?"

I sat down at one end of a long sofa and Mrs.

Hammond sat down at the other. She was studying me intentively, smiling a little to hide the concern in her eyes.

"Just what was it now?" she asked. "May be I can help you."

"May be you can. Do you know a man named Mel Traynor, Mrs. Hammond?"

The smile left her face instantly and her body seemed to tense. "Yes," she said. "I know him. . . . Or rather, I know of him." She moved a bit closer to me. "What's this all about, Mr. Manning ?"

"You don't know Mr. Traynor personally, is that it?"

"No, I don't know him. I've never seen him." She said this emphatically.

"I understand he's a special friend of your daughter's," I said.

Mrs. Hammond took a deep breath. "Yes. Unfortunately, that's the case."

"You don't care for him, I take it."

"Care for him? Indeed I do not care for him. . . . Look, Mr. Manning. . . . as Nancy's mother I feel I'm entitled to know just what this is all about."

"I'm sorry," I said. "This is police business, Mrs. Hammond. We'll have to leave the questions up to me." I paused. "Seeing you've never met Mr. Traynor, what is it you have against him?"

She looked at me fixedly for a moment. "Have you met Nancy?"

"No."

She nodded knowingly. "That explains it. Nancy is only eighteen years old, Mr. Manning. Until she met Mel Traynor, she never even knew such men existed. Her father died when she was quite young, but I brought her up in a way that would have made him proud. You'll never know—no one will ever know — the sacrifices I've made, to make sure she grew into a proper young woman . . . . And then she met this Traynor person . . . ."

"I understand they plan to get married."

"That's ridiculous!"

She studied me for several seconds, turned her eyes away, then declared: "Nancy is simply a young girl, an inexperienced girl, who has temporarily lost her head. Sooner or later she'll discover what a tragic mistake she's making even seeing Mel Traynor, and then she'll never have another thing to do with him or his kind ever again. . . . And besides, the man already has a wife. From what Nancy tells m the wife is still in love with him. She probal wouldn't give him a divorce, no matter how much was set on spoiling my daughter's life." She sighe "Only God knows what power that man has ov women. It must be almost hypnotic. Otherwise Nancy would never have been blinded to what he is

"Just what do you think he is, exactly, Mrs. Ha mond?"

"Don't you know him?"

"Not too well," I said.

"I see. Well, he's a drunkard, for one thi And he won't work. All he does is prey on womer in every way he can. That's the only thing h good for—to ruin women's lives for them. You ta Traynor's wife, for instance. Nancy tells me she's beautiful woman, and still quite young. Since she l Traynor she's met a man—a very wealthy mar mind you—who wants her to get a divorce a marry him. But do you think she will? . . . . No. Sh so hypnotised by that worthless hulk that sh willing to throw her life away for him."

"Did Nancy tell you all this, Mrs. Hammond?" said, wondering.

"Yes. Nancy and I are very close. Oh, if she co only see what this insane affair is leading to!"

"May be—"

"He's hypnotized her, I tell you. Let me give y an example of what I mean," Mrs. Hammond sa "Just about two weeks ago Traynor and Mr. Sha ley had a fight. They—"

"Mr. Shanley?"

"That's the gentleman who wants Mrs. Tray to get a divorce and marry him. Carl Shanley."

I wrote the name down in my notebook. " right, Mrs. Hammond," I said. "Go on."

"Well, as I say, they had this fight. It was o Mrs. Traynor, of course. I wasn't there, but I'm s it was all Mel Traynor's fault. At any rate, Mr. Sha ley knocked him down. Oh, he wasn't hurt v much, and I'm sure Mr. Shanley wouldn't have him too hard, but you should have seen the w Nancy carried on. It was almost unbelievable. H the man had received nothing more than a scrat you might say, hardly hurt at all. But Nancy thoug the world was coming to an end. She even called ambulance. Can you imagine ? And for a week ten days after that, there was no consoling her. S was sure the man had a fractured skull, or a co cussion, or something like that. She simply worri herself sick."

"What else can you tell me about Mr. Shanley I asked.

"Very little, I'm afraid."

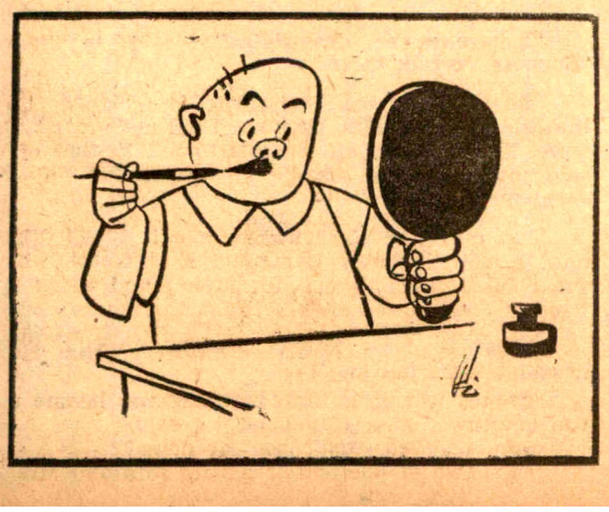
"You ever hear of Traynor having trouble wi anyone else?"

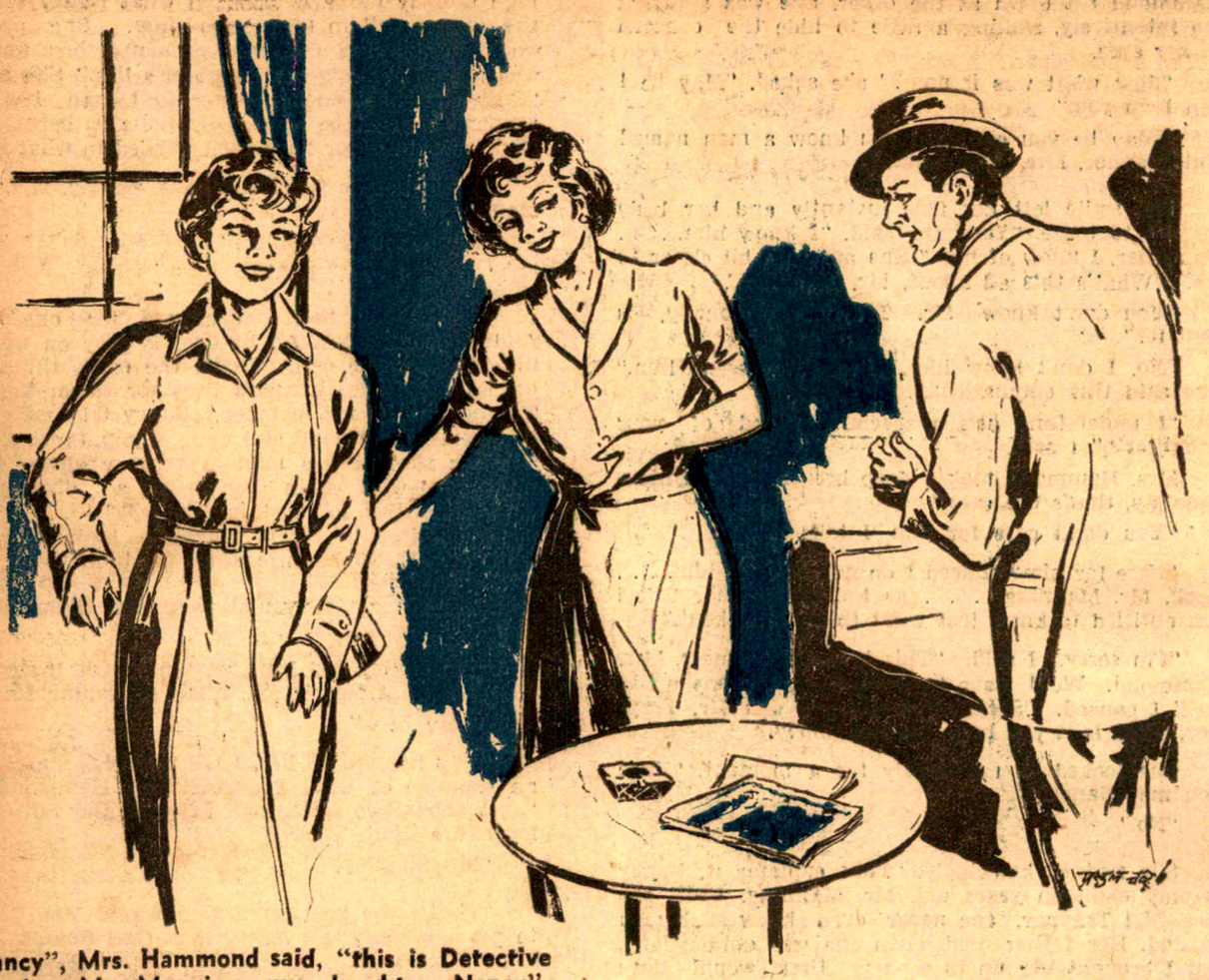
"Other than with Mr. Shanley, you mean?"

"Yes."

She shook her head, and it seemed to me th she did it hesitantly. "No," she said.

The hall door opened and a young girl came Like Mrs. Hammond, she had wide-set gray ey





'Nancy", Mrs. Hammond said, "this is Detective Manning. Mr. Manning, my daughter Nancy".

very full lips, and blonde hair. A real beauty, who resembled Mrs. Hammond so strongly that she might have been a younger sister.

Both Mrs. Hammond and I got to our feet.

The girl smiled at Mrs. Hammond and then at me.

"Nancy," Mrs. Hammond said, "this is Detective Manning. Mr. Manning, my daughter Nancy."

Nancy and I nodded to each other. She looked at me inquiringly as she slipped out of an old-fashioned raincoat, which seemed to be a size or so too large for her.

"Mr. Manning has been waiting for you, dear," Mrs. Hammond said. "He wants to ask you a few questions about Mel Traynor."

CHAPTER–IV

NANCY froze, one arm still in a sleeve of the raincoat, staring at me. "About Mel? What—What's happened to him?"

I crossed over to where she stood. "I wonder if I could talk to you privately, Miss Hammond?" I said.

She took a short step toward me. "I asked you a question. Why don't you answer me?"

"Perhaps I will," I said. "Where can we talk?"

Nancy hesitated for a moment, biting at her lower lip.

"Really, now," Mrs. Hammond said from across the room. "Isn't this just a bit highhanded, Mr. Manning?"

"I have a car downstairs," I said to Nancy. "Suppose we talk there."

She surprised me. She shrugged, slipped back into the raincoat. Mrs. Hammond did not protest any more. Nancy and I left the apartment. Neither of us said anything more until we were seated in the department sedan.

The rain had slackened to a soft grey drizzle now. I offered Nancy Hammond a cigarette, which she refused, then lit one for myself and rolled the window down a few inches to let the smoke escape.

"What is it?" Nancy Hammond said. "For heaven's sake, tell me!"

"Things will go a little better if you let me ask the questions, Miss Hammond," I said.

"Oh? Well, just who are you to drag me out of

my home and talk to me this way? What gives you the right to ask me anything?"

"I'm a policeman," I said. "I don't like this any better than you do, but it's my job, and it has to be done. We can talk here, or we can talk down at the station house. It's up to you."

Nancy's eyes flared angrily for an instant, but she said nothing at all.

"Your mother tells me you took in a movie this afternoon," I said.

"Did she?"

"A little co-operation will go a long way, Miss Hammond."

"Will it?"

I looked at her, then leaned forward to turn on the ignition. "As I said," I told her, "it's up to you. We'll talk at the station house."

"Oh, all right," she said, as if she were placating a very small boy. "Yes, I went to a movie. What about it?"

"What time did you go into the theatre ?"

"About one-thirty."

"You're sure?"

"Yes, of course."

"Anyone with you?"

"No."

"Your mother mentioned another girl."

"I was supposed to meet her out front, but she didn't show up."

"What theatre did you go to ?"

"The Beacon."

I didn't ask her what picture she'd seen. If it proved necessary to check out her alibi, the picture would be only one detail among many.

"You stayed for the complete show?" I asked.

"Yes." She spoke woodenly, as if she were determined to show no further emotion, or even interest.

"And then?"

"Then I went into a little bar near there and had a drink or so."

"Then?"

"Then I went to another place — Corcy's — and had dinner." She turned toward me suddenly. "The least you could do is tell me what I'm suspected of and tell me what about Mel, for God's sake!"

"I didn't say you were suspected of anything, Miss Hammond. I merely—"

"Mel!" she gasped. "Something's happened to him and you think that I . . . !" She grasped my arm with both hands. "What *is* it? What's happened to him?"

"What I said about the questions still goes, Miss Hammond," I said. "I'm sorry, but that's the way it'll have to be till I've asked you what I must."

"But—"

"Is Mel Traynor your only boy friend, Miss Hammond?"

It took her a few moments to regain control of herself. Then I felt the pressure of her fingers on my arm relax and she drew as far away from me as she could get.

"We're going to get married," she said. "Does that answer your question ?"

"Not entirely. Girls have been known to have friends other than the man they intend to marry."

"The only other man I ever see at all is Bill Kelbert. And I wouldn't see even him if Mother didn't insist on it."

"Does Traynor know about this Bill Kelbert?"

Of course. I tell him everything."

"And he doesn't mind?"

"Do you think I'd see him against Mel's wishes? He doesn't mind because he knows I see Bill just to pacify Mother. Mother wants me to marry Bill."

"I see ..... Does Bill know about Traynor?"

"Certainly."

"How does he feel about it?"

"What does it matter how he feels? He's a very wealthy man. He could have almost any girl he wanted."

I got out my notebook again. "What's Bill's address, Miss Hammond?"

She gave it to me and I wrote it down.

"I guess that'll be all for right now," I said. "Thanks very much, Miss Hammond."

She sat waiting tensely for me to tell her about Traynor. Then it dawned on her that I wasn't going to. Then Nancy opened the door on her side, glaring back at me over her shoulder.

She jumped out of the car and slammed the door shut so hard that I wondered why the glass didn't shatter.

I watched her running back to her apartment house, the raincoat flapping against the backs of her legs, and then I started the motor and headed for Mel Traynor's brownstone.

The apartment was filled with police brass, reporters, and men from the District Attorney's office. I called Walt Logan outside to talk to him.

"How'd you make out?" Walt asked.

"Traynor could pick the hard ones," I said. "If you think his wife's cool, you should see his girl friend."

"You get any leads?"

"A couple. Mrs. Traynor had some guy pretty hot after her. A man named Carl Shanley. Seems he wanted her to get a divorce and marry him. She do any talking after I left, Walt?"

"Not a word. Cool — like you said."

"Well, this guy Shanley and her husband had a fight. She didn't mention it to me, probably because she was trying to protect Shanley. That's lead number one."

"What's the other one?"

"Somebody named William Kelbert. A very wealthy guy, I understand. He wanted Nancy Hammond, but she didn't want him. It looks like Mel Traynor really had the ladies, Walt. Once he got them, he had them for keeps."

"This is the kind of case that'll spread out all over the place," Walt said. "The technical laboratory men haven't come up with a single good print. Funny, how you hardly ever get good ones. All they've been able to lift are partials."

"The D.A.'s men giving you a bad time?"

"Not yet."

"Well, there's no point in both of us hanging around here. I want to talk to Shanley and Kelbert. Especially Mr. Shanley."

"He's the one that had the fight with Traynor, right?"

"Yes."

"You want me to keep Mrs. Traynor here?"

"Yes. At least until she starts to balk. Holding her wouldn't be worth the trouble it would cost us; and besides, we can pick her up again fast enough."

Walt nodded. "Give me a call if you get anything. I've got a hunch we'll be around here quite a while."

CHAPTER—V

I DROVE back to the station house, spent ten minutes briefing the squad commander, and went to work.

I called the Bureau of Criminal Identification again and asked for run-throughs on Carl Shanley and William Kelbert. Then, while I waited for BCI, I called Bellevue and asked to speak to the assistant Medical Examiner who was performing the autopsy on Mel Traynor's body. The assistant M. E. told me he had proceeded far enough to confirm his theory that Traynor had been killed by a single blow to the back of the head, but that nothing could be considered official until after the autopsy had been completed. The autopsy itself would take another hour or so, and the toxicological examinations would probably take at least another twenty-four hours. So far, the only statement the toxicologists could make with certainty was that Mel Traynor, at the time of his murder, had been completely sober. There had been no trace of alcohol in his blood at all. Later examinations would determine the presence or absence of drugs or poisons.

I hung up, typed out reports of my findings, and prepared a folder to hold the flood of subsequent reports, statements, miscellaneous documents and so on which would result from the investigations.

I'd just placed the folder in file when BCI called to say that William Kelbert had checked out clean but that Carl Shanley — Mrs. Traynor's boy friend— had a record. He had been arrested for assault twice, once in 1951 and again in 1954. In both instances he had seriously injured men with his fists, and both of his victims had had to be hospitalized. Both men had sworn that Shanley had attacked them without provocation. Shanley on his part, had sworn that the men had made slurring references to the woman he happened to be escorting at the time. The women, in both cases, had denied this. Shanley had drawn a fine and a suspended sentence in the first case; in the second, the charge had been dropped because the complainant had left the country before Shanley could be prosecuted.

I decided Shanley might be a very good man to talk to, and went to see him. He shared an apartment with another man on East Sixty-fourth Street. His roommate told me that Shanley had not gone to his office that day, saying he was sick with a hangover, and had left the apartment about noon. He hadn't told his roommate where he was going, and he hadn't returned. The roommate told me of two places where Shanley sometimes went to cure his hangovers, and gave me a complete physical description of him. I checked both bars. Shanley had been in neither place. This, the barmen told me, was unusual, because Shanley seldom missed a day spending an hour or so in each place. I then called Communications and asked that an alarm be got out for him.

I drew another blank with William Kelbert, the man whom Nancy Hammond had jilted for Mel Traynor. Kelbert lived at an exclusive club on East Fiftieth, but he had not been seen since shortly after breakfast. He had asked one of the employees at the club to check plane schedules to St. Louis, but had changed his mind before the employee could follow through A few minutes later he ad asked the same employee to get him one orchestra ticket for a Broadway show that night, and had then left the club. He was in the habit of leaving telephone numbers where he might be reached, but today he had neglected to do that.

I called BCI once more and asked for an alarm on Kelbert. Then I called Walt Logan to see if there had been any developments at Mel Traynor's apartment. There had not been. Everyone except Walt, Mrs. Traynor, and two uniform men had left. I told Walt to leave one of the uniform men as a stakeout, take Mrs. Traynor home, with a strong suggestion that she stay there until she heard from us, and then meet me at the squad room.

Walt arrived about thirty minutes later. It was then half past eleven.

"We're going to have to drag in some more men on this, Walt," I said. I told him about having put out alarms for Shanley and Kelbert and that, so far, they hadn't been picked up. "We've got some likely suspects, and that's all. We haven't got a damned thing on any one of them."

"And no prints," Walt said. "No prints, and no clues whatever. A sweet little case, Steve, no kidding."

"We've got to start the old leg work," I said. "We'll ask Headquarters for a dozen men, to start with. If that doesn't do it, we'll get some more. We've got to re-question everybody in that apartment house, and everyone else around there who might have seen someone go in or out. And we'd better send some men around to the cab companies to check their trip sheets. That's a tough job, but it'll have to be done. We'll have to check out every pickup or discharge made within a block of that address between, say, noon and four-fifteen. If we still don't get anywhere, we'll have to start questioning everybody Mel Traynor knew."

By the time I had called Headquarters for additional detectives and given assignments to each of them, it was after one o'clock in the morning. We worked steadily throughout the night, and at daybreak we were no further along, so far as clues were concerned, than we had been when we began. I had staked out patrolmen at Carl Shanley's apartment and William Kelbert's club, but neither man had returned. I had also checked with the airlines to see whether Kelbert had carried through on his trip to St. Louis. There was no record of a reservation or the purchase of a ticket.

At seven-ten, I received word that William Kelbert had called his club from Philadelphia, asking that some papers be forwarded to him there. I long-distanced the Philadelphia police, who were able in a short time to establish the fact that Kelbert had gone to Philadelphia by train to wind up a business matter, but had become so involved that he had spent the day there and stayed overnight to complete the transaction this morning. During the time of the murder, Kelbert had been in the company of four other men.

At a few minutes past ten, we got a call from one of the detectives who were checking the cab drivers' trip sheets. I wrote down the information he gave me, then hung up and grinned at Walt Logan.

"You can say all you want about scientific police investigation, Walt, but there's nothing will ever replace routine."

Walt came over and leaned up against the edge of my desk. "What've we got?"

"A cab driver with a good memory," I said, handing Walt the note I'd made. "Let's go talk to him."

CHAPTER—VI

WE needed to talk to the driver only a few minutes before we knew we were on the right track. We took the driver with us to the Ansonia post office sub-station, where he had picked up the fare he drove to the corner of 72nd Street and Central Park West the previous afternoon at 2-15. We talked with several people at the post office, and then — still in company with the cab driver — drove to the apartment Nancy Hammond shared with her mother.

We arrived there at noon. Mrs. Hammond let us in, glanced questioningly at the cab driver in his cap and leather jacket, and then turned to me.

"I'm sorry," she said, "but Nancy isn't home. You'll have to come back later."

"It isn't Nancy we want to see, Mrs. Hammond," I said.

She frowned. "Oh?"

I looked at the cab driver. "How about it, Mr. Laney?"

"This is the lady, chief," he said firmly. "I'd swear to it."

"Thank you very much," I said. "You can go back to work now, if you like. We'll let you know when we want you."

"Just say the word, chief," he said. He turned and left the apartment.

"Just what is this?" Mrs. Hammond asked. "Who was that man?"

I closed the front door and motioned toward the sofa. "May be you'd like to sit down, Mrs. Hammond. My partner and I—"

"Aren't you a little confused?" she said. "Asking *me* to sit down, indeed ..... This is my home, not yours."

"You asked who that man was," I said. "He's a cab driver, Mrs. Hammond. You don't seem to remember him, but he remembers you very well. He's the man who drove you from the post office to Mel Traynor's apartment house."

She stared at me for what seemed like fully half a minute, then looked at Walt. "What is he talking about ?"

"He'll tell you," Walt said.

"You drew out twelve hundred dollars of your postal savings yesterday afternoon, Mrs. Hammond," I said. "Why?"

"That's none of your business."

"I'm afraid it is."

Mrs. Hammond started to say something, then broke off suddenly, frowning toward the draped archway that separated the living room from the rest of the apartment. "Nancy! I told you to stay in your room."

Nancy walked slowly into the living room, looking at her mother searchingly. There was a tense alertness about her movements and her gray eyes were bright and slightly narrowed. She ignored Walt and me completely.

"May we see your raincoat, Mrs. Hammond?" I asked.

"My — raincoat?" She glanced furtively at Nancy, then back at me.

"Yes, please," I said. "The one you were wearing yesterday afternoon. The one with the plaid trim around the collar and the bad tear in the left sleeve."

"You — you must be insane. I have no such coat."

"No," Nancy Hammond said softly, almost inaudibly. "But I have." She walked toward her mother with a slow, pacing stride. "Mother, did you—"

"Nancy!" Mrs. Hammond said.

Nancy turned to look at me, very slowly, moving only the upper part of her body. "I borrowed her raincoat when I went to the movie yesterday," she said. "I'd torn my own coat and I hadn't had a chance to get it repaired."

"Is that the way it was, Mrs. Hammond?" Walt Logan asked. "Did you have to wear Nancy's torn coat over to Mel Traynor's place, because Nancy had borrowed your own?"

There was a long silence. Then I said, "You replaced that money in your postal savings account this morning, Mrs. Hammond. My partner and I would like to know why you would take it out just a short time before Mel Traynor was murdered and then—"

"I'll tell you why," Nancy Hammond said. "I know damn well why she did."

"Nan—" her mother began.

"She took it out to bribe Mel with, that's what she did. She'd told me a hundred times that she could buy Mel off. She——"

Mrs. Hammond stared up at her daughter, her eyes rounded incredulously. "I've given my whole life to you ..... And now you...."

Nancy raised both hands level with her shoulders, the fingers clawed, her whole body trembling. "You killed him!" she screamed. "You *killed* him!"

Mrs. Hammond cringed back from her. "But I *had* to. Don't you see? I had to protect you."

I had edged my way toward the two women slowly, and now, as Nancy's fingernails raked toward Mrs. Hammond's face, I brought my right forearm up swiftly and knocked the clawed fingers away. She struggled with me for a moment, then sank down on the sofa beside her mother. She stared straight ahead of her, crying soundlessly.

Mrs. Hammond stood up. "I had every justification," she said. "Mel Traynor was going to ruin my daughter's life. She could have married a decent young man who could have taken care of her properly, but Traynor was going to destroy all that. All my life I've worked and sacrificed for Nancy — I had no intention of letting that work and sacrifice go for nothing, just because a silly young girl and a drunken wretch like Traynor couldn't think clearly."

"Perhaps you'd rather wait till we get to the station house," I said. "We'll call in a stenographer and—"

She went on as if she hadn't heard me. "After Nancy went to the movie yesterday, I got to thinking about things. I knew they couldn't go on much longer, and I decided to talk to Traynor while I had the chance. I took that money out of postal savings to bribe him with. It was raining, and I took a cab from the post office to his apartment house."

She paused for a moment to glance down at her daughter. "Traynor laughed at me. He just stood there, fooling with that little camera, and laughing at me. He said that he and Nancy were in love and that they were going to get married, and that there was nothing anyone in the world could do to stop them. I took the money out of my purse and offered

to him. He became abusive. I thought he was ctually going to strike me. He told me to get out. hen I refused, he insulted me and Nancy. He said at I didn't care anything about Nancy's happiness— at all I cared about was my own welfare. He — actually said that I was trying to auction Nancy to the highest bidder — that I wasn't any better an a ....."

"Mrs. Hammond," I said. "I think we'd better—"

"And then he put the camera down on that table the door and started to jerk the door open and it me out ..... That's when I grabbed up the mera and hit him. He was facing away from me, nd I caught the long shoulder strap in my hand and vung it as hard as I could." She shook her head owly and her voice took on a tone of wonder. "How ould he have said such a thing? How could he even ave *thought* such a thing? It proves how rotten he was. If he hadn't been completely rotten, would he ever have said that about my trying to sell my own daughter for the highest price I could get? Can you even imagine a man saying anything like that to a mother like me?"

I looked at Walt Logan, then walked to the telephone and lifted the receiver.

"See Mrs. Hammond down to the car, Walt," I said. "I'll be along in a moment, just as soon as I call Headquarters and ask them to cancel that alarm for Carl Shanley."

"Can you imagine a man saying anything like that to me?" Mrs. Hammond said to Walt. "Can you?"

Walt took her arm gently and nodded toward the door.

"We'll have to leave now, Mrs. Hammond," he said.

"That's when I grabbed up the camera & hit him. He was facing away from me, & I caught the long shoulder strap in my hand & swung it as hard as I could".

By Lieut. Col. P. G. DEVASHER

THE story is not mine to tell. But the yarn is. The yarn spun out as my own experience pegged itself on to the story here and there. Towards the close of 1948 I landed a job in Army Headquarters, Delhi. 1948. Independence a year old; bright sunny days; sharp autumnal nip in the air; and multitudes, multitudes, wherever one went. In Connought Place one afternoon I met someone I knew.

Connought Place, as those familiar with Delhi know, consists of great blocks of buildings built in a circle, the inner and outer sides forming separate self-contained premises. The fashionable and popular establishments are on the inside and in front of these the homeless people from Pakistan had set down their tin boxes and spread out their wares regardless of the ownership of the place and the shins of their customers. Crowded at any time, in the evening it was thronged in a manner that I will not attempt to describe: for those who have known it no description is necessary; for those who have not none would be adequate. Suffice it to say that every yard walked therein had to be diligently inched through a jungle of bolts of cloth, dried fruits from Kandahar, pen knives from Wazirabad, coat hangers from nowhere in particular, and what have you, at one's feet; and a forest of elbows, shoulders, heads, hats, backs and fronts higher up the anatomy. In contrast with the crush and jam of the Inner Circle the Outer Circle was a haven of almost cloisteral peace, devoted as it was to trades that do not take kindly to tin boxes, such as agricultural implements, automobiles and the like. Walking down its spacious and restful corridors one afternoon my attention was arrested by some books in attractive covers displayed in a shop window. I thought I might look in.

It was a long narrow room, dark at the far end, with barely a few feet between the shelves that ran down the walls. An old, bespectacled gentleman sat at the desk by the door. He rose as I entered, turned to switch on the light but remained undecided for a moment, his glance hovering between me and the switch a couple of times, and finally settling into a steady interested stare. Flicking on the light at last his face broke into a smile and he asked me if I remembered him. It was my turn to stare now; but I placed him soon enough.

NOT LONG-LOST FRIENDS

He was a certain Mr. Bhargawa from Lahore whose book-shop in a wide dusty thoroughfare off Anarkali I had known well in my own Lahore days. He dealt in what his signboard declared to be "High Class Second Hand Books for School and College Students". We at the University knew his place well; because there one could not only buy text books cheap but also, upon occasion, exchange one's own books for a bit of badly needed cash. Yes, I knew Mr. Bhargawa; but that was about all. We were not long-lost friends come together. No friendship had previously existed.

However, from Anarkali to Connought Place is a long way and from early youth to the threshold of middle age is a long time. And so much had happened since! The slender thread of our acquaintance, which in normal circumstances would have made no call on either of us, suddenly strengthened in our hands as we stood facing each other. We spent an animated quarter of an hour going over the old times and thereafter that little shop on the Outer Circle became a frequent port of call for me whenever I happened to be in Connought Place. The bond of Lahore and, for me, memories of the cool and green fragrance of youth that he revived, inspired a certain relationship between us. It was not friendship in the commonly accepted sense of the word—the difference in our years and situations in life was

too much for that—but we were always glad to see each other. Yes, I think that is the way to put it: we were always glad to see each other. Sometimes, if the old gentleman was not too busy, we would go and have a cup of tea at a shabby little restaurant down the corridor and sit batting the breeze for a while.

We talked a great deal about the Past, the Present and the Future: but two subjects the old man always showed a pronounced disinclination to pursue with me. One was how he had left Lahore and the other, his family. Every third 'Refugee' one met had performed the most heroic acts during his last days in Pakistan and had invariably taken the last train or the last truck out, having stuck to it till the bitter end. And of course he was penniless, having lost his all in Pakistan. Mr. Bhargawa briefly stated that he had come out quite comfortably through the D. A. V. College Camp. His property and goods naturally remained where they were, but he had transferred his bank account to Amritsar sometime before the freezing order came through. So he was quite all right. He had apparently no dramatic experience to relate.

Again, property was not all that people lost in Pakistan—or in India for that matter—from many History exacted graver forfeit. It was customary those days to ask if one had come out with friend and family safe. Mr. Bhargawa confirmed that all was well but did not quite appear to relish the query. (A bit odd, that, I thought; considering that all *was* well.) This reticence of his to talk about his family was distinctly marked. Realising that that was so I refrained from bringing up the subject in conversation— there were so many other things to talk about—but one day the subject brought itself up in a big way.

One afternoon early in the New Year, I chanced to be in Connought Place looking for some odds and ends of existence. I had been away on leave the best part of December and thought I might go round by the Outer Circle and exchange the compliments of the season with the old man. He was not in.

SARI-DRAPED FIGURE

In the dark interior of the shop hovered a sari-draped figure whom I took to be a customer. As I turned to go this lady advanced a few steps and, to my surprise, said, "Would you wait a second, please; my father will be back any moment." Not knowing what, if anything, to say in reply I remained by the desk near the door, feeling foolish and wanting to get away. But very soon Mr. Bhargawa came in carrying a large brown paper parcel under his arm. Registering my presence with a smile he hurriedly walked down the shop. The brown paper parcel changed hands, there was a brief conversation in low undertones, and then the two came up the long narrow room, the daughter going straight out through the door. As she passed, I saw a young lady of medium height and build, simply but becomingly dressed; and that rich lemon pale complexion which the narrow, sunless streets of Lahore and the dark, squeezed-in, pressed-up dwellings within the city walls nourished. Yes, that 'Lahore' complexion was unmistakable: as also the gravity and composure of countenance which betokened upbringing in the old ways and the old graces.

However, I felt annoyed with myself at having stumbled on to that little family scene and at having gained the knowledge I had. I could hardly say to the old man: "That was your daughter, wasn't she? She told me that herself". That sort of thing would never do with a man like old Bhargawa. If only he would himself say, "That was my daughter you saw going out; dropped in to collect something"!

Mr. Bhargawa was cordial as ever, gave me a cup of tea, but did not choose to ease my conscience.

* * * *

30th of January 1949: the first anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's assassination. All roads led to Raj Ghat that day. Clerks and officials from a hundred offices laid aside their pens and papers; officers from the great Service Headquarters cast away their uniforms, scholars their books: the general populace gave no thought to job or profession that day; women resolutely put out cooking fires and told husbands and children that they were coming too. There was something about that first Sarvodaya in Delhi that made it a truly national day It was not just the size of the gathering, which was enormous, but the prevailing mood and temper which made it so. The wine of Independence was still heady, and the glory and tribulation of kafilas and refugee camps was still fresh in people's minds. Also, as yet there was no Republic Day to overshadow it four days before with its elaborate Ceremonial of State, the glitter of long lines of bayonets, the zoom of aircraft, and the crash of guns. Looking back it seems to me that that day marked the turning point of that period of emotional fervour. The feeling of patriotic pride and rejoicing that heaved through the crowd did not stem entirely from the memory of Gandhi, though that was strong enough. Rather it was a summing up of the throb and thrill of achievement, of perils met and countered, of human courage and goodwill that surged through those stirring days. That 'Morning Glory' hour was bound to pass; but perhaps we could have given the strong spiritual note that flowed through it a more permanent home.

As a memorial meeting we were a washout. Everyone was in his or her colourful best; children complete with rubber balloons and paper bags of sweets. But all brought flowers, flowers for Bapu's Samadhi. And the first thought of everyone on arrival at Raj Ghat was to lay up his flowers. The Samadhi enclosure was one closely packed mass of jostling good-natured humanity moving ceaselessly but ever so slowly in a clockwise direction around the central block of masonry. Completing my circle

'Would you wait a second, please; my father will be back any moment.'.....

at last I proffered my handful of crushed roses and marigolds and turned with relief to walk the few remaining yards out of the Samadhi. Suddenly released from the uncomfortable but sustaining pressure one felt unsteady for a step or two. Apparently someone else was doing the same, for a hand shot forward from behind me and grazed my arm.

MEETING AT RAJ GHAT

Turning around on my heels I saw a very pleasantly ruffled young lady in the act of passing the free end of her sari over the shoulder having evidently lost balance for a moment. Looking on with somewhat amused concern was a young man, plainly but neatly dressed in a tweed coat and grey slacks, and another sturdy looking young lady, her attention divided between the person who had had a near slip the moment before and the screaming, rebellious child in her arms. She seemed to be much the most exercised of the three; and was telling 'Krishna Bhainji' to do all sorts of things. Well, this 'Krishna Bhainji' was Mr. Bhargawa's daughter. The recognition was instantaneous and complete, and also mutual. At any other time and in any other place it would not have occurred to me to claim acquaintance. But the stream of goodwill flowed strong at Raj Ghat that day. Not only was my 'Namaste' readily and graciously returned but turning to her companions she said: "This is father's friend from Lahore" and to me: "My brother and sister-in-law" There were salutations all around. Evidently it was understood which one of 'father's friends from Lahore' I was. Just then another young man, dressed in a stylish achkan-and-churidar, and a short, squat lady of indeterminate age dressed in green sari and wearing gold-rimmed spectacles, emerged struggling and heaving from the turgid stream behind and came to anchor beside us. Suddenly the air of becoming confusion seemed to drop from Miss Bhargawa; she became calm and composed, as she had been in the shop. I thought this was as good a time as any to take my leave. So we all folded hands again and I went my way.

* * * *

The 'glimmer and murmur' of the story was now round the corner, though I was not yet conscious of it. Indeed, as far as my immediate knowledge went, everything pointed to a complete, if temporary, cessation of connection with the persons who have figured above, and their affairs. For, in the office, the very next day, I was warned for a course at one of the Army Schools of Instruction. I was to leave Delhi almost immediately and was to be gone three months. So when I next clocked in at the Outer Circle it was to say, 'Good-bye'.

Bhargawa was dealing with a customer when I arrived. As soon as he was free he turned to me and said: "So you all met at Raj Ghat the other day." I had naturally intended to mention that myself and said so. By way of reply he shut his desk drawer, turned the key, and telling the pan-and-cigarette-wallah on the pavement to call him if he was needed, led the way to the tea shop down the corridor. For quite some time after we had seated ourselves at one of the grubby glass-topped tables he did not speak. When he did so it was to say that his daughter was betrothed to the young man I had seen. The one in the black achkan.

Nothing startling in that as a statement of fact; but that he should make it contrasted strongly with his general reticence about his family affairs. However, tea had by now come and I said, pouring out the cups:

"Ah, that is very nice. Just engaged?"

"No, the engagement has stood for years".

"Lahore people?" I asked.

"Hardly", he replied, "Originally from Lahore, of course. But both he and his father are in the Secretariat. So they are Delhi-Simla people really. You know the type, I mean."

'BABOOS' OF HIGHEST QUALITY

Yes, I knew the 'Government of India' type well. Army Headquarters were stiff with them. Thirty years of pen-pushing in the 'duftur' and a four-room box-like 'Niwas' or 'Villa' in a dusty Delhi street at the end of it. Very conscious of position and respectability. Beyond question 'Baboos' of the highest quality.

Aloud I asked when the wedding was. In March. When I explained that in that case I should unfortunately miss it, Mr. Bhargawa seemed to consider the proposition quite seriously. Then, as if putting something away from his mind, he declared in a much lighter inflection of tone that I should most assuredly get an invitation card wherever I was. There was something curious in all this. I had known Bhargawa long enough and well enough to expect an invitation. But if the wedding was in March nothing in our acquaintance had led me to expect a preview of it in January.

But Mr. Bhargawa, now thoroughly relaxed, continued to be forthcoming with information. He was a widower. His family consisted of just one son and a daughter. I learnt that Prakash, the son, was a Civil Engineer and was articled to a well-known firm of architects who had moved over to Delhi on partition. He was doing well. I thought of his loud-crying child and said something about the trouble it was giving its mother that day at the Samadhi. Bhargawa's face lit up.

"Oh she", he exclaimed, "it is she who keeps her mother in order. Otherwise Rekha is much a headstrong girl".

And then, reflectively:

"They were married in the D. A. V. College Camp you know. In fact that is where we met the family; they are from Peshawar, not Lahore people at all."

He was now talking more to himself than to me. In a soft undertone he went on:

"But these Delhi people have delayed things for more than a year".

This last was clearly a bit more than he had intended to say. We rose from the table, came out into the corridor and stood for a few minutes on the kerb talking about my impending departure. Saying good-bye, I mounted my bicycle. Looking over my shoulder I shouted light-heartedly:

"Don't forget that card, though?"

Mr. Bhargawa waved and disappeared into the shop.

On that note I left Delhi: Prakash and Rekha wedded in the midst of the alarms and turmoil of a Refugee Camp: Krishna about to be married in pursuance of a long-standing engagement 'after the delay of more than a year'; and I to get an invitation to the wedding at the School five hundred miles and more away.

* * * *

On the course the days and the weeks passed with scarcely a thought given to Delhi. From the great metropolitan city one was translated to a tiny little station in the wild uplands of Central India, deep in the lap of one of our great jungles, several hours motor journey away from railhead. All day long, and the best part of the night sometimes we

ead, talked, and played the games of our profession and went to bed, when we did, sated with food and exercise. The Union Flag flew at the mast head; every one of us felt in his bones the joy and thrill of it; but it was a far cry indeed from the tumult and crowds of Delhi. Rather what stood out about the place was the handiwork of the past masters; in particular those twin citadels of British authority in India—the Garrison Church and the Station Club.

The club had character and atmosphere. Far more than the large topnotch clubs in the great cities this little one sang of the old days and bemoaned their passing. The weather-beaten sign-board bearing the familiar and once ominous legend "For Members Only" still bravely did duty by the fragrant well-grown hedge, half hidden by it. The long neat lawn, the broad deep verandah with its creaking wicker chairs, ancient notices and tattered old guide map stuck up on the wall, hat pegs and rests for golf sticks—they all seemed to be silently waiting for some rugged Empire-building Commissioner or Colonel to stride in and rend the air with a stentorian 'koi hai'.

I particularly liked the long narrow room that served as the library. The closely packed rows of mildewed, well thumbed books belonged to an age and mental environment that had passed long before August 15, 1947. Here the lives and works of the great Indian Civil servants such as Lawrence, Metcalfe, Munroe, Elphinstone and Meadows Taylor reposed in their forgotten virtue. The hunt of the Pindaris, the suppression of Thugee, famine relief and other pre-occupations of the Indian District Officer lay side by side with the travels of Richard Burton, Francis Younghusband, and accounts of cart journies by elegant young ladies from the Bay of Bengal to North Indian hill stations. Heroes of the Mutiny and sundry little wars on the Frontier and elsewhere held forth their powers at sport and soldiering in ponderous volumes. Jane Austen, Rudyard Kipling and John Buchan catered to more spiritual needs of the vanished Keepers of the King's Peace. All very pucca.

NO WEDDING CARD

One Sunday afternoon on a lonesome jaunt on the rocks and crags of the plateau (which no one else was minded to join) I found myself thinking of Delhi. It was well on into March now and the promised invitation card had not yet come. Not that it mattered : I was not going. It had not even occurred to me to send a wedding present. But I wanted to get that card. In some odd way I thought it would be a memento of old Lahore.

So ruminating I reached the club where I intended to have tea before returning to camp. While waiting for it to come I passed into the library and pulling out a book at random settled down in an easy chair. It was a good one—a Somerset Maugham; "Ashenden".

Well, the tea and toast went down right enough; but I didn't get far with that book that day. For early on, in the introduction I think, Mr. Maugham says, "Fact is a poor story-teller." Is it? My chain of thought led on to Prakash and Rekha. The great quadrangle of the D. A. V. College filled to overflowing with the Hindu and Sikh populace of Lahore beaten and burnt out of their homes; secure for the moment within its walls; crossing over to India their one thought and hope; yet fearful of the journey to the border. Bewildered, laughing, crying, quarrelling, friendly, humanity; petty-minded, big-hearted; some nursing their sorrows and all their hopes. And all drawn together by the impressive march of events and the realisation that however cruel the hour for some, it was still the Hour of Destiny. On to this tumultuous scene had somehow stumbled a Peshawar family. Perhaps they and the Bhargawas had neighbouring rooms; or perhaps Prakash and Rekha being educated young people, had jobs about the place such as distributing rations. I liked to think that their people blessed their wayward romance. There was no question of fixing a date for the marriage when they got to India. A girl was much more secure with a strong young husband to protect her than with a father who had half a dozen others to look after. The wedding ceremony must have been brief and simple—no costly silks for the bride; no gold, no jewels; no feast for the groom's party. And yet how great an hour for those two to look back upon. Fact was certainly a great story-teller in their case.

But in Krishna's case? She had come out of all that to marry a Baboo in Delhi. What a poor story!

Well, March drew out into April and April into May. The course duly came to its end and one day we climbed down the steep escarpment of the plateau to the railhead. No card had come. A visit to the Outer Circle was a 'must' on getting back to Delhi.

* * * *

In Delhi, however, it was high summer. High, harsh summer and closed doors. The bookshop was shuttered and boarded up; had been so for several weeks, according to the people at the neighbouring establishments. I had never been to Bhargawa's home but knew where it was—in one of the new 'nagars' already beginning to spring up around Delhi. And there I bussed out a couple of evenings after drawing that blank at the Outer Circle.

Finding the 'something over something' that was Bhargawa's house was no easy matter. The place was still building; street names and house numbers were conspicuous largely by their absence. But the evening was fresh and cool and the great new wilderness of brick and cement and mounds of building material had character and personality. Not many people were living in as yet. But some there were. Occasionally a door banged; voices raised in laughter or argument floated down the breeze; or a cooking pot announced by sound and smell that it was ready to be taken off the fire. The odd cyclist navigated his machine across the line of sight; or a fluttering dopatta disappeared behind a pile of bricks. There was space and silence.

AT BHARGAWA'S HOUSE

I reached Bhargawa's house at last. And there I found my friend ill with asthma; Prakash not yet returned from work; and Rekha and Krishna at home. Krishna, yes; in her father's home, unmarried, no vermilion line running down the parting of her hair, and a set expression rasping through her eyes. So that was it. Other things had gone wrong besides Bhargawa's health.

No talk with the old gentleman was possible that evening; and with the others it was not my place to talk of such matters. All the same the visit resulted in a 'development'. It was dark when I rose to go. (The young ladies had insisted that 'uncle' should have a cup of tea.) Rekha told Krishna to accompany me to the main road with her torch. In any case someone had to go to the doctor's shop: Prakash had not yet returned, and she herself had the food to see to.

We walked in silence. The torch was certainly useful in the unpaved and unlit streets which bristled with scaffolding and ditches and things. From the

doctor's to the lamp post which was the 'Request Stop' for buses was only a short way. But I let Krishna come with me. I wanted to say something to her; though for the life of me I could not think what to say. We stood under the lamp. She fidgeted about on her feet, looking down, putting the torch off and on, and making unnecessary adjustments to her dopatta. I was about to give it up and suggest that she might now return when, suddenly, without any warning, she looked up and staggered me by asking if I could help someone in getting a passport. A passport! It was sometime before words came to my tongue.

"Shouldn't be too difficult to get hold of someone who could help", I said, "but who is going abroad? Yourself? Got a scholarship or something?"

"No, it is not for me."
"Your brother, then?"

"No, it is someone else," she replied, "but my brother will tell you about it. May I send him to meet you?"

As she talked that brittle set of eyes sometimes disappeared; but it was not the 'Raj Ghat' look that took its place. Rather it was that look of desolation, that confession of defeat that only youth can conjure up for itself. Her honest troubled face moved me deeply. Of course I would see her brother, I said.

The very next afternoon Prakash turned up in my room in the mess, accompanied by a tense looking youth. I looked through the sheaf of papers they produced and saw that what was immediately required was clearance of the application by the police. That one was easy. I knew one of the Officers of the Delhi Police—he was an old war-time friend—and for him I wrote out a note. Handing it to Prakash's friend who, incidentally, wanted to go to Kenya, together with his papers, I asked them if they would care to tell me more about it. At this the Kenya-bound youth bolted. But Prakash stayed on. He, too, was highly strung, almost resentful, to begin with. But we had tea, and eventually a talk.

THOSE GRIM DAYS

The story was simplicity itself. The Bhargawas and Romesh's people—that was the fellow's name—were friends and neighbours in Lahore. Prakash and Romesh were the only two young men in the combined households. During the great days of 1947, they had organised the watch and ward of their locality. Krishna was their active helpmate. There were night duties. Many were the kettles of tea that she had brewed for them. And many a time during the nights of that hot and blood-thirsty summer, the three of them had watched the crimson horizons of Lahore from the roof of one or the other house, and had gone over their plans in case the fire should spread their way, or trouble come in another form. And so on.

And they had come out of all that to find that Krishna was decreed to marry a Baboo in Delhi!

Well, the Delhi people had considered matters for a year and then broken off the marriage, on its very eve almost. Father had been seized with asthma. Romesh was going to bury himself in Africa, and Krishna had sworn by everything that was holy never never to marry. "The only thing left for them to do", Prakash finished rhetorically.

Operation Heartbreak. Ah, youth!

I asked if Romesh's parents knew about the Kenya plan. Prakash looked at me as if I were being from another planet.

"Of course not", he said.

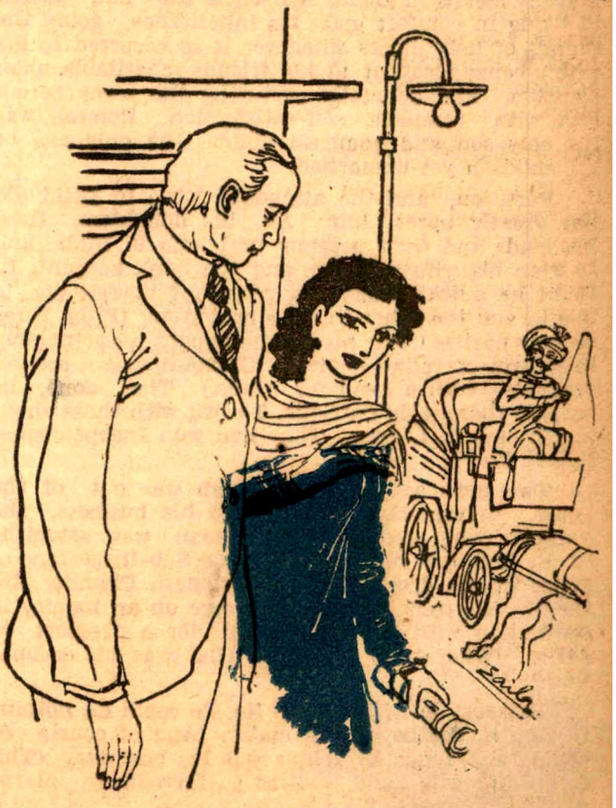
"And your father?"
"No; he, too, is rather fond of Romesh you know

I knew. The crassest stupidity that there ev was. A talk with old Bhargawa became a mor obligation, both by virtue of what I had done an what had come to my knowledge.

But the old man had to get a little bit bett before we could have that. I asked Prakash to kee me informed of his father's condition and let him g But a week passed and no message came. I bega to grow uneasy in mind over this passport busines The more so when my friend of the Police joyfull informed me that on account of my note he had cu out all the red tape from the proceedings. Certai things had to be done of course and those he wa getting done at top speed. I began contemplatin another visit, with the object of finding out th address of Romesh's father and going and talking t him, if Bhargawa could not, or would not lister But I, or rather through me the Fates, had sow better than I knew.

STORY WITHIN STORY

For the tale was nearly told. It was tha 'top speed' that did it. ("Registered Target Mike One" said the police man later. He had been a Gunne in his day.) One evening, while I was still in my room several pairs of footsteps strode up the Mess veran-dah and began shuffling impatiently outside. Light gay voices swept away the weak protests of my



'No, it is not for me'. 'Your brother, then?' 'No, it is someone else', she replied....

I must sweeten the mouth immediately. Ramesh and Krishna were engaged to be married.....

bearer. Presently the owners of the voices flooded into the room.

The whole lot of them—Krishna, Romesh, Prakash, Rekha and that rebellious little girl of hers. Some one flicked off a large silk handkerchief from a silver tray laden with sweets and pushed it under my nose. I must sweeten the mouth immediately. Romesh and Krishna were engaged to be married.

Well, what emerged from the happy confusion of the next half hour was a story within the story. To begin at the beginning. Romesh's father was a man of property in Lahore and consequently a gentleman of means in Delhi. His whole life had passed in living in comfort upon his inheritance, going the rounds of holy places whenever it so occurred to his wife, being pleasant to his friends, charitable upon occasion, and generally surveying the scene before him with complete self-satisfaction. Romesh was his only son and youngest child: the only one of his children yet unmarried.

Partition, and the attendant move to Delhi did not greatly upset him. All his daughters, their husbands and their progeny were safe in India, and so were his wife and son, and the bank account. In Delhi he quickly bought a couple of houses, one to live in and the other to draw rent from. (From three or four parties.) For his son he bought a partnership in a firm of radio dealers. (Romesh was a science graduate with a head for radio.) That done, he became thoroughly patriotic. To hell with those shops and houses in Lahore. They had won Independence, hadn't they?

Two days ago, when Romesh was out of the house, presumably attending to his business, the comfort-loving and placid gentleman was astonished to find two rough and tough Sub-Inspectors of Police at his door step. Did Romesh Chander live there? His son? Right; they were on an inquiry in connection with his application for a passport to Africa. Where was he? And what was his occupation?

Passport to Africa, yes. No, he could do nothing to stop it, the boy was a major. And of course he could raise funds by selling out his business. (This from the wife and mother.) Incredulity, alarm, panic.

That very evening the three of them, father, mother, and son, reached old Bhargawa's house in a taxi bulging with baskets of fruits and platters of sweets.

"Oh, my friend Benarasi Das", he declared, "for long I have waited for this happy occasion. Put eleven rupees in Romesh's hands first".

Fortunately Prakash was out at the time. The sharp-witted and practical Rekha took charge. In a trice she placed half a dozen crisp notes in her father-in-law's hands and helped him to transfer them to Romesh's, (Romesh's father was pre-occupied, but not too much so as not to note that that was fifty-one to the good, not eleven). Romesh was then commanded to touch Mr. Bhargawa's feet. Now, where was daughter Krishna?

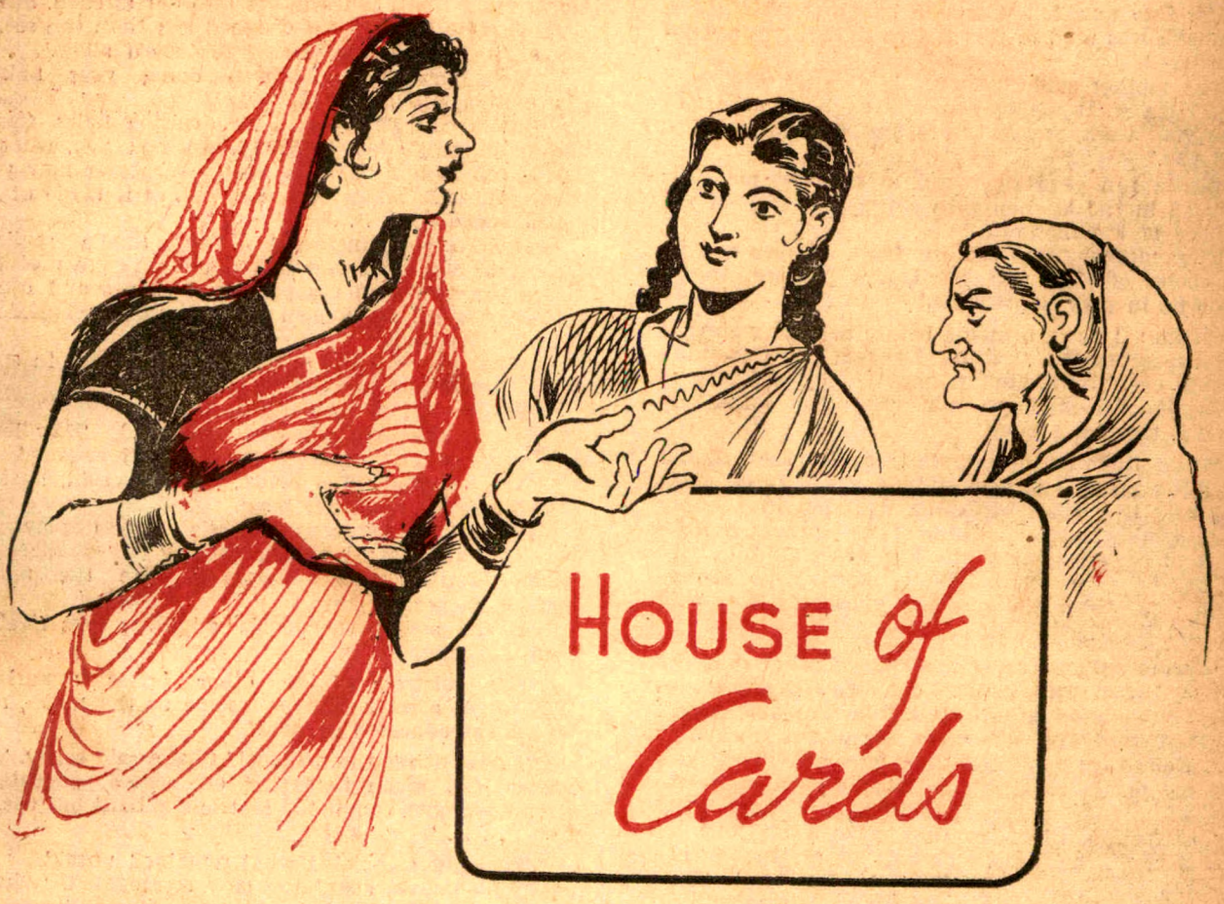
Rekha dragged her into the room.

"Krishna, my dear, from now on you are my daughter", said the gentleman of means, most solemnly slipping a long gold and ruby chain over her head, prolonging the act as much as he could.

"And you must wear this too," beamed the mother. Rekha snapped up the thin crinkling paper parcel and led Krishna out of the room. (It was a sari, a gossamer green and gold affair that set off her complexion marvellously. She was wearing that in my room right then, and the gold and rubies too.) So bedecked Krishna returned to her father's side to receive his blessings, and those of her future parents-in-law.

At Romesh she could not look, nor he at her.

It was a sari, a gossamer green and gold affair that set off her complexion marvellously.....



HOUSE of Cards

By TARASANKAR BANDOPADHYAYA

AMAR bought a tea-set to which he took a fancy. Half a dozen cups and saucers, a tea-pot, etc.—nice coloury things. And the price wasn't inconsiderable — four rupees! For a middle-class household four rupees meant quite a lot.

Amar's mother ordered the set to be kept carefully apart and brought it out for friends and relations and respectable guests only.

Hemendra Babu and his family came to their country home. Today women of that family would make a call at Amar's house. So the whole house was astir for their reception.

'Take out that set today, Gouri,' Amar's mother said.

Gouri was her daughter, Amar's unmarried sister. The mother handed her the key-bunch. Unlocking the utensils' room, Gouri brought the set along with a tray of German silver and said, 'Why are there only five cups, ma, what's happened to the other one? See here, I've just brought them out, don't blame me afterwards.'

'Why don't you go about to see where it is?' said the mother disgustedly. 'Somewhere in the room it must be. It can't grow wings and fly away.'

Gouri placed the set there and once more closely searched the room. Coming out, she exclaimed, 'I don't know if it's grown wings or somebody has eaten it up, but I'm sure it's nowhere in the room.'

The mother rushed into the room in a huff and commented, 'You're not to blame, dear, it's all my ill luck. You all work with your eyes raised on to the forehead, can't see the things down below.'

Maybe Gouri's eyes were always raised on to her forehead, but in this case her fault was not proved. The cup remained untraced.

'Bouma, bouma,' the mother shouted.

Shaila, Amar's wife, was then scrubbing the rooms upstairs and arranging seats for the guests. Hurrying down, she stopped before the mother and said, 'Are you calling me?'

The mother-in-law was almost fanatic about her utensils. Unable to trace the missing cup, she was burning with rage much like a brinjal thrown into boiling oil.

'Yes, my princess, I am', she burst out, 'otherwise, did you think I'd call those sweeper women as my daughter-in-law?'

Shaila remained standing without uttering a word.

'Why is a cup missing?' the mother roared. 'What's happened to it?'

Shaila broke her silence and said, 'I've broken it, ma.'

Gazing at her face, the mother said, 'Well, well, what then can I say?' Verily, when an offender

makes clean breast of his fault, one can possibly do nothing but pardon him. Slamming the doors, she cried, 'Those five too I'll break to pieces and throw out.'

Her fury now fell upon the poor tea-set.

Shaila was used to this sort of thing. Not a word she uttered.

The mother said, 'You've broken it. Well and good. Then what makes you waiting here? Go and finish your work, you've to prepare the refreshments, mind you.'

Shaila ran upstairs and in a few moments appeared in the kitchen with a beaming face in the presence of the mother.

The mother who was in high temper had by now cooled off. She said, 'Well, now prepare things as you do in your countryside.'

Shaila sat down bringing before her the materials of food preparation. 'I think I should put fish-stuffing into everything, ain't it, ma?'

'What, fish-stuffing? Oh, yes, you must, no widow is coming, I hope.'

While stuffing fish into flour-made cases, Shaila said, 'You know, ma, this stuffing would have been very tasty if a little asafoetida were put into it. My father wouldn't relish a thing if it's without asafoetida, and he won't allow any and every stuff to get into our house, no, he wouldn't. Right from Afghanistan come those Kabulis, you know, it's they who give him the right stuff.'

'Upcountry, that's a good place, dear,' said the mother, 'this country of ours can't be compared with it, and those good things are hardly available here.'

'That stuff, ma, you won't get in the upcountry even. Kabulis bring it for their own use. They give it to my father because they hold him in high regard—often take money from him, you know. Not only asafoetida, whenever they come, each one of them presents him small baskets of grapes, pomegranates, pears, nuts and what not. The total collection—what it amounts to you can well imagine. So many green things get rotten!'

From the verandah of the other room Gouri bantered, 'So it starts at last.'

It meant that Shaila would now go on talking hyperbolically about her father's house. Frankly speaking, that was her only fault. Shaila, this polite modest, sweet-tongued, handsome daughter-in-law, could hardly say anything without reference to her father's place.

In a neighbour's house a mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law engaged in a brawl. There was an uproar.

'Let them do whatever they like,' the mother remarked, 'but I've got a good son's wife, she doesn't bandy words. One can't take her to task even if she does a wrong. Looking at her face, one is moved to pity.'

'Why doesn't her son correct his wife?' Shaila said. 'You know, mother, had it been my elder brother, he wouldn't have spared her. Perhaps he would have despatched her to her father's place at once. One day my sister-in-law exchanged some words with my mother, for that my brother was not on speaking terms with her for three months. At last mother persuaded him to speak. However, this my brother is somewhat eccentric—wears a knee-long hand-spun cloth and sleeveless garment—a garment of this much length. No tobacco, no *bidi*, no cigarette—a man of queer habits, he is.'

Possibly the mother was a little annoyed. She said, 'Well, be quick. Take care that no fishbone is left in.'

'Small fishes these are, my hands aren't moving fast enough to pick out bones. But I've almost finished.'

Releasing a mass of *singaras* (stuffed cakes) into the frying pan, she said again, 'My mother would never allow small fishes to get into our kitchen. She'd at once return a fish if it weighed less than two seers. Of small fish, only a selected few she'd allow.'

'Well, hurry up and finish doing your hairs,' the mother cut her short.

Shaila was changing after dressing hairs. Casting an admiring look at her Gouri said, 'Oh, what a lovely complexion is yours, sister! Whatever may you wear, you look wonderful. And me, as if made of a burnt logwood. . . . .'

'It can't be transferred sister,' Shaila replied, 'else, I'd have made you a gift of it. You're praising mine, had you seen my parents, brothers and other sisters, you'd have known what's called complexion. Exactly like roses.'

'What do you say sister!' asked Gouri in surprise. 'Theirs is fairer than yours?'

'Yes, dear, I'm the darkest of all.'

The mother came in and whispered, 'How long will you take, daughter? They have all arrived.'

'Yes, mother, I'm ready,' Shaila said, hastily drawing a veil upon her head.

Putting the gorgeous apparels and display of jewellery and beauty of the wealthy city-dwellers to shame, Shaila appeared—appeared like the moon amid a cluster of stars.

As she bowed, the guests' admiring eyes riveted upon her face.

The mistress of the other house remarked, 'You've got a son's wife handsome as the moon, sister! Is she educated as well?'

'I have'nt read in a school,' Shaila said softly. 'My father isn't much in favour of school education. I read at home, completed Matric standard but thereafter. . . . .'

The hint completed what remained unsaid.

'Who knows, dear,' the lady commented, 'What's happened to this land nowadays; girls aren't married unless educated in college. All my daughters-in-law were in college, but I took them out after marriage.'

'Something of college course I also read. But my sisters have all studied well. Our eldest brother coached us at home, he has a great craze for study. Every year, you know, he buys books worth hundreds of rupees—Bengali and English. Orders books from England. And if you asked him to take to some avocation—of course, my father has his own business—or to look after that business, he'd say: before me lies the vast ocean of knowledge, I've no time to turn my eyes.'

'Where's your father's place?'

'Allahabad. You must have been to Allahabad. We've been living there for three generations. Father is a contractor there.'

'How much he earns?'

'That I don't know for certain. However, my second brother sometimes complains: no, ma, we can't go on like this, you tell father. He'd let out all our brick-built houses and himself live in a tiled hut, supervise his works riding a *tonga*, but wouldn't buy a motor car—this sort of thing can't go on. And father would say: this is my ancestral home, it'd remain as it is. I'd neither demolish it nor shift elsewhere. And motor car, that too I won't buy, that'll make my sons luxurious. I may earn now, suppose they can't! They say, you know, Mahendra Babu is in a sense a saint!'

So saying, Shaila gave a sweet smile.

The leader of the guests now told Shaila's mother-in-law, 'Then your son has married in quite a well-to-do family, sister. Far more well-to-do than

you are. Well, how do they make seasonal presents?'

'A queer world it is, queer is human mind. They are more well-to-do than you are—this casual remark hurt the vanity of Amar's mother.

She replied, twisting her lips, 'Who knows, sister, well-to-do or not—I for one don't know. However, it's daughter-in-law who talks tall about her father's riches, but presents we can never find. She's come here these two years, this tender child, but they don't give the slightest hint of taking her to them.'

'You know, mother,' Shaila immediately replied, 'my father's ways are rather odd. He says: Why should I bring her back whom I've given away for ever! If, however, she's voluntarily brought by the person I've given her to, I'll certainly love them both, honour them and call them my own. And talking of presents, it's hardly possible to send presents from such a distance. But, money he gives as soon as asked for and will continue to give whenever wanted".

"What did you say daughter?" the mother cried out! 'Your father gives us money?"

'What did you say, daughter?' the mother cried out. 'Your father gives us money! When, at what time?'

'I didn't mean you, mother,' Shaila rejoined. 'You may ask him—hundred, fifty, eighty—father gives, whenever wanted, and why shouldn't he?'

Mother-in-law's face grew dark. The women present were not only co-villagers but city-dwellers as well. This news would in no time spread abroad. Mother felt like hiding her head in shame.

'Very well,' she said, 'let Amar come, I'll ask him. Why, I haven't had the slightest knowledge of it.'

'Perhaps Amar didn't tell you,' the mistress of the other house tried to console her. 'He needed money and took it from father-in-law.'

'But why should he take, sister? It's not proper on his part. It's disgraceful. Shame, to beg of father-in-law, shame!'

* * * *

Amar worked in Calcutta where he ran an order supply business. Though a business, it's scale was small, scope limited, yet he was independent. Hence he could come home twice a month. With eyes red with rage, Amar's mother waited for her son's arrival.

She could by no means forget the humiliation she had had to suffer in the presence of the wealthy residents of Cacutta. Not only did the penury of her household expose itself in full nakedness, she herself also appeared to be a liar. These few days she hardly spoke to daughter-in-law. Shaila, however, was blameless in this respect; wearing an ever-present smile on her face, she always looked up to the mother awaiting her orders.

Time takes away the heat of fire and cools the heat of mind—that's the usual rule of this world. But to Shaila's misfortune, the flames of fire raging in the mother's heart received a fresh supply of fuel and rose higher up before they found time to abate. The whispers of this affair had started rolling everywhere in the locality and came out in the open in no time. The other day Amar's mother had heard in her own ears the details of an open discussion that had taken place in the Sarkars' rendezvous.

Amar intimated that he would come home after about ten days on account of a holiday. Shaila felt the heaven had crumbled down on her head. It was all a lie—what she had said. In spite of repeated resolutions, she could not persuade herself to write to her husband anything about this matter. She felt ashamed of making any request. Her fingers did not

"Who says that?" he exploded. "Who is that rascal, who's that bitch?".....

move, her lips quivered, tears filled her eyes. Collecting the letter-paper, she tore it up and threw away. She kept on sitting in her bedroom in calm expectation of her husband's arrival. She would throw herself at his feet the moment he came in.

Suddenly she startled at Amar's loud angry voice. Coming out stealthily like a thief under cover of darkness, she felt relieved—no, she was not the target of his fury. Amar had started a quarrel with a coolie.

'This half a mile, the luggage is hardly half a maund or, say, twentyfive seers, two annas I've paid you, what more you want?'

The man too was not a person easily to give way. 'Why didn't you then settle the rate, sir?' he shouted. 'Three annas—that's our rate, give it, yes, you have to.'

'Get out, you swine, get out, I say. Here's your bloody money, but get away at once from my presence.'

Throwing the coins, Amar angrily stepped into the house.

'Just see the fun, the day you've to run into losses, you do in this manner. A fellow slopes with fifty rupees, then I miss the train, and now even after coming home I lose four pice.'

The mother was also waiting—perhaps prepared. She said in a calm but sarcastic tone, 'Why worry for that, son? There's your father-in-law, write to him and he'll send money.'

Though he could not follow exactly what she meant, the shaft of these biting words didn't fail to smite him. Knitting the brows, Amar asked, 'What do you mean?'

'That's why I'm so eagerly looking for your arrival, son. What I want to know is whether you feed me with your earned money or you offer me oblations with alms given by your father-in-law! Is it a fact that you beg money from your father-in-law and he sends you money—hundred, fifty, eighty—whenever you need?'

Already wearied and vexed, Amar lost self-control. In an instant his head was set ablaze.

'Who says that?' he exploded. 'Who's that rascal, who's that bitch?'

'Daughter!' mother called out.

Shaila felt everything around was swinging before her eyes. What to do and what to say in these circumstances Shaila was unable to decide. 'Why you keep mum?' mother thundered. 'Speak up, answer.'

'Yes, father gives, he does,' Shaila said bewilderingly. Immediately Amar began to strike his head against the wall like a mad man. Mother hastened to hold him back.

'Not a drop of water must I take so long as she remains in this house,' Amar declared.

'I felt so small before the ladies of Haren Babu's house!' mother said. 'I also can't live with such a daughter-in-law, my boy.'

* * * *

Little justice is done where the judge is not circumscribed within the confines of codified laws; what happens in the name of justice is despotism. So, on account of that trivial offence, a heavy punishment fell to Shaila's lot. That very night arrangements were made for her banishment. Shaila's brother-in-law started with her for Allahabad by the night train.

* * * *

Seeing Shaila, her mother was taken aback.

'What's this, Shaila? What makes you come so unexpectedly?'

'Why, ma, is there any bar to my coming? You didn't care to bring me, so I've come myself.'

Embracing her daughter affectionately, mother said, 'Dear, dear, don't I long to bring you or feel pained at heart, but what can I do, say?' Heaving a long sigh, she added, 'Your father's income has gone down, they say the market is very dull. Besides, Haimi's marriage is imminent. You see, dear, I'm unable to spend.'

Now at last Shaila found an opportunity to release a gushing stream of ceaseless tears.

'Who's come with you, Shaila? Son-in-law?' mother enquired.

'No,' Shaila dejectedly replied, 'my brother-in-law has accompanied me?'

'Where's he? Good lord, why is he outside? As good as a son of ours, he is. O maid, go and see sister's brother-in-law is outside, call him in. Tell him mother is calling.'

Shaila's heart was palpitating.

Not even a glass of water must he touch in this house—that was Amar's strict instruction to his younger brother. The order was given with a deadly oath.

The maid came back to report that none was there. The mother was surprised. 'Where has he gone?'

'He has left, ma,' Shaila said. 'He's to catch the train.'

Mother's surprise knew no bounds. 'He has to catch the train—has left—why?'

'He's to go to Simla, ma. Going there in search of a big job. He'll take the very train we came by, he can't stay.'

The mother felt relieved. 'Surely you've asked him to get down here on his way back?'

'Of course, ma,' said Shaila, drawing a heavy sigh, 'but I'm afraid he won't be able to. The matter is very urgent, you know. From Simla he'll go to Calcutta with somebody's letter, and all this will be of no use if he fails to reach in time.'

At this stage Shaila's eldest brother entered. True, he wore a handspun cloth, but it was a fancy one with gold-thread borders. He also had a handspun fancy garment on and a Gold-Flake cigarette

(Continued On Page 74)

The Ghost Girl

By MANOJE BASU

IT is a tale of a ghost girl; not what you would like to call a story but an event I had witnessed myself. I would swear by God that I have not exaggerated any detail. It often so happens that a ghost supposed to have been encountered by many is after all an optical illusion, an escaped inmate of a lunatic asylum or some woman of ill repute. Dhumabati's affair was not a hallucination of any such kind. It was a real thing, for the female ghost after all turned out to be a female ghost.

I do not like the word ghost. But how else am I to describe her? I was young then and my mind was romantic. So I called her Dhumabati—the smoke-woman. She was very beautiful and did not at all have the kind of looks that one is apt to associate with a ghost. She was more beautiful than any of those real women in flesh and blood that young men fall in love with. She was more beautiful than Labanya, my wife (of course you will not let her know of my views).

Since my birth I have been a town-dweller. I was only accustomed to clicking the switch on for light and opening the tap for water. But when I found myself a position, I had my posting in Biratgarh. It was a high-sounding name and I had thought the place must be quite a big town. In fact it had been so at the time of the indigo-planters. But when I reached the place I found the buildings almost in ruins, overgrown with large trees and bushes, often inhabited by snakes and wild bears. I was told that even tigers came and stayed here during winter. In a few days I got tired of the place and wanted to leave. I felt like resigning m position and going back to the town.

But my guardians at home asked me to d nothing of the kind. I had no backing and I did nc know how to have wires pulled. Even so I appeare in the selection test and surprisingly enough, jus managed to scrape through. When a year and a hal passed by I received a letter from the Governmen which intimated the fact that I was appointed Sub Registrar and was posted to Biratgarh. It wa customary in the services to make a person roll fro one place to another. My guardians advised me t stick to my gun and look up my superiors occasion ally so that I could get a transfer to a better place By that they meant a place where there wer opportunities to make some extra money. But thought a better place was one where I could hav friends for chit-chats during the off hours.

So I stayed on. I had an efficient servant, name Harish. He washed the linen, did the cooking polished my shoes, washed the dishes and the changed into the uniform of my office bearer twirlin his moustache. At 10 I, the Hakim, held cour attended on by my bearer. In the rural areas, th Sub-Registrar was called a *Hakim,* that is, Magistrate. Everyone addressed me as *'Huzur,'* th master. It was quite soothing to the ear. My offic duties kept me occupied till 4 in the afternoon.

In the evening I was often summoned to th police-station. A constable, armed with a gun an a staff and carrying a lantern, came along to escor me there. The Sub-Inspector was crazy about card playing. Except when he was out on duty, he wa regular about this game. The police officers her were the real masters of the place and so they coul not rub shoulders with every one. There had to b

four in the game. Besides the Sub-Inspector, there were the Inspector, the doctor of the charitable hospital and Dayalhari Sen, the estate-manager of the local landlord. If any one of them was absent they looked for me to take his place. I could not avoid them. They almost dragged me to the police station just as they would take a murderer. I did not like this at all. I wanted to read and write quietly by myself. I might tell you in confidence that at that time I was quite young and just because there was water and green all around I had got into the habit of writing poems

The Sub-Registrar's office was housed in a brick building and close to it my quarters consisted of two thatched rooms. The nights here were quiet. In the intel lizards clicked their tongue. Jackals wailed in the jungle which signified the appearance of a tiger or a ferocious animal. In the deodar grove a swarm of bats fed on the ripe fruits, rushing from tree to tree. Even that sound gave one the creeps. At that time I often remembered the great sermon that the pride of office and status ought not separate man from man. I called my servant inside. The "Magistrate" and his bearer's beds were almost side by side. The people of the land however, had no knowledge of it, or else they would have showered praises on me.

In the middle of one night in July Harish woke up and called out to me, "Please get up, *Huzur*, I can hear the sound of water flowing by the house." I hurried out of my bed, opened the door and came out to find that the courtyard was submerged in water. It had been raining for a couple of days but who could have expected so much water!

I looked about this way and that. The water seemed to have spread into the horizon. In the pale moonlight peeping through the clouds the office building nearby looked like an island. I spent the night sitting in the verandah. A fish seemed to jump out of the water and back again. Harish cried out 'Ah, it's just over there under the tree. Quite a large one. All fish have escaped from the pond. If I had a drag net I'd have caught it immediately."

A flood was coming. Wading through knee-deep water, we carried all our boxes and beddings to the hall of the office building. It was fortunate that we shifted. For in the evening the mud-brick quarters could resist the onrushing flood no longer and collapsed. The roof, the posts and the fence were swept off by the current. Had we been there, we would have shared the same fate.

The water subsided after three days. Then we faced the problem of accommodation. It was not possible to stay permanently in a Government office building. But I very much objected to taking up residence in a thatched hutment. My friends of the card-game also were worried for me.

Dayalhari, the estate Manager, seemed to be in a position to place a vacant bungalow at my disposal. 'Would you like to stay at the bungalow", he asked. 'It was formerly owned by indigo planters. Now it is in ruins. One of the partners of the estate had repaired the place and made it habitable. So that he could stop here whenever he came on a tour of his estate. But after a few days' stay on one occasion he fled from the place never to return. It is a haunted house. Ghosts lurk in every nook and corner of the bungalow".

On hearing this yarn the doctor laughed at me. "Ghosts!" he exclaimed. "Well, as a doctor I can make things out. The boss was drunk all the time. In that condition it is hard to distinguish between animals, human beings and ghosts. And you, of all people, believe in this canard!"

Dayalhari turned to me and said, "Tell me if you are brave enough. I have the keys with me and the doors can be unlocked if you want. The floor is painted, the walls are distempered and the rooms furnished. You can enjoy yourself and be comfortable as long as you like. I live very near this place. The vacant house frightens the womenfolk of my family. They will feel greatly relieved if anyone comes and stays there".

The Police Inspector also assured me, "It's all right. You can move into the house. You are an educated man. Why should you have any superstition? I shall put a police constable on duty at the place. After all, you are our friend and a Government official as well".

So, I shifted to the bungalow. Harish, the servant, told me that he would do all work but would not stay there at night. He would finish the cooking by evening and leave I could not compel him to revise his decision for it seemed that he was prepared even to resign the office bearer's position on this issue.

Anyway, it did not really matter. The Police Inspector had kept his word. A constable came every night to guard the place. Often I woke up at night to find him sitting in the verandah.

Four months passed. I was quite comfortable there. I wonder who it was who scared away the partner of the estate. Dayalhari always made personal inquiries about me. Whenever I was in, he would come up on the verandah and ask, "Are you all right? Good, very good—".

Then he would turn to my servant and tell him that his wife wanted to see him. "Go and find out what it's about", he would say.

All this of course meant one or two dishes of curry or pancakes and rice pudding for me. It happened almost everyday. I was all alone here in this village with no one to look after me. Harish was not much of a cook. I took the food he prepared just because I could not help it.

The bungalow and Dayalhari's house were separated by a plot of *aus* paddy-land. From the verandah one could see everything going on there.

"Well Harish, I see a girl there these days—", I would begin.

In the office he was my peon but since we shared the same room many a night he was occasionally a friend also.

"That tall skinny thing that moves about all the time", I would continue.

"Not skinny, *Huzur*. She is a town girl and quite charming".

Harish kept all information about the villagers. He said, "She is the Manager's niece. Her mother is dead and her father has his second wife. She had now come to stay with her uncle because of trouble at home".

He smiled mischievously and added, "Her ways are exactly like yours, *Huzur*. She is afraid of

bathing in the pond lest she should get drowned. She bathes in water fetched from the pond. And who would fetch water for her So you can see that she herself fetches pitcherful of water".

What he told me about her made me feel that she and I were alike. In the whole village we two were different from the rest. We could not bathe in the pond. It was fate that had brought us to our exile in this jungly village but we retained our town-life habits. I was sure that the boring life here exasperated her and made her sigh just as it did me.

Yet I had never seen her clearly except as a shadow on the other side of the *aus* field, for at 10 I always left for the office. One Sunday I saw her carrying bathing water to the house. Many girls and women came to fetch water at the pond inside the compound of the bungalow. But she was quite different from the rest. She did not even know the way they rested the pitcher on the hipbone when they carried water. Most of the water spilled and soaked her sari. She could clearly see that the Sub-Registrar *Hakim* was standing on the verandah and watching her. Any other woman would draw the veil over her face and quickly leave the place. Some bashful woman would start running across the field like a porcupine. (I compare her with porcupine because her anklets jingled while she ran). But this girl looked straight at me and went away.

In November water in the ponds turned black since jute stalks were left in them to rot. Though I took quinine pills regularly one day I was running temperature and shivering with chill. I did not have even the strength to get up from bed. The work at the Sub-Registry almost came to a standstill. Peon Harish however had to go and attend office every day. In the afternoon I felt quite lonely. My mother was dead long ago and I thought of her. I remembered my friends in town. Thoughts of Dayalhari's niece also flashed across my mind. Whenever the temperature was low I got up and sat at the window, hoping that she might go to fetch water at the pond, or that Dayalhari's wife would prepare barley water for me and ask her to bring it here.

But she came,—not carrying the barley pot but empty-handed. I was groaning under a terrible headache, pressing my temples with the fingers. She came very close to my bed and watched me with her serene eyes. She was as fair as an English girl. As I looked at her she asked, "Are you feeling very uncomfortable?"

"No, no. I am quite all right".

Not that I was telling her a lie. Tell me, did one feel uncomfortable when such a girl uttered those words of sympathy? In the twinkling of an eye, the moaning changed into something musical like a song.

"Why are you standing? Please take your seat on the chair."

But instead of taking her seat she moved away. "I'm going now", she said as she left. "I shall come again".

I saw Harish coming. So she ran away. Harish returned from office to know if I needed anything. How sincerely did I wish the degree of his anxiety for me was a little less.

After being in bed for a month I recovered. Daily the girl used to visit me, towards the afternoon. She spoke very little but kept on looking at me and the look was sweet. In these rural areas the *Sadhu* and *Fakirs* used to cure people of their ills chantin mantram or canticle or by other mysterious processe Our doctor might have thought too much of himse but deep in my mind I knew it for certain that it w the sweet look of her eyes that brought about th cure.

After I recovered I did not see any more of he I was not allowed to expose myself to the cold and s I had to keep indoors every evening shutting the doo and windows. I used to sing at one time and m voice was liked by all. I had a harmonium brough from Dayalhari's house and resumed the practic One could not always follow doctor's instructions an I started keeping my windows open. It is rathe possible to enchant wild animals by singing but n people from the town.

At last in sheer desperation I made up my mir to write a few lines to her. I scribbled, "You used come daily when I was ill. I think it is better f me to be so again. The windows are kept ope every day so that I catch cold and fall sick again."

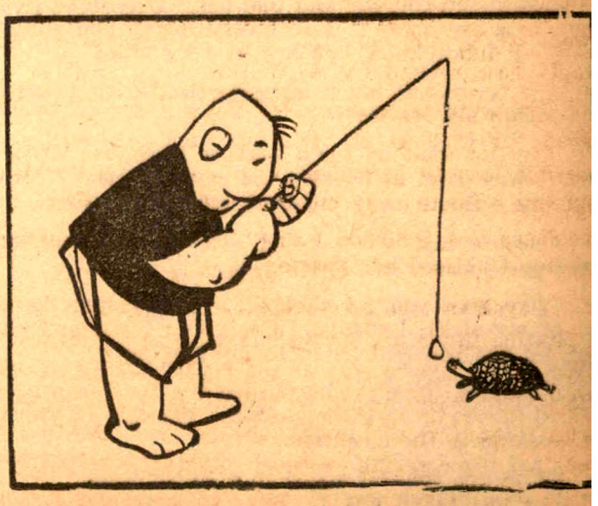
Instead of handing over the letter to Harish called a cowherd boy from the street and tipped hi four pice. "Go and give this letter to that girl", told him, "who is plucking brinjals in that Manager kitchen-garden. Let me know what she says".

He ran back with the news that she had hisse at him just like a king-cobra. "I have never bee there," she said. "The letter contains all lies." Th boy then told me that the girl in anger aimed prickly brinjal at him which put him to flight.

I had to pacify him with another one anna b because he had escaped from the fury of a cobr "Well, you did not come to me, you say. This fal from your lips! What then does it mean? It mea I have no one in this wide world. Very good. I ha no one then". This is how I tried to reconcile my self to the position.

I resumed attending office but came back earl One day I noticed an envelope lying on the floor. must have been dropped through the window.

She had written, "What I told the boy the oth day in sheer anger was not quite correct. I wer only once on learning that you were running a 1 degree temperature. I just peeped through the wi



"Why are you playing the fool?"
"Just for fun', She replied.....

ow. Why did you write that I used to go daily? It very improper that you should have written to ıe over a trifle". The letter was signed Labanya.

I was so happy to know her name. She now dmitted to have come only once. Much better ıdeed than complete denial. It then follows that her isit on other days was an illusion.

Came a second letter. She wrote, "May be, I ent four or five days, so what? Anyone would have one if it was learnt that a stranger was lying ill. did not enter the room of course. Please make sure ıat my uncle and aunt have no knowledge of it." s I raised my eyes I was surprised to find the writer f the letter herself standing near and watching me ith her dark brows puckered. She was smiling.

I asked her, "Why are you playing the fool?"

"Just for fun", she replied.

I gathered courage and told her, "Why don't you ome here any more? I feel very lonely and suffer lot. I didn't know you are so very cruel".

She became so much intimate that I felt heaven as within my reach.

The fun went on for a number of days. Whenver it was quiet and lonely she came to me. I also ept my servant away on some pretext or other.

One evening when I just started my singing ractice I noticed her passing by.

"I've seen you", I shouted. "You cannot keep ıt of my sight, Labanya. Come in. Come and sit ere on the bed and listen to my singing."

Strangely, the girl who pushed the door open and alked in was of dark complexion. The fair Labanya sappeared in the meantime.

"Who are you?" I asked in a harsh voice.

She was taken aback. Her voice trembled and she fumbled for words as she said, "I don't think you know me well. I was passing by when I heard you singing and stopped for a while. I came in because you called me. Very well, I am leaving".

The pleasant evening was spoilt. She was leaving in embarrassment and yet I was most unkind to her. I was abusing her all the time.

"So you came to spy on us. You must disclose your identity. Who are you? Who has sent you here?"

The girl disappeared beyond the hazy trees. A boy from the town as I was, I did not have enough courage to run after and get hold of her. Anyway I thought it would not be proper to delay any longer for there might be a scandal in no time. Somebody or other must have noticed that a girl had slipped out of my house.

Next day I took a chance and made the proposal to Dayalhari.

"I am most undeserving", I told him, and yet if you would be kind enough to marry your niece to me——".

"You? Would you care to give Labanya refuge at your feet? Her mother is dead. She is young and has suffered a good deal. She is very unfortunate indeed!"

Dayalhari shed tears in delight.

"Labanya, after a few days you are entirely mine. Listen, didn't you know about it?"

She replied with a playfully mischievous look in her eyes, "But my aunt was very angry — How did he know you, she asked me. Do you visit him often and make love to him — I ran away from her. If she could catch me she would have given me a beating. Well, aren't you going to sing today?"

She was panting. A charming smile lit her face.

I went almost mad. Once I could catch her, I would have taught her a lesson for playing tricks all these days.

She was running away and I went after her. I got over my fright and felt quite courageous. She stopped suddenly and giggled.

"Come and catch me if you can. I don't think you'll be able to. Come and catch me."

I went near and reached out for her. The hand just missed her. She edged away a little. She felt quite amused to have fooled me. Her laughter blended with the moonlight and rippled around. As I went near her she slipped out of my reach. I ran and ran and yet could not catch up with her.

"All right. Once again".

She pulled in a deep breath and started running again, making a sound like the continuous droning of a bumble-bee in the infinite silence of the night.

With my bare feet touching lumps of earth I realised that I was now in the *aus* field. The harvest was over and the ground had been ploughed again.

The country around was bathed in moonlight. She stood in the middle of the field and called out, "Well, you haven't been able to get me."

Well, I almost did. No, I just missed. Perhaps this was how will-o'-the-wisp enticed a wayfarer and sucked blood out of him.

My blood was on fire and I was not able to think in cool brain if I was doing the right or wrong. I reached the courtyard of Dayalhari's house. If a *hakim* like me were seen behaving in the manner I was doing people would certainly think I had lost my head.

However, I met with success at last and grabbed her by the hand "I am still weak after my recent illness", I panted as I held her soft hand in mine. "Why do you make me suffer like this?"

"You write to me and ask me to go to your house", screamed that girl who I had thought was spying on us the other day. "And then you come to my house and speak sweetly to me. What do you think I am. A doll to play with? Do you think you can do me whatever you like?"

In the twinkling of an eye the other girl whom I was chasing melted away in the moonlight.

So this girl was Dayalhari's niece! Another girl brought me here only to appease her by holding her hand. She tried to pull her hand out of my grip but I had held her more tightly.

"There is something very confusing about the whole matter. Tell me everything. My head is reeling."

But what did she know and what could she tell me! When she had heard that the lonely stranger from town was suffering in bed she tip-toed near my window. She had been wondering lately if I had a pair of eyes at the back of my head or else how could I be aware of her presence without turning my head and then make a mention of it in the letter....

She moved away hurriedly when she saw her uncle and I could not hear anything more from her. It did not however matter for there would be enough opportunity to know more later on.

Dayalhari welcomed me with a shout of delight.

"Have you come, son? Come in. I have told the Inspector and the Sub-Inspector in the Police station about you. Everyone is showering praises on you. No one even hears of such magnanimity these bad days."

I happened to meet the fair girl again for once. I had been asked to go on transfer from Biratnagar and I was to leave on the next day. That was our last night of stay in the bungalow. Labanya and I were asleep. Suddenly I woke up. Through the window the moon in the western sky could be seen. The moonbeam had entered the room obliquely. *Champa* flowers were in bloom somewhere and their fragran had filled the room.

The fair girl was smiling at us with her ha on the edge of the bed. On seeing her I felt ve happy.

"You have brought me much happiness", I t her. "I got Labanya because of you. Wherever am, I shall always remember you".

I was addressing her with the more intima second-person pronouncement for those younger age. She objected laughingly and asked, "Do y know how old I am?"

"Of course you are much young than I——

"I am much older. Grant, the indigo plant was my father. There was a lot of agitation Harish Mukherjee's paper when Nayantara w abducted. I am the daughter of that Nayanta You can now calculate how old I am".

"Women always have a tendency to conceal t real age and try to pass themselves as younger I replied. "But your tendency seems just t opposite?"

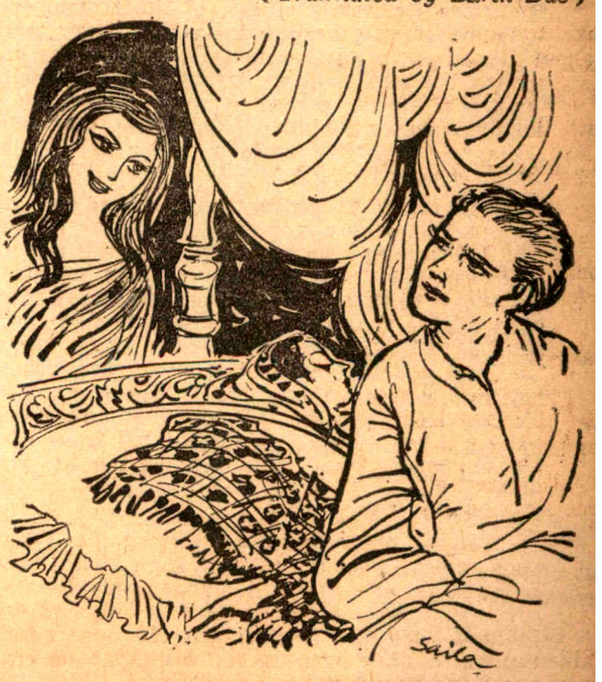
"But believe me, like all women at times I fe very sad. I yearn for love talks and the touch human beings."

She heaved a deep sigh. Her voice tremble "I am just a spiral of smoke. Fortunately the smok appears colourful in your eyes. As Labanya's proxy hoodwinked you and heard plenty of words of love

She laughed and went away.

She would not show herself weeping but woul show her smiles only. Perhaps that was why sh went away laughing like a mad person.

(Translated by Barin Das)



"But believe me, like all women, at times I feel very sad, I yearn for love talks and the touch of human beings.".....

HOUSE OF CARDS

(Continued From Page 68)

held between the lips. He had in his hands some fishing materials.

As soon as he sighted Shaila, he exclaimed, 'By love, when have you come, Shaili?'

'This morning, brother,' Shaila answered with a smile. 'Are you well?'

'Oh yes, all right. You're a newcomer, coming from Bengal proper—come, just prepare these baits, let's see what luck your hands fetch me. Today I'm going to a village for angling—in a landlord's tank.'

Taking the materials, Shaila said, 'Why not once visit ours, brother, I'll see how many fishes you can catch.'

'You've plenty of fish over there, isn't it?'

'Only our tanks are full of pretty big fishes—each one half a maund, fifteen seers, twentyfive seers. You know, brother, when I went there for the first time, my brother-in-law brought an eighteen seer Katla fish and demanded that sister-in-law must have to cut it in pieces. By God, how frightened I was! Now, of course, I don't fear at all—half a maund, twentyfive seers, all these I cut with perfect ease.'

'I feel like going, yes, I do, but a chance doesn't come. Sometimes I visit Calcutta, yet can't make time to see Amar Babu. But if you were in Calcutta, I'd have certainly gone to see you.'

'All right, I'll see,' Shaila said. 'Now we're also going to have a house in Calcutta. . . .'

'Are you building a house in Calcutta?' the brother interrupted her.

'He's going to buy a plot of land, then a house will be built in due course.'

Highly pleased, mother asked, 'Son-in-law is now earning fairly well, ain't it, Shaila?'

'In the village also he'll construct a brick-built house,' said Shaila with downcast eyes.

After a couple of months Shaila's mother sensed that something unusual had happened somewhere, neither son-in-law nor his mother wrote to or enquired about Shaila. She told her husband, 'I suggest you write a letter to Shaila's mother-in-law.'

Mahendra Babu was a man of quiet temperament. Whatever exaggeration she might have made about others and about her father's income, she had not spoken too highly of her father's nature. Really, he was a peace-loving person of noble disposition.

Frightened by what his wife told him, Mahendra Babu the very next day wrote a letter to Shaila's mother-in-law.

> I am highly obliged to you. You have done me a great favour by giving Shaila a shelter at your feet. I hope and pray that neither myself nor my Shaila may ever be deprived of that favour. I am unable to make out what has happened there, what offence Shaila has committed. But she must have done something wrong about which I have the least doubt. She has not disclosed anything, yet during the last two months she received no blessing from you. Our dear child Amar too does not write any letter. Kindly let me know what has happened. I will myself reach her at your feet.
>
> Then he added:
>
> Though Amar has not informed me, I have been extremely happy to hear from Shaila about his growing prosperity. It gladdens my heart to know that he is going to build a house in Calcutta. I have also heard about the good examination result of your second son—that he could not stand first just for a few marks. I bless him. May he secure the right place in his B.A. examination.

This letter brought tears into the eyes of Amar's mother. With the passage of time the anger smouldering within her heart had cooled down for want of incitement. Very often she recalled Shaila's image-like beautiful face. Shaila might be telling lies, yet the melody of her sweet words often rang in her ears. Today after going through this letter, her mind was relieved of the load that lay heavy on it. She was highly pleased with her son's wife. That portion of the letter she read again and again. . . . . a house in Calcutta, etc. . . . . .

She sent a letter to Amar. To Shaila's father she wrote:

> My daughter-in-law is the light of my house. Can she do any wrong? I could not make enquiries about her owing to preoccupations and the fault is mine. Amar will soon go to bring her here.

Overjoyed on receipt of this letter, Shaila immediately sat down to write to her husband.

Amar arrived. He brought with him a fish of about ten or twelve seers. Shaila did not lose time to cut it in pieces.

'Probably they couldn't catch a big-sized fish,' she remarked.

'It's started coming now,' commented her brother's wife, 'as if none else has so rich a husband!'

At night, Shaila was standing before Amar with downcast eyes. Amar brought out a letter and said, 'Well, what do all these mean?—You must at any cost bring a large fish. I have here told them we have plenty of fishes.—Well, we haven't a single tank with full rights. yet—shame! Then again—Pearl-studded ornaments are in vogue here, for me a necklace of imitation pearls. . . . . what's that, what's that! Why do you weep? Shaila, Shaila. . . . . .'

Shaila threw herself upon the bed and pressed her face against the pillow which began to soak with tears gushing out from her eyes.

What was all this for she could hardly tell her husband freely.

(Translated from Bengali by Sourin Choudhuri)

Shaila threw herself upon the bed and pressed her face against the pillow.....

A Boy or A Girl?

By JYOTIRMOY DAS GUPTA

IT is probably from the very beginning of human life a biological difference between the sexually contrasted forms male and female, in man as well as in animals, has always aroused intense awarness and provoked speculations concerning its significance and genesis. Many of the answers were bound up with theories of sex most of which are dismissed at once because of their unscientific approach. Some are based on whimsical conditions which cannot be seriously considered, others on unveriable factors such as the stars, phases of the moon, the climate, the mother's diet and also the parental desire for a male child, the age of the partner and their relative vigour, origin of the sperm from the left or right testicle, development of child in the right or left side of the uterus etc. Some are physiologically absurd and others are based on a big generalization on an outrageously small number of cases. It was towards the end of the 18th century some scientists even claimed to have seen a tiny human being inside the sperm and with all seriousness gave the nomenclature "homunculus" (Little man). But in the background of modern scientific truth, it is just like a child's desire to see the spinning old lady in the moon. These were promulgated at a time when hardly anything was known of the morphology and physiology of a cell, of cell division, of gametogenesis (maturation of the sperm and egg) and of fertilization. With the advent of scientific developments these hypotheses, however, proved incapable of accommodating the new observations. Towards the early part of the present century, Mendel's revolutionary discoveries of organic inheritance gained footing and focussed much attention to the mode of transmission of the inherited characters and sexuality.

The sex determination is an important consideration to a dairy farmer or to a chicken farmer. A father with several daughters would also very much appreciate the next child to be a son. But nature does not honour the wishes of anybody. It moves in its own path producing approximately equal number of males and females and the poor father is just as likely to be blessed with another daughter as he is to have a son.

CELL THE UNIT OF LIFE

In order to understand the physical basis of sexuality we shall first recognise a cell, the unit of life. It is a unit with individuality. Taken singly it behaves as an entire life. In a massive individual like us (Multicellular) it consists of many of these tiny units massed together. But our life story still starts with a single cell. Everyone of us at the outset of his or her individual life story is a microscopic single cell which grows by repeated multiplication and by its descendants' coherence shapes its own specific form. Our body consists of cells, perhaps fifteen thousand million or more of them. These cells may be disc-shaped, spherical, cubical, columner, starshaped, spiderlike, bracket-shaped, filiform or branched like a tree. They are also varied in their function performing different duties in our system such as olfactory, gustatory, visual, auditory, tactile, respiratory and reproduction etc. In spite of all these differences in size, shape and function they are built upon a general scheme. It consists of a small speck of living fluid or jelly-like protoplasm surrounded by a film or membrane. Inside the protoplasm are included globules of fat, glycogen, etc. and the most important structure, the nucleus, without which a cell usually ceases to exist.

REPRODUCTIVE CELLS

We shall concentrate our attention here to the nucleus of the male and female germ cells (reproductive cells), the sperms and eggs, manufactured by the male and female gonads, the testes and ovaries respectively. The sperms and eggs are actually the cells responsible for the propagation of living organisms. In higher types of animals the germ cells are dimorphic i.e., the male and female germ cells of the

ame species are different in their pattern. The male erm cells, the spermatozoa are extremely minute nd intensely active and in comparison with the vum or egg nearly 100,000 times bigger. The eggs re stationary unlike the spermatozoa in male. Many imes smaller than a full stop in this article. On an verage one hundred millions of sperms may be pre-ent in a single drop of seminal fluid. It is amazing o think that a few thousand millions of sperms which are necessary to father the entire population of the world today can be commodiously accommo-dated in a small thistle of a tailor. A spermatozoon is somewhat like a tadpole with a distinct head and a long tail. The head is composed of the nucleus and the tail of the cytoplasm. Tail is the motor organ which aids the spermatozoon to wriggle towards the ovum or egg which is more or less round with a huge storage of food material.

CHROMOSOMES

If we probe into the secrets of the anatomical details of the sperms and eggs, it reveals the pre-sence of twenty-four thread-like structures called chromosomes inside the nucleus. The chromosomes are complex protein threads which are colourless and special dyes are used to make them easily visible under the microscope. This gives them the name chromosome (Chroma=colour, soma=body i.e., coloured bodies).

These chromosomes are actually the agents through which the physical characters of parents are handed down to the successive generations. They are also responsible for determining sex. In any person we commonly find that some characteristics are inherited from the father e.g., hair decoration, the colour of the eyes, it may be, the shape of the hands, the arching of the eye brows, the pouted lips, the arch of the foot whereas many others are e.g., complexion, the shape of the ear and nose, the poise of the body etc., are carried by the virgin ovum of the mother.

GENES THE WONDER

Each chromosome reveals some infinitesimally tiny things, the genes which may be considered to be the nucleic acid and protein molecules held in a definite linear arrangement on a protein framework by some powerful force not yet understood. More simply a chromosome can be pictured like a beaded necklace in which the beads are genes stung in a pro-tein thread. The geneticists are still in the dark to give a satisfactory answer to the question, what is a gene? They can speak of a gene for woolly hairs or dark complexion but fail to answer why one particu-lar gene causes such characters. It is only the mecha-nical aspect of inheritance that is known to us. It is the endeavour of the geneticists to define each gene in chemical terms based on its structure and func-tions and to co-relate each gene to the actual chemi-cal process which it controls in the body of the orga-nism. They believe that each gene in some way or other controls a specific chemical process or synthesis in the system. The genes are probably isolated or poly-merised molecules of nucleoprotein which has the ability to produce enzymes or catalyst involved in some body process.

The immeasurably small genes have the potentiality to change the whole life of an individual. In the world of infinite minuteness particles like atoms, electrons and protons are immensely powerful to annihilate or to do good to humanity; the genes are likewise wonder of all wonders which control and shape the entire life force. It makes all the difference between a peace-maker and a war-monger, a sculptor and an iconoclast, a relegieux and an atheist; it is the action of the genes which makes a scientist, a politician, a poet, a lunatic, a beautiful or an ugly person out of a man. The revelation of these genes puts us in wonder and makes us awfully brooding how precisely and wonderfully we traverse this perilous path of creation.

CELL DIVISION

In each egg and sperm these chromosomes carry all the hereditary materials contributed by both the parents. Thus the total contribution of mother and father to the child is forty-eight chromosomes. The number of chromosomes and morphology are, however, different in different animals. Both the parents also started their lives with the forty-eight chro-mosomes compact together in the zygote (cell-formed by the union of a sperm and an egg). It mul-tiplies countless times in a geometrical progression i.e., two cells become four, four eight and eight sixteen and this goes on.

In the beginning of such division of the zygote specialization starts. Some cells give rise to muscles, some form skin, blood, brain, bone and so on and some are set apart to form gonads to manufacture germ cells, the sperms or eggs. When a boy or a girl is born they have the same fortyeight chromosomes in testes or ovaries which in puberty form sperms and eggs with half the number of chro-mosomes i.e., twentyfour in each case. It is a compli-cated process of cell division by which the 48 chro-mosomes in each cell are halved and become twenty-four in each sperm and egg. Technically it is called the maturation of germ cells or gametogenesis: the spermagenesis (in male) and oogenesis (in female) by which the sperms and eggs are formed where halving of the chromosome number from diploid (48) to haploid (24) takes place. Thus the total num-ber of chromosomes after the union of two mature germ cells, sperm and egg, is again restored by the number of "fortyeight" or twentyfour pairs. The chromosomes are conventionally expressed in pairs i.e., 24 pairs, because each of them finds its fixed partner in the chromosome ballet in a sperm mother cell (a cell from which sperm will develop). If there would not have been any reduction division each sperm and egg would carry 48 chromosomes and on uniting the offspring would start with 96 chromo-somes and thus the number would go on increasing to a fabulous infinity. This reduction division seems to be the device of Nature by which the number of chromosomes is kept constant in successive genera-tions.

SEX CHROMOSOME

The sex of everybody is determined at the time of conception and it is the father who is responsible for making a boy or a girl. The events or changes during the prenatal stage may, however, thwart the normal development to affect the degree of male-ness or femaleness but nothing can change the de-cided fate of a fertilized egg to be developed to a boy or a girl. Of the 24 pairs of chromosomes both in male and female gonads 23 pairs are called auto-somes and the last pair is called sex chromosomes as the genes in them are supposed to determine the sex of the individual. This pair can easily be recognised under the microscope by their behaviour and garni-ture in the entire chromosomal set-up. Leaving aside the autosomes (chromosomes other than sex chro-mosomes) if we consider the sex chromosomes the woman has got one pair which is being named XX. Each individual of this XX pair of chromosomes is actually contributed by both the parents. They are

(Continued On Page 80)

Maithon

By SUDHANSU MOHON BANERJEE

IT was not yet completely dark. The mellowed evening was yet to melt into a pristine blackness. The day was on its last gallop. Ramen Roy, the new Engineer, stood enchanted. His sensitive soul had discerned that perfect moment when night meets the day and light its counterpart. Though his profession made him an engineer and he had just returned from a course of training in the Tennesse Valley he had curiously developed a romantic and historical perspective. He had inherited this trait from his father who was an antiquarian and an archaeologist. He was mad after ancient records, documents, old coins, statues, figures. He would rave, he would brood, he would reconstruct and re-envisage a picture of the days long gone by. He was his own scribe and so to say his own pharisee too. He used to instil into his son's ears—Who says history is bunk ? Only those debunked heroes say this. It leaves its own imprint in the sands of time and sows its seed. It is an organic whole. It records the past no doubt but it has a value for the present and it is the cradle of the future. It repeats itself.

Ramen had been infected with his father's enthusiasm. So when he came back from the States he accepted a comparatively smaller job in Maithon. It fitted in with his ideas and his sense of idealism. He had a vague feeling that he was assisting in something big, something real. He remembered the day when he came here. A dismal day had just dawned in the wake of a black and bleak night. The sky was overcast. It was drizzling. Below the Barakar bridge a suddenly swollen river was fretting and fuming against the background of an autumnal cloudburst. On the left silhouetted against the sky was Panchet Hill somewhat in the posture of a crouching elephant. The temples here and there brought memories of the days when Lakshmana Sen ruled and Vaishnavas sang though it was also the land where Tantrik ritual held sway.

He remembered how that day when he crossed the river and on his way up saw a concrete slab pointing 'Maithon', he was a little intrigued. It literally meant 'Mother's land'. Was it a symbol and legend of New India that was being born where a new temple of humanity was to be built in whose construction he would help ? A river of sorrow was being turned into a river of joy and hope of sustenance and succour. His father was a little taken aback when he told him of the offer and his acceptance. He kept quiet for sometime and then slowly said—Is there a hand of fate in it? It is strange that your first station of work would be the same as mine.

Ramen was his only child, his mother having died while he was yet a baby. His father did not marry again. This sad event had occurred immediately after their return from Maithon 25 years ago when

anjib Roy went there to make an archaeological sur-ey and camped in the jungles for some time.

His father told him—Don't forget that you are oing to a place which is truly the symbol of Mother's and. Mother is everywhere but there she is more han prominent. My son, civilisation is based on a ream. Its codes and conventions, its ways of life and abits of mind are poised on a dream. History has o be read not merely in its framework of time se-uence, in its analytical bearing but also in its totali-arian and synthetic grasp. Every achievement, be it ttle or small, has to be tested by that measure, in he laboratory of human mind, in the crucible of pain nd passion. Today we are talking of pre-history, of he beginning of life in this planet, of the events that ccurred millions and billions of years ago. Tomorrow e will be talking of the history of another species in nother world. Bigger and brighter sputniks would oat over the space and bring news of the milky way rom another universe where life's history was being ritten in another fashion. Go, my son, you must ot merely have a place, but you must win. Don't rget the mother. Almost irrelevantly he asked—id you ever visit the Art Galleries? Did you see urillo's picture of Immaculate Conception?

Ramen was forcibly reminded of his father when e was having his usual evening walk over the ridge. hat was his daily routine. After the day's strenuous ork he would take a stroll by the side of the man-ade lake. Up the hillock occasional night birds ould chirp and down the dale in a corner Kalyanes-ari's temple and its trident would shine in the last low of the setting sun.

His only friend here was Ramanujam, the curator be of the new museum that was being set up ere with a wing entirely devoted to the preservation f the remnants of the old matrilineal culture. Rama-ujam was a hale and hearty man, somewhat older an Ramen and had begun his service under his ather. He was almost a chatterbox and would talk cessantly.

He often told him—Hello Roy, what's this? Here ou are an eligible bachelor, smart and young, yet the aid of honour is still absent. Haven't you mixed ith young damsels and have they not fallen heads nd ears in love with you? Don't tell me that. Go nd get yourself married. Repent—Ah! That you an do at your leisure. Don't you see the logic of it? e begin our lives in their laps. Then in course of me a mother, a sister, a wife, a daughter, often a rand-daughter takes charge of us. Isn't that too uch of a crude philosophy in these days of indivi-ual liberty? My friend—we are never independent spite of the Constitution and the solemn pledge at we would devote our all to maintain that inde-endence. Womenfolk see to that. Well, you are a bit a scientist, aren't you? Every position wants its eutron. There can't be a position without magnitude. reation is athirst amidst aeons of space. You must in in this atomic hula-hula dance. It's not jazz. ou must hear the music of the spheres. You must ne yourself to a suitable wave-length. I was married hen I was not even twenty. Result—of course a few hildren earlier than usual but perfect peace, no heart-urning, no stupid cupid's darts, no dates or data. I am insured, I am inoculated and I am insulated. Women don't run after me and I do not. What a peace, what an amount of energy saved?

I hope it is not the peace of the graveyard.

No my friend, no didactic struggle or creative emergence from pillar to post from Reno to Las Vegas. Be a good boy. Take my advice. Get a good bride. Invite us. Let us have a good feast.

What about the fist?

That can take care of itself. The toxin is gradually neutralized. It creates its antibody in time. After all a woman will one day cross your life. Why not sooner the better.

Let us talk about other things. What about this place?

Ah, shirker, please yourself. Here was the base of a big city — a prosperous town, and here flourished Mother cult *in excelsis*. Who were they—Kolarians, Dravidians, proto-Austroloids or Indo-Tibetans? I do not know, but this is evident that Kalyaneswari is the last surviving symbol of that great Mother concept. We are also following the same footsteps. That is why there are so many plans, so many programmes, so many phases. She has to be properly established in a social welfare state. That would be the last contribution of this Mother's land.

Ramen was reminded of these things while walking. Here were no mean achievements. The Sindri and Chittaranjan, the collieries down below, the dams and the power houses, the industrial belt that lay around him—were all pointers to a greater development of the Mother's land. Would it envisage a new dawn, a new promise and a renewed faith?

The fleeting eventide was almost romantic. The gloom was deepening, the riot of colour taking its flight. On the crest of the hill which was the highest point in the neighbourhood there was a raised platform where floral and other offerings were often placed. A small lamp had just been kept there. Its flickering light was perhaps an offering from a disturbed soul to the spirit beyond. It was almost a beacon light. A woman was coming down. She looked young and comely. She had put red oleanders on her matted locks and flowing hairs. She was humming a tune. Ramen was going up. She was coming down. They met at the half way. Below, the river danced and above, the sky looked. She was really older than she apparently appeared to be and there was an expression in her large penetrating eyes which he could not fathom. In that split fraction of a moment, he looked at her and she at him and the combined magnetic effect was terrible. Two poles had met, one a Harrow Harvard Tennesse-returned boy and the other an unsophisticated forest girl, unlettered and uncultured. He did not stop any further but he could feel that here was a woman who was looking at him with more than amazement or wonder. An unknown bondage had developed in a second.

Ramen felt mentally disturbed. There was really nothing to be worried about but even then there seemed to be a 'but'. When he came down from the top there was no trace of her except that she had dropped inadvertently the bunch of red flowers which he instinctively picked up.

He returned to his quarters. Ramanujam was waiting there and he said—What ho! friend, you look moody. Nothing serious I hope. Met a tiger or better still a tigress? They are much better than suckers

who squeeze you night and morn. Tell me what is the matter.

Nothing.

Don't be silly. Your face shows that something is wrong. How did you get these flowers?

Oh, don't worry.

The historian Ramanujam always loved to talk and hear his own voice—You know that in old days a curious rite developed in matriarchal societies. It was called in some parts "Dipala dinne" or offering of light at the altar of the unknown spirit which was symbolic of an invocation to the great Mother to send a proper mate, a consort who would give her a son. In course of time it became an open invitation that here was a woman waiting to entertain and be consummated. A red flower was its peculiar sign.

Don't talk of taboos and totems.

Well, don't be afraid, a red flower has no significance in the mid-twentieth century but a red mind has i.e. a mind which has been coloured either by emotion or by set dogmas.

For the time being the topic ended there. It however left a trail. Ramen could not forget the incident. Every evening while strolling there he would be reminded of this chance meeting and would half expect to see the lady of the lake with her lamp again. Though he did not physically meet 'er, he felt somehow or other a presence.

Days passed. That a little incident on the top of the road had almost been effaced from the conscious memory, though it was in full force in his sub-conscious mind, when the second scene arose. It was a misty night. He was down with the 'flu and was running a high temperature. There was none in the house. Even his servant had retired. He was feeling restless amidst fitful rounds of sleep. Suddenly he felt that he was seeing a dream where he was awakened to the consciousness that someone was tending him, someone was nursing him with all the care of a professional. It was such a relief. There was none to give a dash of Eau de Cologne to his hot forehead or a cup of water to soothe his fever-parched throat.. He fell into a deep and restful slumber. He was aroused from it almost at the break of the day by cries of 'Thief, Thief'. It was the hour before the gods awake. His servant came running and was aghast at seeing his master so ill. On enquiry he learnt that someone in black apron was seen coming out of the house a few minutes ago. Some said it was a thief whose attempt was timely foiled. Others said that it was a ghost. A few only smiled.

Ramen was further nonplussed. The fresh fragrance of Eau de Cologne was still there. That at least could not be a dream. His excited brain wove a thousand stories and a thousand lights shone in his mind. His keen eye had discerned some red flowers too. This was too much. He felt very uneasy but kept quiet. This mental uneasiness retarded his recovery.

A few days later after he had somewhat recovered, Ramanujam raised the issue again—Roy, better take leave, go home and see your father, get married if possible—

Nonsense.

No nonsense, it is full sense. Come and dine with me tonight, we shall talk it over again.

That very night the climax came. After dinner he was talking with Ramanujam and he was late in returning. His standing instructions to his servant were not to wait for him. He had his latch key. H came back, opened the door. The light was not o Before he could flash his torch someone had claspe him. He felt the warm touch of a woman's breas Someone was imprinting a feverish kiss on his fore head. It was more a soothing touch than a sensatio of rock and roll. He forcibly released himself fro her grasp and in his mad fury took up a cane an lashed her mercilessly and cried—Get out. When h put on the light he could see the crouching figure o a woman hurrying away in shame and pain, leavin a trail of blood. He felt sad. He need not have bee so cruel. After all, he should not have lost his balance

He forcibly released himself from her grasp an in his mad fury took up a cane and lashed he mercilessly and cried — Get out.....

His servant Thomas, the Adibasi Christian, wh was most devoted to him came running. On learnin the facts he remarked—This must be Marion. Sh has one or two screws of her brain loose. She is a right otherwise but very abnormal regarding a com plex—She says she has a child or will get a chil She is an old woman by now—

Old—She looks young.

Past forty, Sir. It is a pitiable case. She wa a pretty girl and from her very girlhood she had deve loped a maternal love for children. She was marrie early and had her own baby. But unfortunately sh lost him soon. This unhinged her considerably s much so that the husband deserted her. About th

ne a Bengali family came here on a survey work—
have heard it from my mother. The wife was sick
d she had a baby of six months. They wanted a
t nurse and Marion was appointed. She was so
grossed with the baby and so enamoured of him
at the mother became frightened. She said to her
sband—Let us leave this place at once She would
t only spoil the baby and take him away from me
t she is a witch. God knows she may even claim
e baby's father too as her own. The husband natu-
lly said "Rubbish". But the lady did not stop there.
e really left with her baby for Calcutta and warned
r husband to follow quickly The woman when
e saw that they were gone, behaved almost like a
lky tigress deprived of her cub. Then one night the
ntleman found her waiting in his bedroom. She
erely said—Give me back my son or give me one.

This was too much for the gentleman and he
ipped her out of the room.

That was too much for her. She became comple-
ly mad for a time The Rev. Father Abraham of
e Mission took pity on her and kept her in the Mis-
n hospital. Gradually she recovered and became her
self again. He told her the story of Christ and
e Virgin Mary and she took refuge in Christianity
d became one of the best sub-nurses. Everybody
spects her, every patient loves her. I will tell you
story. A refugee from East Bengal, a good high caste
ahmin boy homeless and penniless came here. He
t the job of a messenger though he was a matricu-
e. His health was poor. He had passed quite a
enuous time. He fell ill. The doctors expressed the
inion that it was leprosy. He lost his job, lost his
elter, lost everything he had. Nobody would look at
m. Marion came and gave him shelter in her own
s. There was a huge agitation. She was suspended
m her job; she was asked to vacate her quarters.
e left it with him and lived in the outskirts of the
lage in an improvised shelter for months. People
monstrated with her. She said—Ask Jesus, did He
t nurse a leper? She was adamant. For months
e tended the ailing boy, fought with death but ulti-
ately had to give in. He died and on the last day
e boy said—Mother, I am a Brahmin but my last
ayer is that let me be your son in the next birth.
m so already.

Ramen was so agitated that he could not restrain
nself.

Who was the Bengali gentleman who was here
entyfive years ago whose baby she had tended with
e milk of her own breast—

Sanjib Roy—

What!—

He at once got up pale and shaking. He ran for
e village. There was a stir there. The old Father
raham was also much agitated. Marion was no-
here to be seen. She was seen only about 11 o'clock
the night previous going towards the colony.
men sat there helpless and the only words he could
ter were—Mother, Mother.

Translated by author from the original in Bengali)

A BOY OR A GIRL

(Continued From Page 76)

almost identical in their morphology. They remain together side by side like other pairs (autosomes) of the chromosome ballet and separate during reduction division in which from one cell two daughter cells are formed. Each X along with 23 chromosomes form a daughter cell The cells or eggs thus produced are all alike having 23 autosomes and an X (23+X=24 chromosomes). The sperm mother cells in man also contain the similar 23 pairs of autosomes but the pairs of sex chromosomes are XY. The X is the same as we get in woman but its partner is a tiny Y, different in size and morphology. In case of reduction division in this case each daughter cell or sperm will have 23 autosomes and one X or one Y in its share (23+X=24 or 23+Y=24). The male germ cells or sperms thus produced are of two types, exactly fifty per cent in each case i.e., X-bearing or Y-bearing, out of 200,000,000-500,000,000 sperms released by a man in each ejaculation, half the number possesses X and half Y. Now let us imagine the picture that millions of sperms are racing to hit the target, the egg, first which remains fixed in the uterus. It has been claimed that when a sperm reaches within a certain range of the ovum some chemical attraction is brought about to force the sperm, somewhat mechanically towards the ovum and fertilize it. A single sperm enters a single egg and a new individual starts on its way. The luckiest one in the race reaching first will determine the sex accordingly. If it is an X-bearing sperm it will form XX combination i.e., 23 pairs of autosomes and XX (23 pairs+XX=24 pairs) On the other hand, if the individual has been Y-bearing the resulting combination of 23 pairs of autosomes and XY would form a boy (23 pairs+XY=24 pairs).

MYSTERY STILL UNSOLVED

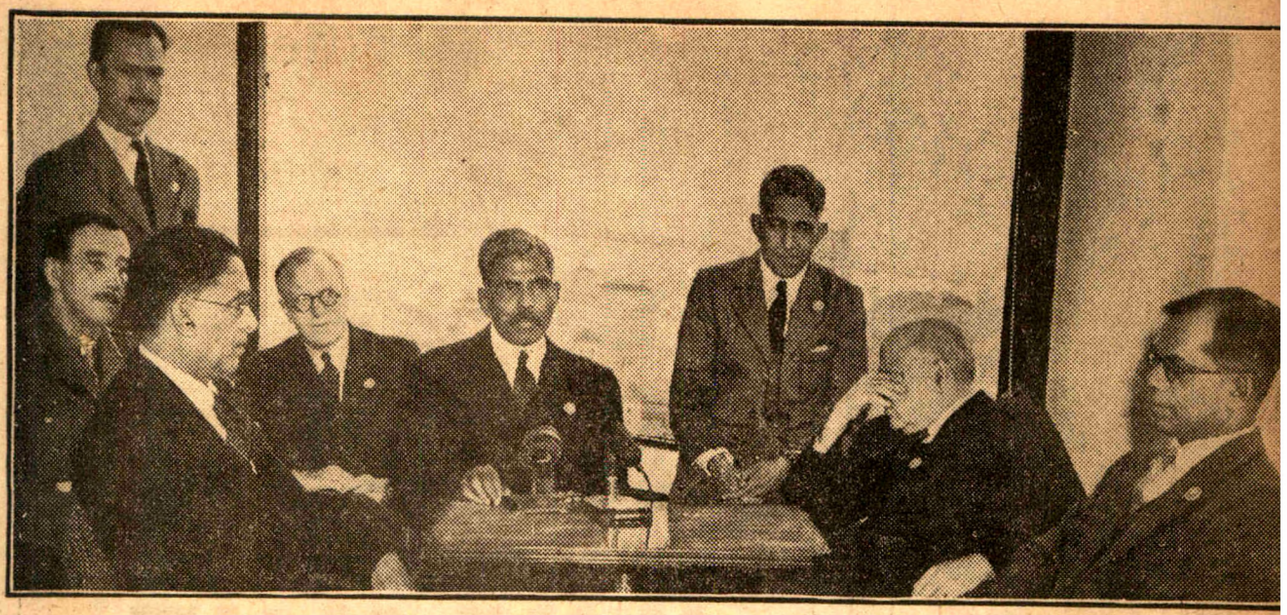
The fact remains that it is just merely a chance if the combination will be to produce a boy or a girl.

From many controversial issues Bridges modified the theory of sex determination in which he states that there are many genes for maleness and femaleness in each chromosome and everybody has genes for both conditions. The X chromosomes carry preponderance of genes for femaleness and the autosomes for maleness. Now the sex of the individual is determined by the balance between genes i.e., the ratio of autosomes and sex chromosomes. The ratio found to control the sexuality in *Drosophila melanogaster* (fruit fly) is stated below:

Sex	X chromosomes	Autosomes
Supermale	3	2
	4	4
	3	3
Normal female	2	2
	1	1
Intersex	2	3
Normal male	1	2
Supermale	1	3

Without probing into the moot points the combination of XX and XY are the simple answer to the hallowed mystery of sex. Now it is a matter of time when the geneticists may develop a control over the genes and their balance and on the X and Y-bearing sperms which will enable them to cater a male or a female child according to the parents' desire. It will allow the father to stay at home in complacence instead of anxiously pacing in the hospital corridor for the errand—a boy or a girl?

Shree Shree GOURNITAI



Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, Supply Member of the then Governor General's Executive Council, leader of the Deleg tion of India, signed the United Nations Charter, on June 26, 1945, at San Francisco. In this picture are seen : Ca T. Edward Brownson, Secretary; Major General W. J. Cawthorn, Military Adviser; Sir Firoz Khan Noon, Delegat Mr. John Bartley, Legal Adviser; Dr. P. J. Thomas, Economic Adviser; Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, Chairman; Sir V. Krishnamachari, Delegate; Mr. K. P. S. Menon, Principal Adviser. Since then India has played a considerable role in U. N

INDIA AND THE UNITED NATIONS

By P. G. KRISHNAYYA

SIR A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, then Supply Member of the Governor-General's Executive Council and Leader of the Delegation of India signed the United Nations Charter at San Francisco on June 26, 1945. Since then India has played a considerable role in the affairs of this world organization. A report of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace sums it up this way :

> India wants the United Nations to develop into a true international institution of worldwide prestige; it must be as broad-based as possible and be in a position to influence and help the member States and the people of the world in regard to such basic matters as human rights, freedom of dependent peoples, and the development of economically backward areas. At the same time India wants the United Nations, under the present circumstances, to have only limited powers in such important fields as collective enforcement measures and control and ownership of atomic energy. In regard to the most important question, the maintenance of international peace and security, India believes that the responsibilities and functions of the United Nations will be better exercised and performed through concentration on the pacific settlement of disputes rather than on any other methods, for it is feared that emphasis on the military functions of the United Nations will tend to disrupt, rather tha strengthen, the organization.

Srimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit somehow ha made the greatest impression at the headquarte of the United Nations. Her personality and her bloo ties to the Prime Minister of India helped her to som extent to achieve this. The United Nations observe very strict protocol and few have achieved the statu she has won in diplomatic circles. As an ex-Presider of the General Assembly of the United Nations, a the headquarters at least, even her brother will hav to take a second place to her.

The election of Srimati Pandit for the Pres dentship of the General Assembly of the Unite Nations is a personal triumph for her sagacious an courageous statesmanship. It is the culmination o her active association with the world organizatio almost since its inception. At the time of the Sa Francisco Conference in 1945, India was not politi cally independent; but as a non-official Ambassado of the suppressed masses of Asia and Africa, she cam paigned vigorously to make their voice heard in th deliberations of the Conference. From 1947, whe India became free, she has been heading the India delegation year after year, except for a brief perio

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when her Ambassadorial assignment at Washington kept her away from the United Nations.

Srimati Pandit has the unique record of scoring several firsts in the national and international life. She was the first woman to become a Minister in India; she was the first Asian woman to become an Ambassador. She has also the distinction of being the first lady in the world to head a national delegation to the United Nations General Assembly and become its President. What is the secret of her unparalleled success? Her beautifully and delicately moulded face, fascinating voice, charming manners, wavy grey hair and flowing saree coupled with the dignity and poise of her bearing, and facile and felicitous expression have made her a most popular, respected and distinguished figure at the United Nations. Endowed with abundant natural intelligence, she is also gifted with the ability to say the right thing at the right time. She has extraordinary psychological insight into people and affairs, while her diplomatic finesse is no less yet another remarkable feature of her personality. Her slender form, however, embodies tremendous will power which explodes, on occasions, into a blazing indignation against the incompetent, but by her quick, friendly gestures, she will silence the wail of anguish and brighten the atmosphere with the sheen of her child-like laughter. She has a magnanimous heart which harbours neither pettiness nor vindictiveness.

* * * *

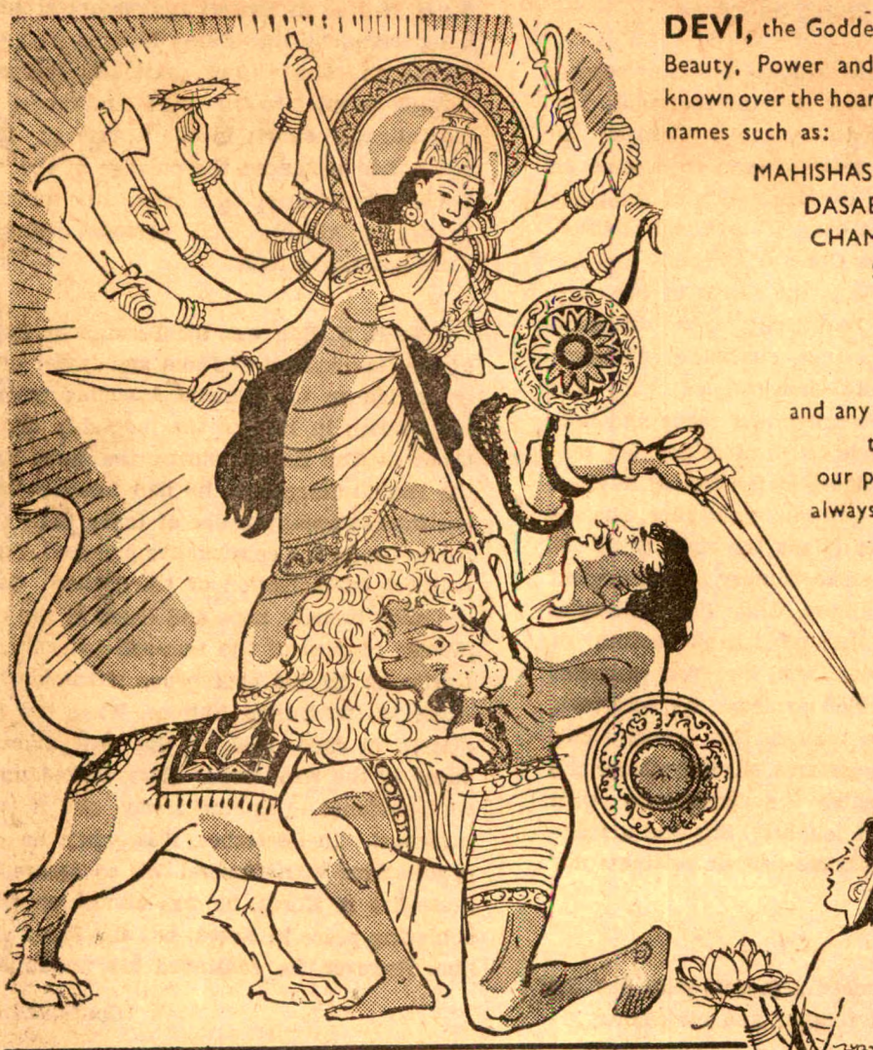
The next man was indeed a modest man but he won profound respect for himself and his country.

The lacerating news of the unexpected demise of Sir B. N. Rau in Switzerland was received with poignant sorrow by the United Nations. The General Assembly and the various national delegations paid glowing tributes to the great statesman who, by his indefatigable efforts in the cause of international peace, had enhanced the prestige of the United Nations. Many others who knew him more intimately by ties of kinship and personal friendship paid their homage in tears.

Sir B. N. Rau was the Permanent Representative of the Government of India and leader of the Indian delegation to the General Assembly from 1949 until his election in 1952 to the judgeship of the World Court at The Hague. During the three years he led the Indian delegation, he had assiduously promoted the international prestige of India, built up the Arab-Asian Group for constructive purposes, facilitated the political emancipation of the Italian Colonies and generally brought hope and cheer to the lives of suppressed peoples of the non-self-governing and Trust territories by his courageous championship of their cause at the United Nations. When the Korean War started in June, 1950, all the delegations including those of the rival power blocs, looked up to him for wise guidance in finding a way out of the ghastly holocaust. In December, 1950, when he carried on negotiations with General Wu to secure a basis for cease-fire in Korea, he was almost on the point of achieving peace in Korea, but the Fates were against him. However, he continued his undaunted and in-

(*Continued on page* 86)

U. N. Representative for India and Pakistan : Before delivering his statement to the Security Council on the Kashmir question, Dr. Frank P. Graham (centre), U. N. Representative is seen talking informally with Sir Benegal Rau (left), Permanent Representative of India to the U.N., and Prof. Ahmed S. Bokhari, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to U.N.



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CAN THE CLIMATE BE CHANGED?

By I. GLUKH AND S. SAVINA
Research Workers of the Institute of Geography
of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences

BY climate we mean the weather conditions that prevail for many years in a given locality of the globe. In contrast to weather which continuously changes the climate of a district undergoes comparatively little change. This is explained by the fact that without man's active interference the principal factors that make the climate do not undergo radical alterations in the course of many years. One of the reasons why the climate is relatively stable is that it depends upon the influx of heat from the sun which practically remains the same all the time. This is what causes great differences in climate.

An equally important role is played by the air currents of the atmosphere. With them is connected the transmission of warmth and moisture from one district of the earth to the other. Despite the diversity and variability of these currents they have their regularities which manifest themselves clearly in the course of long periods of time. That is why in regions which lie in the same latitude and, therefore, receive the same amount of heat from the sun the climate may differ greatly. This is due to air currents coming to these regions which in some cases bring warmth, in others—cold.

SURFACE OF THE EARTH

There exists another important climate-influencing factor, namely the surface of the earth. The diversity of climates corresponds to the great diversity of the earth's surface with its seas, oceans, warm and cold currents, lakes, mountains, planes, forests, etc. even under the same influx of heat from the sun and the same air currents.

The question arises: does the climate change and can it be altered?

Radical changes in climate occurred in the life of the earth lasting for thousands of years. Only archaeological excavations and fossil remains of plants and animals, information about the level of lakes and seas and astronomical computations of the position of the earth in respect to the sun can give us an idea about the climate of those distant periods. These data enabled scientists to establish that, for instance, several thousand years ago the climate near Moscow and in Byelorussia was very harsh. And prior to that, many millions of years ago, palm forests grew on these areas. At that time South Africa, India, Argentina, Brazil and Australia were covered with ice.

CLIMATIC FLUCTUATIONS

There are also short-term periodic changes in climate observed in the course of a few years which it would be more correct to call climatic fluctuations. The observations of the meteorological stations for a period of 150-200 years give us an idea about them. The rise in the temperature in the Arctic observed in 1920-1945 may serve as an example. During this period the temperature of the water in the seas was temporarily raised by 8° Centigrade as compared with that of 1920.

The glaciers at Spitsbergen and Alaska receded markedly. The ice cover of the seas was considerably reduced, which made it possible, by the way, for the Soviet icebreaker "Sibiryakov" to cover the North Sea route in 1932 in one navigation.

Both the radical marked changes in climate and the short-term changes occurred independently of man's activity. It is supposed that the first were caused by changes in the composition of the atmosphere, chiefly as a result of the changes in the content of carbon dioxide and water, while the second were due to alterations in solar activity. It should be noted that no theory has been created as yet to adequately explain all the regularities in the changes of climate.

HUMAN INTERVENTION

Of special interest are the changes in climate caused by man's active intervention. As yet people cannot in any considerable way alter major processes taking place in nature. But they can markedly alter the physical properties of the earth's surface and in this way influence the climate. This will become clear if we recall that the air is warmed on the whole not from above, not directly by the rays of the sun but from below, from the surface of the earth warmed by the sun. The distribution of solar energy that reaches the earth, namely the amount of energy which goes to warm the air and the amount that it takes to transform water into steam, determines the diurnal and annual course of all the elements of the climate. Therefore, by draining or irrigating separate parts of the earth we can redistribute solar energy for man's needs. The entire system of measures to alter the climate, to be more exact, the local climate is based on this principle.

Extensive and systematic work on the improvement of natural condition is conducted in the Soviet Union. The climatic conditions of the country are so diverse that the works undertaken to alter them differ greatly. They proceed on the whole along two lines: irrigation and draining.

In the arid districts there are tremendous unutilized reserves of heat which with a sufficient supply of water could ensure high farm crop yields. Irrigation has considerably altered the appearance of these areas. Rich oases have sprung up in places where bare lifeless sands were before. Gardens and green cotton plantations grow there now. Such is the "Rakhta-Aral" oasis in the Hungry Steppe (Central Asia). And it is not the only one. Millions of hectares of land are irrigated in the Soviet Union in the districts of Central Asia, in Kazakhstan, Transcaucasia and North Caucasus, Crimea and on large areas of the steppes.

EFFECT OF IRRIGATION

What effect does irrigation produce? In the desert the temperature in the daytime on the surface of the soil reaches 65° C while on the adjacent irrigated areas it is about 35° C. In the large oases the temperature of the air during the warmest months is by 3° C lower than in the desert. Is that much or

(Continued on page 87)

INDIA AND THE UNITED NATIONS

(*Continued from page* 83)

efatigable efforts in the spirit of his own inimitable ords: "The real failure is the failure to try!" A rateful world appreciated his self-less dedication to he cause of world peace and elevated him to the Vorld Court Judgeship as though to give him peace nd rest after three years of strenuous political work n the General Assembly and the Security Council.

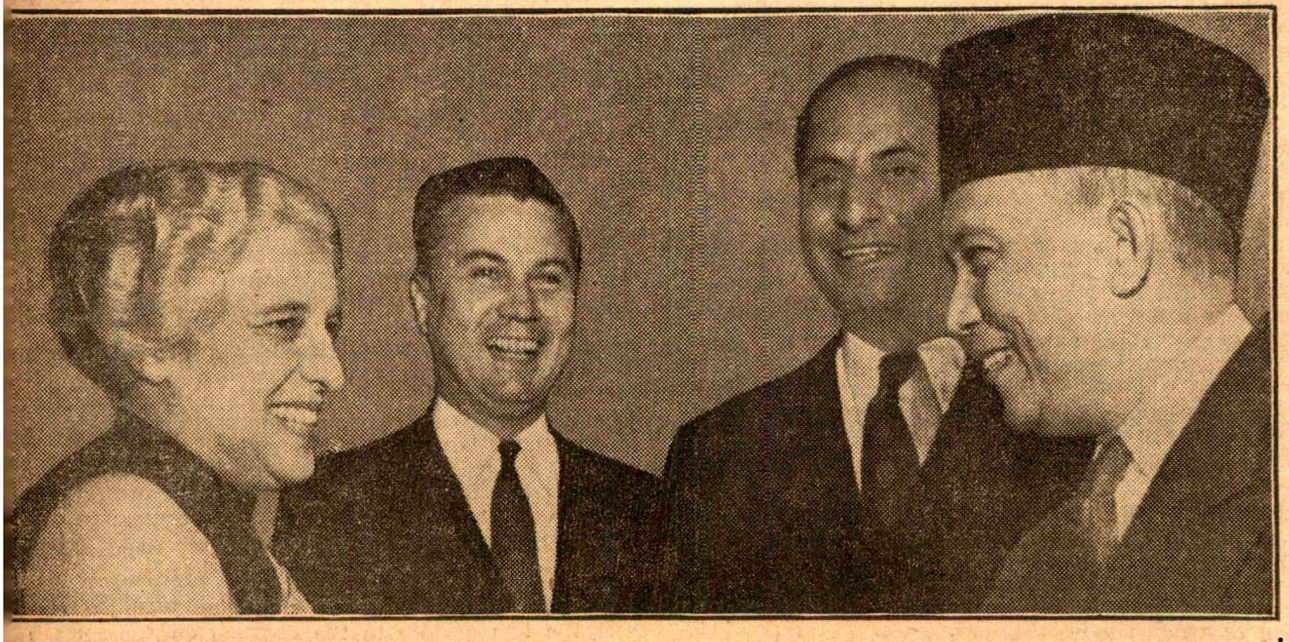
What are the facets of Sir B. N.'s personality hich contributed to his phenomenal prestige and uccess at the United Nations? Moral and intellectual ntegrity even in the rough and tumble of power poli- cs at the United Nations was his bed-rock; he lled the sails of diplomacy at the United Nations ith the wind of his integrity. With brilliant scholar- hip in constitutional law and a dazzling analytical ind, with an extraordinary flair for finding quick nd suitable formulae for insoluble deadlocks, an un- uffled temper and sunny optimism reflected in his oft, deep and confident tones and the kindly smiles f his magnificently plain and unassuming persona- ty, Sir B. N. sauntered on from victory to victory. He as a statesman who never sought refuge in diplo- atic codging in approach or verbal hanky-panky n expression. He spoke with laboratory precision, ith the delicate lilt of a meticulous mind and irre- stible sweetness of a sincere heart. His austere gure, detachment almost saintly, cool utterances ith no propaganda overtones, self-assurance born f high purpose compelled respectful attention from ven blatant demagogues. He drafted the Constitu- ons of India, Burma and Libya, besides advising everal other Governments on knotty constitutional ssues. During the brief period he sat on the World ourt, he lent prestige and dignity to it by his legal erudition and political insight. Despite his tempera- mental shying from publicity, he had the limelight of International Press. Yet nothing detracted him from his child-like simplicity. There was no air of long-faced gravity or ginger-bread grandeur about him. Wherever he was, he smelled fresh air and noth- ing of varnish, and invested the atmosphere with the aura of impeccable sanity and aroma of rare inte- grity.

* * * *

In contrast to Sir B. N. Rau was Mr. V. K. Krishna Menon. Krishnayya's News Service conduct- ed a poll among American correspondents who cover the United Nations because there was a feeling that Mr Menon was the most unpopular of all delegates that have come here, at least among Americans. But, surprisingly, a great majority of these correspon- dents came out and said that whatever his short- comings after the late Mr. Vishinsky of the U.S.S.R., Mr. Menon was the star of the United Nations. He is the man everybody wants to see and hear. Here is what an American correspondent told about him in the poll:

> Mr. Menon is often a thorn in the side of the old- fashioned diplomat, and is, therefore, frequently severely criticized and maliciously misrepresented. He will make no concessions to futile double talk, but goes straight to the point with his brilliant inexorable logic, usually in the simplest terms. I have been present at most of Mr. Menon's press conferences at the United Nations, and have heard him speak on and off the record. He was always courteous and cooperative with reporters, except when they have been downright rude; on these occasions he has rebuked them sharply.
>
> I remember one occasion when American reporters asked him why India presses for "recognition of Red China". Mr. Menon answered crisply: "My country's view is not that the United States should recognize

(*Continued on page* 88)



eventh Session of the U. N. General Assembly: Before the opening meeting of the seventh session of the U. N. Gene- al Assembly Sm. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Chairman of the Delegation of India, shaking hands with Mr. Lambertus alar, Acting Chairman of the Delegation of Indonesia, as Mr. James Barrington (left), Chairman of the Delegation f Burma, and Sri Rajeswar Dayal, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, look on. Srimati Pandit olds the distinction of being the first lady in the world to head a national delegation to U. N. Assembly.

CAN THE CLIMATE BE CHANGED?

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little? For comparison we may indicate that at this time of the year the average monthly temperature changes from south to north for a distance of 400 kilometres by 3° C. That means that in passing from the desert into the oasis we feel the same drop in temperature as if we travelled more than 400 kilometres to the north. Differences were found in other meteorological conditions as well. For instance, the relative humidity in the oasis is greater by 6-10% than in the desert and the velocity of the wind is reduced by about one-half.

Oases are created in the steppe zone, too, where afforestation plays an equally important role. During the years of the fifth Five-Year Plan period alone (1951-1955) more than 2819 thousand hectares of forests were sown and planted. Work has been conducted to promote the natural regeneration of forests on 2705 thousand hectares. Afforestation decreases runoff and increases the water content in soil. The humidity of the air layer nearest the soil is heightened, its temperature is reduced and the velocity of the winds is lowered. The "Kamenny steppe" ("Stoney Steppe") located near the watershed between the Volga and the Don Rivers is a graphic example of a steppe oasis. It was so named because in the past this was a typical section of the black soil steppe in the semi-arid south-east the ravine slopes of which were covered with boulders and rocks. The first transformer of this steppe was the Russian scientist V. V. Dokuchayev. Today this formerly sun-scorched spot of the bare steppe has become unrecognizable. Broad forest strips grow along the boundaries of the fields and reservoirs have been created in the ravines and hollows bordered by shrubs and trees. The change in climatic conditions of the fields surrounded by forest strips has led to a marked rise in yields. For instance, during the dry year of 1946 the winter wheat yields on the fields protected by trees were 8 times higher than on fields in the open steppe.

ARTIFICIAL LAKES

The digging of artificial lakes and large reservoirs is proceeding apace in connection with the irrigation projects and the erection of hydropower stations. In the various districts of the U.S.S.R. more than 20 large reservoirs have been and are being created. Artificial lakes which are hundred kilometres long and scores of kilometres wide exert a considerable influence on changes in the local climate.

Besides the huge areas which require irrigation there are lands with surplus moisture. These are the bogs and water-logged localities. Draining decreases the humidity of the air, reduces the number of misty days, promotes better warming of the soil, and makes the locality more healthy. The draining of bogs is conducted on a wide scale in the U.S.S.R.

The creation of artificial seas, the afforestation of deserts and steppes, the draining of bogs—such is by far not the full list of measures which in one way or another alter the local climate. Can the combination of these changes influence the climate on a large scale? The answer may be given in the affirmative.

Today Soviet scientists are elaborating bold projects to alter the climate and, hence, nature itself.

A number of projects is connected with the problem of preventing the drop in the level of the Caspian Sea. The drop in the water level is doing great damage to different branches of economy. According to engineer M. M. Davidov's project the waters of the Siberian Rivers will be sent to the Caspian Sea, and according to engineer G. B. Dmitriev's plan the waters of the northern rivers, especially the Pechora and Vichegda rivers, will be sent into the Volga and from it into the Caspian Sea.

The problem of altering the climate is extremely fascinating but it requires further thorough investigation.

Refugee Rehabilitation

(*Continued from page 29*)

the war. Moreover, most of the refugees in Germany were skilled workers, while in India the case was reverse.

In India the resettlement problem is viewed as a partial State responsibility. The "Equalization of Burdens Scheme" governed the German approach. In other words, the resident population and the refugees shouldered the same burdens and received the same benefits. It was held that the entire German people was responsible for the war, and so no particular segment of the population should suffer more than the rest.

The case for "equalization of burdens" was much more clear in India, and yet the method adopted was completely upside-down. Those least responsible for the partition, refugees from Sind and the West Punjab and East Bengal, had to carry heavier consequences of the partition than the residents of unruffled provinces. Three men—Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel and Sardar Baldev Singh—agreed to the partition scheme on behalf of India without consulting the peoples concerned, and two of these three men came from provinces which did not have to be partitioned. Indian Parliament, mostly composed of representatives of the resident populaces, rejected the idea of a special sur-tax to spread the burden evenly between the refugees and the residents. In Germany, on the other hand, equalization levies on capital, quite distinct from the ordinary tax on capital, were willingly accepted.

Of the eleven to twelve million German refugees nine million are what they call "expelees". These are the Germans who have been systematically forced out after 1945 from German territories that went to the Soviet Union and Poland under the Yalta and Potsdam Agreements. Here, too, there is an Indian analogy. Quite a few thousands were systematically squeezed out of Pakistan.

There has been one difference. Some Germans emigrated to overseas countries, particularly to the United States. But their number did not exceed 300,000. West German economy is so expanding that there is hardly any unemployment there despite the steady stream of refugees. Germany does not regard the refugee as a burden! He is looked upon as an asset!

INDIA AND THE UNITED NATIONS

(*Continued from page* 86)

China, but that China be admitted to the United Nations." Then he continued with the indication of irritation: "Why don't you people call the country by its correct name, the People's Republic of China? How would you like someone to call your country the 'White United States,' or something like that?"

Krishna Menon believes in free, full discussion and negotiations on every level, and in open agreements freely arrived at. He does not believe in so-called "gentlemen's agreements" so dear to the old type of Western diplomacy, and thus he often infuriates devious people. On occasions the Western Press has described him as "Nehru's Bad Boy", "India's Trouble-Maker," etc. All of which has practically no effect on Vengalil Krishna Menon, this new type of diplomat who knows where he came from, where he is going, and where he is now, and why, in this rapidly changing new type of world.

* * * *

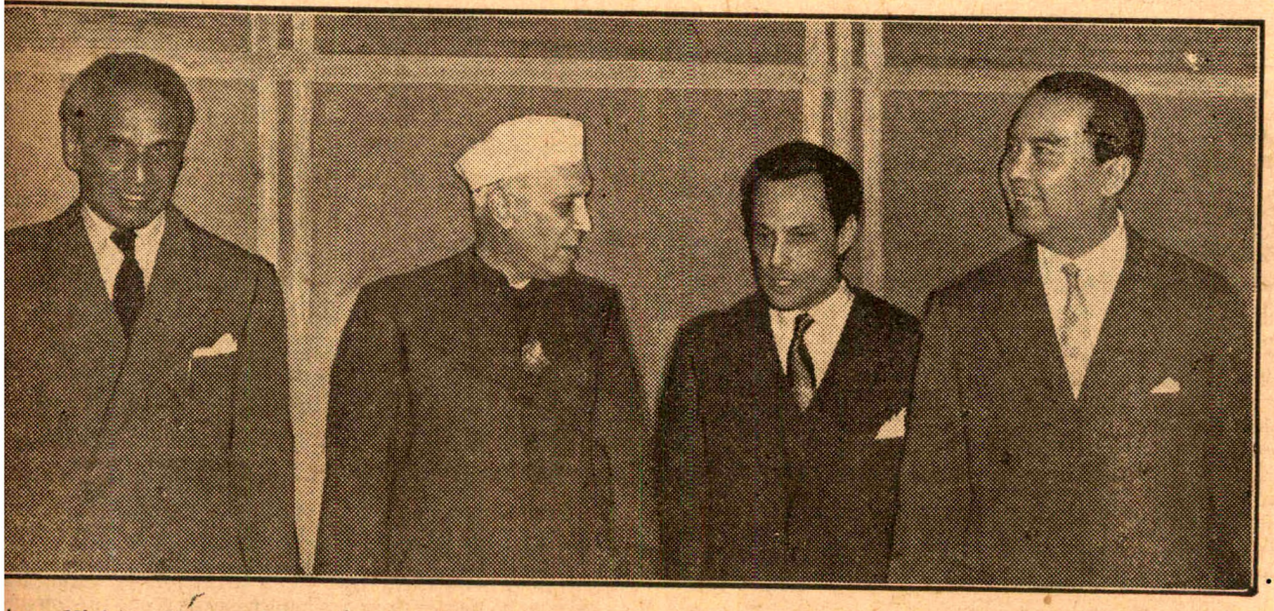
The dean of the United Nations Correspondents ssociation is Dr. Max Beer of Meue Jurcher Zeitung, urich. He covered the activities of the League of ations at Geneva since its inception, and has done ıe same thing with regard to the United Nations. He as telling one day what was wrong with our Indian legates. He asked the question: "Where were all ıese people when Mahatma Gandhi was leading the ovement of freedom in India?" This is not intend- l to be a detraction of the fine work permanent presentatives of India like Rajeswar Dayal and thur Lall have rendered. They belong to the Indian vil Service and considering they are career men, ey did better than what was expected of them. Another Indian Civil Service representative, Mr. Jha, is going to replace Mr. Lall as Permanent Representative of India.

Anyway to go back to Dr. Beer: He wants, at least, that our Permanent Representatives at the United Nations be men who are real followers of the Mahatma.

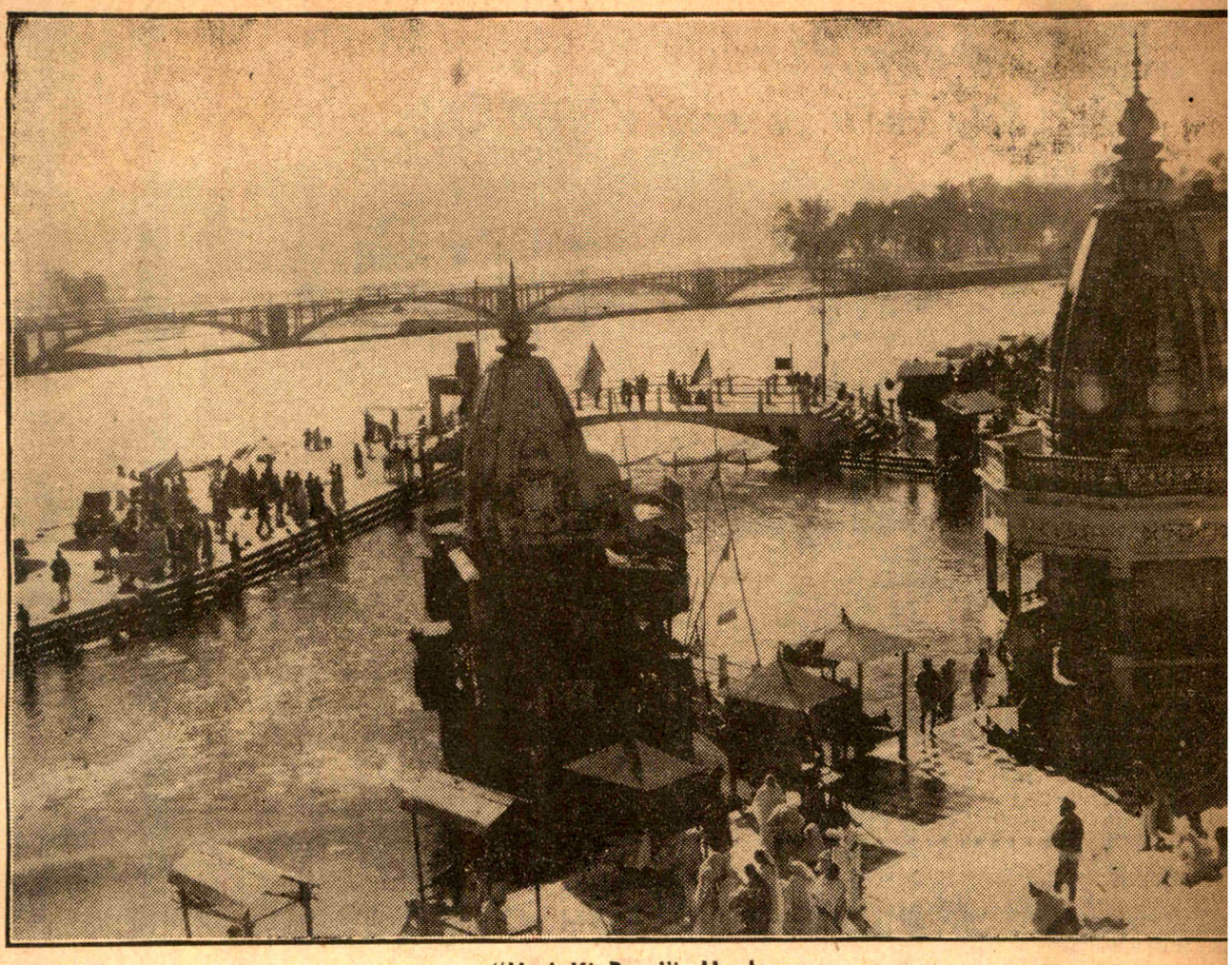
There is one man of our Indian Delegation whom we cannot very well ignore. He is Mr. T. J. Natarajan, now the second-ranking member of the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations. A veteran of the Ministry of External Affairs, until his recent appointment here, he has been the Secretary of every General Assembly Delegation of India at the United Nations, and as such, he has been the moving spirit of all of them—a sort of guide, friend and philosopher, to everyone high and low.

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru paid two visits to the United Nations Headquarters once when it was at Lake Success, and the other, two years ago at its permanent headquarters on Manhattan. As a general rule, everybody at the headquarters is 'somebody.' People here are so used to celebrities that the Prime Minister of India or the Prime Minister of Japan, or even of England, is just by-passed.

On his recent trip, Mr. Nehru, who had a rather trying time at the Indian Embassy and Consulate functions eluding crowds had some peace, comparatively speaking, at the Headquarters of the United Nations. Of course, everyone recognized him, but they thought the best thing to do was to let the Prime Minister of India go about his business like every other famous figure that pays a visit here.



ime Minister Nehru visits United Nations Headquarters: Sri Jawaharlal Nehru paid a visit to the United ıtions and addressed the Delegates in the packed hall of the General Assembly. He declared that "the cold war is ntially, fundamentally wrong — it is immoral — it is opposed to all ideas of peace and co-operation." 's picture was taken upon arrival of Sri Nehru at U. N. Hqrs. From left: Sri V. K. Krishna Menon, Sri Nehru, Sri A. Lall, India's Permanent Representative to U. N., and Prince Wan Waithayakon of Thailand, President of Genl. Assembly.



"Hari Ki Pauri", Hardwar

HISTORIC TEMPLES OF UTTAR PRADESH

By Dr. NANDALAL CHATTERJI,
M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt., University of Lucknow

THE land of Uttar Pradesh has hallowed associations for the Hindus, for it has been the prime stronghold of Hindu culture and religion. From those far-off days when the Aryans made it their home, it has been the most sacrosanct of regions in India. With its ground redeemed in some mythical past by Vishnu, Siva and Durga, Uttar Pradesh is justly regarded as the threshold of the gods.

Varanasi, the Vatican of the Hindus, is reputed to be the centre and the earliest created spot of the earth. As such, it is the holiest and the most ancient cradle of Indian civilization. There are other sacred places in India venerated for religious association, but none of them would appeal with a stronger attraction than Varanasi to the many millions of devotees who worship at its shrines. Rising on the banks of the Holy Ganga, Varanasi is a city of temples of which, it is said, there are at least 2,000.

TEMPLES OF VARANASI

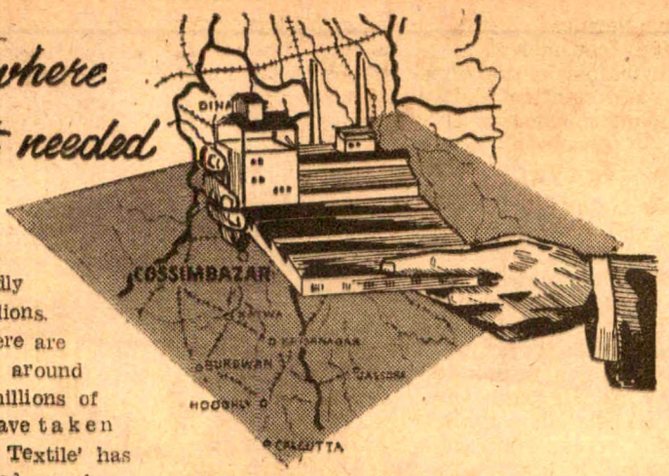
Among the numerous temples in the city perhaps none is so well-known as the temple of Vishwanath, the patron deity of Varanasi. It transcends all other temples in the city in holiness. The earliest temple o Vishwanath was destroyed by Muhammad Ghori. Th second one, rebuilt on the same site, was later pulle down by Aurangzeb. The present temple was built b Ahalya Bai in the eighteenth century. It is both his torically and architecturally interesting. Two of th domes are covered with plates of copper, overlai with gold. These were presented by Ranjit Singh, th Sikh ruler.

Another temple which is much revered and visit ed by devotees is that of Annapurna, the Goddess o Plenty. The temple is said to be two hundred year old and is decorated with beautifully tinted sculp tures. Even though it is situated in a narrow, wind ing lane, the temple is well worth a visit, for struc turally it is both lively and pretty.

The temple dedicated to Durga, the Mother o the Universe, though not very old, is a hallowe building and is architecturally splendid. The bes traditions of the old building craft are to be seen an admired here. Its exquisite porch added in 1865 i remarkably beautiful, and might be easily mistake for a superb specimen of ancient temple architecture Its sculptured pillars, curvilinear spires and orna mental dome are of graceful proportions

Among other temples mention must be made o

Creating job where they are most needed



The plight of rural West Bengal is sad. Land can hardly sustain its teeming millions. Whatever industries are there are concentrated in a small area around Calcutta. On top of it all millions of hapless East Bengal refugees have taken shelter in the State. 'Bengal Textile' has risen to the occasion and created much employment opportunities in the rural areas of West Bengal : its modern factory has been established at Cossimbazar in Murshidabad District where there is a heavy concentration of East Bengal refugees, besides numerous local persons in search of employment.

The alchemy of creative enterprise is there at Cossimbazar for all to see : Where there formerly were only gloom before men's eyes and despond in their hearts now reigns a buoyancy of spirit and a sense of belonging to the great modern India which is emerging.

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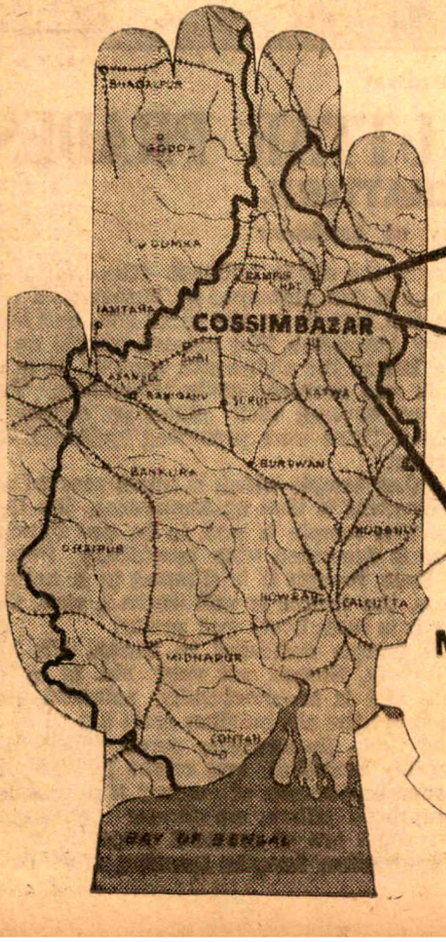

Turning idle hand in to active hand

Jobs are the problem of the day. Million hands are idle, millions of young men in search of jobs are daily losing hope. Manindra Mills' is doing its best to relieve the situation : it has installed good number of new machineries in its factory as a result of which a large number of new hands have been employed and people are also getting more cloths to wear

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the elegant Nepalese Temple on the bank of the Ganga. Many consider it to be the most interesting and stylish temple in the whole city. With its multiple storeys and slanting roofs, this temple appears to be an eloquent contrast to all other shrines in Varanasi.

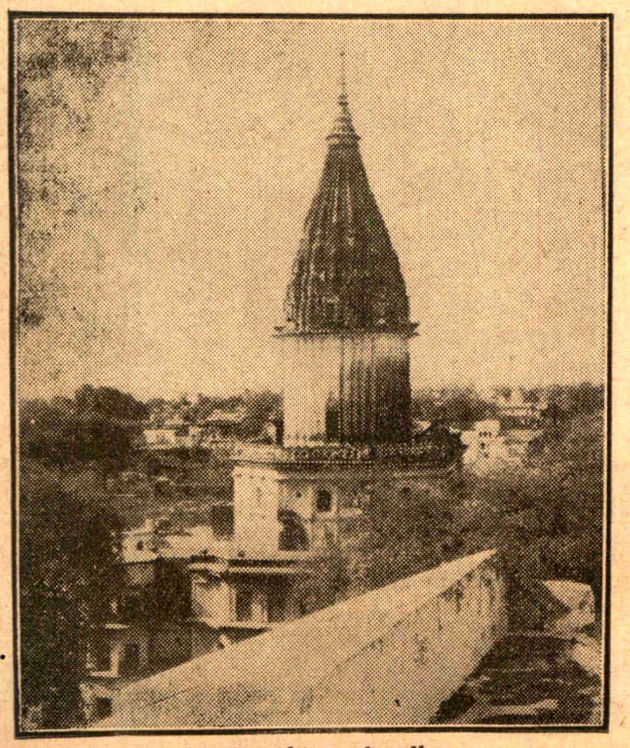
ANCIENT PRAYAG: PATALPURI

Allahabad, standing on the famous site of ancient Prayag, is well-known for the sacred confluence of three rivers—Ganga, Yamuna and the invisible Saraswati. The place dates from a period remote from historical record. Its importance in Hindu history is so great that it is looked upon in epics and legendary accounts as the *Tirtharaj* or King of places of pilgrimage, a title which is proudly acknowledged to the present day. As the place where Brahma performed the horse sacrifice in token of his universal overlordship, and as one which was blessed by Rama and Sita, Allahabad is immortalized with the impress of hoary antiquity. Its annual bathing festival in the month of Magha and the twelve-yearly Kumbha Mela when innumerable pilgrims flock to have a dip in the confluence have still kept alive the religious associations of this holy of holies.

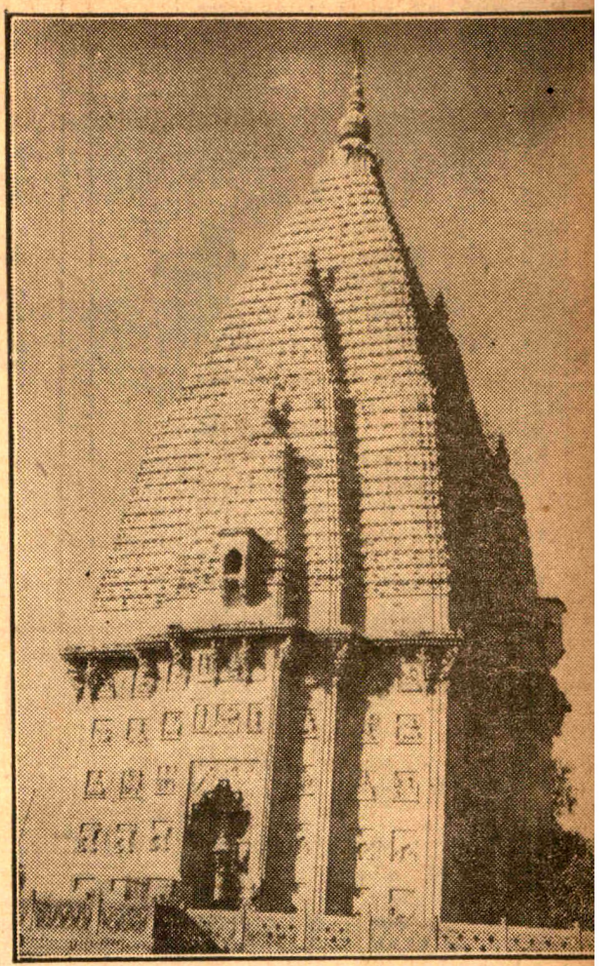
Of the sacred relics of old Prayag, practically nothing has survived. Its temples were all razed to the ground by conquerors like Muhammad Ghori. The renowned temple of Patalpuri inside the Fort of Akbar is, however, the only known ancient site. Historians regard it as the oldest shrine in Uttar Pradesh. Hiuen Tsang who saw it in the seventh century described it as a very large structure. He saw a great tree in front of it, from the branches of which devotees used to jump off and commit suicide. The temple now lies underground, because of the erection of the fort, which made it necessary to raise the interior level of the citadel. The temple is of a peculiar shape, and its oblong hall is a curious feature. An old stump still commemorates the ancient Akshayvata.

HOLY SHRINES OF AYODHYA

Ayodhya, situated on the banks of the Sarayu, is pre-eminently a city of holy shrines, Hindu and Jaina. It is a place of great antiquity, and belongs to the epic age. It was the capital town of the ancie kingdom of Kosala, ruled by the Solar race of king There is no Hindu who does not know and lo Ayodhya, the city of Rama and Sita, and the scer of the celebrated Ramayana. After the death of t last of Rama's line, Ayodhya, a huge city covering a area of ninety-six square miles, became gradually wilderness and sank into oblivion. Hiuen Tsang sa only twenty Hindu temples and twenty Buddhi monasteries.



Hanumanagarhi, Ayodhya



Sri Durga Devi's Temple, Ramnagar, Varanasi

At the time of Muslim conquest, there were thr magnificent temples here. The temple at Janmastha marked the site where Rama was born. This was co verted into a mosque by Babur. Another shrine, t Swargadwar Mandir, which perhaps marked the pla of Rama's cremation, and the temple called Tret ka-Thakur where Rama had performed a great sa rifice were destroyed in the time of Aurangzeb.

At present, there are numerous temples of Ram Sita and Hanumana. The most important place worship is the famous mound of Ramkot. The ancie relics are no longer to be seen, but there are sever temples of which the most sacred is the Hanumana garhi, a huge structure in the shape of a four-side fort. Among other holy spots in the city is the Ka nak Bhavan which is an impressive modern tem ple. The shrines of Nageshwar Nath and the Manipa vat are equally celebrated. On the occasions of th

(*Continued on page* 96

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THE "CRISIS" IN AMERICAN EDUCATION

By JOHN H. STUMPF

Cultural Affairs Officer, United States Information Service, Calcutta

WHEN Americans visit India, as they are doing in greater numbers every year, they encounter a remarkable number of customs and attitudes which make them feel at ease. They find, with some surprise, that they cannot claim clear precedence as the 'people who create and enthusiastically join the most numerous organisations which hold the most frequent functions for the most varied reasons—or for no reason at all except that members like them. They find, too, the same kind of sentiment—and sentimentality—in human relationships that is so common at home; the same eagerness to make friends, to like and be liked; the same direct, sincere curiosity, a little naive and personal, which has often irritated the more aloof European visitors to America. And when they read in the newspapers, as they can hardly avoid doing, the reported speeches of politicians who view with alarm the "shocking decline of educational standards", when they note the letters to the editor demanding sweeping revisions of educational policies and, above all, when they understand that in India, as in America, almost everyone has an opinion on educational matters and feels compelled to express it, Americans in India must feel almost at home. Higher salaries for teachers, better schools, more equipment for them—but no increase in taxes; more engineering and science graduates—and a better grounding in the humanities; the merits of a three-year degree course—or of a four-year course; the advantages of higher secondary schools—and their fatal disadvantages: some of the terms of the debate and many of the problems are different but the spirit is clearly the same. A visitor must be pleased and surprised to find that the people of another nation argue and pontificate about their educational system almost as vigorously and joyously as Americans do.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

The reasons for these interminable criticisms and proposals for reform are essentially the same in both nations. Their citizens recognize that knowledge is power: the power to become free and to remain free, the power to live wisely and richly, the power to control nature instead of being controlled by it. What is more, both nations are largely peopled by those who know through their own or their ancestors' experience what it means to be denied even a rudimentary education. The young American who stumbles to the platform to clutch his diploma is perhaps the son or grandson of immigrants who could never have had an elementary education in the Old Country; the young Indian graduate may recall that his grand-mother never learned to read. What more natural than that both peoples should become a little excited or even a little unreasonable in their demands for more and better education for everyone, at once?

Finally, in America as in India, there is a tradition of respect for learning as old as civilized history. The inheritors of a 3000-year-old culture may smile at the comparison, but Americans will take pride in remembering that there were schools in Plymouth Colony within months of the Pilgrims' landing.

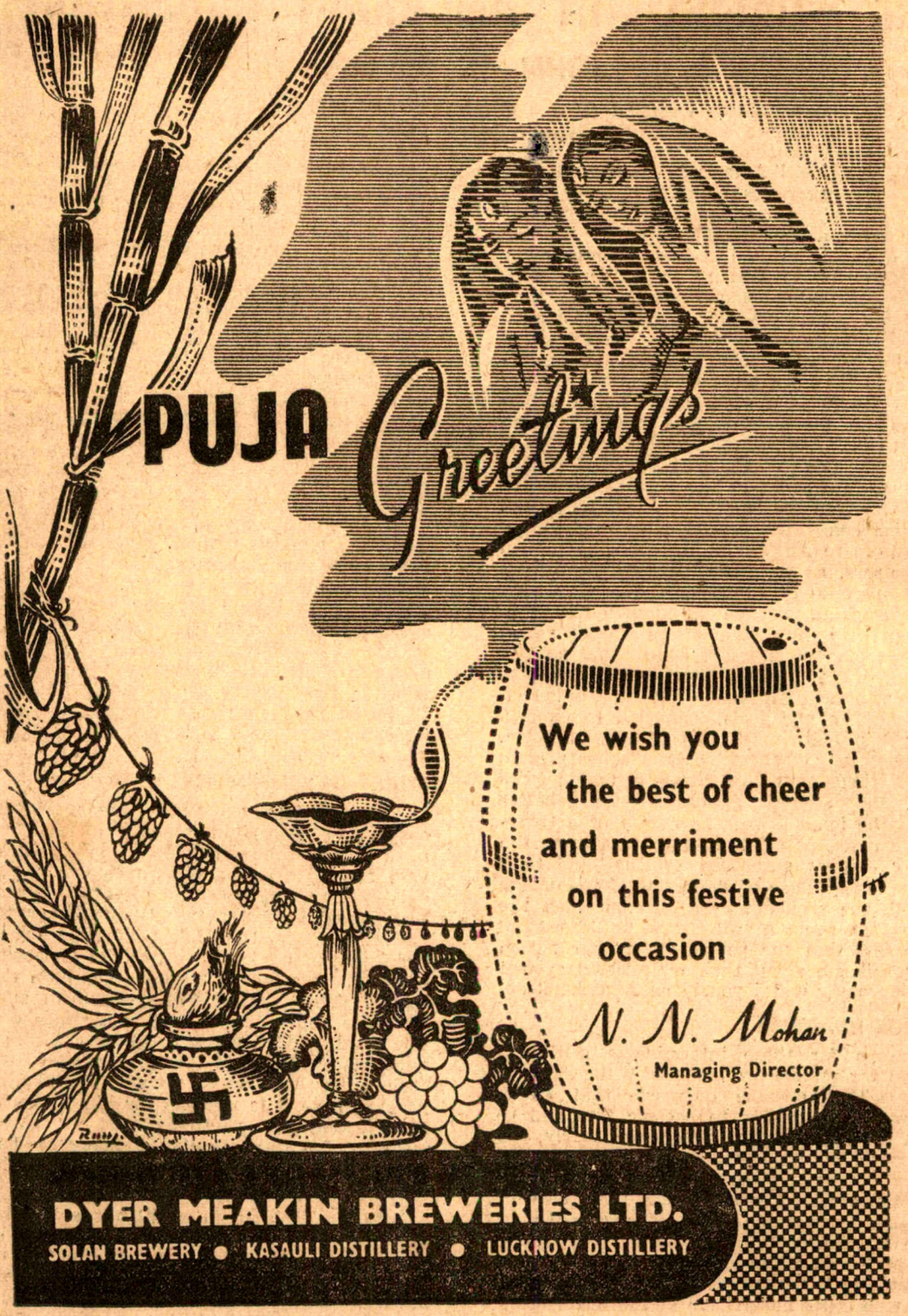
The great educational debate began almost at once and has continued without intermission. Sometimes it adopts new terms, often it raises new issues, but always it circles around two questions: what must our young men and women know? —how can we be reasonably certain that they will learn it? At times, controversy on these eternal issues rises to crescendos or declines to a whisper. It never wholly ceases. Everyone has an opinion and feels an obligation to express it without apology. The *Paterfamilias* trudging with his brood through the National Gallery of a Sunday afternoon may feel obliged to begin his remarks with a show of diffidence: "I don't know much about art but....." However, when the education of the young is discussed, few would acknowledge that they were not qualified to exchange views with the professionals. This confidence is basically wholesome. Surely the radical alternative—public apathy—would be a disaster which a free society could hardly hope to survive. If the citizen feels that education, like war, is too important a subject to be left to the experts, he is probably right.

THREE DEVELOPMENTS

In the last ten years, the great debate has continually grown in intensity and volume, stimulated by three developments. The first has been the very rapidly climbing birth rate which, contrary to expectations, did not level off after World War II. The increase of almost 42 million, or more than 20 per cent in the U.S. population over the last eighteen years fairly indicates the dimensions of the problem. The second stimulus has been the increasingly insistent demands of government and industry for more and better-trained young men and women. The third, and, as many Americans believe, the most important problem is the clear need to insure that each citizen will be as mature, knowledgeable and perceptive as it is possible for him to be so that he can successfully play his part as a responsible member of a free society. Democracy has always required this. The events of recent years have made the requirement clear to all.

In the United States all but a relatively small percentage of children receive their primary and secondary educations in tuition-free publicly-supported schools, directed by local authorities who are customarily elected by the citizens and responsible to them. (Hence, the meaning of the term "public school" is very different in America and Britain.) Co-ordination of policies, standards and curricula is done at the State level. It is always minimal. The largest of the colleges and universities are also supported by public funds.

The increase of about 25 per cent in the number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of school-age children in the last ten years has literally inundated the publicly-supported schools. (It has seriously affected the private schools, too, but they are not obliged to provide for every child who appears at their doors.) At any time this great influx would have created a serious problem. The fact that few new schools were built in the period 1930-45, and that many large new residential communities have sprung up since the war has made the situation almost desperate in some areas.

However, while this is an urgent problem, it is the easiest to solve. The tax-payer's willingness to shoulder heavy new burdens has given most communities adequate though hardly ideal public school facilities. The immediate and pressing need for teachers—especially for devoted and highly qualified teachers—can hardly be met so simply.

TEACHERS' SALARIES LOW

American teachers' salaries have been abysmally low and are still in many places far too low in comparison with what bright and energetic young men and women can expect if they look to industry or to government for jobs. Considering that the citizen expects his children's instructors to be paragons of all the moral and intellectual virtues, the disparity has often been ridiculous. Inevitably, the communities have paid for their short-sightedness: a great many of the best teachers have left the profession, never to return; a great many young men and women have decided against training for a career which offers so few material compensations. They simply could not afford to teach. The wonder is that there have been so many excellent persons whose devotion has kept them in the classrooms.

In recent years the average of teachers' and professors' salaries has soard, but the damage has been done. Every educational field has suffered, but the teaching of sciences in the high schools has suffered most. A fine young chemist or physicist—or even a merely competent one—could hardly be expected to ignore the unlimited opportunities which the universities and private and governmental research organizations have offered. The result has been that many public high schools have been able to do little with the sciences during the years when young students should have had their first sound and stimulating introductions to scientific thought and techniques.

There is every reason to believe that in the next decades the demand for scientists and technologists will be [illegible] but insatiable. The expansion of the economy and, above all the certainty that each year that expansion will require a higher proportion of highly trained persons to other categories of workers means that unless imaginative action is taken quickly, there cannot be nearly enough specialists to supply even the basic needs of research, industrial development and the increasingly complex projects and problems of industrial and public administration. Requirements for men and women with highly developed managerial skills are equally important.

LEADERSHIP STRUGGLE

These requirements are real and must be satisfied. However, the urgency of the probem is by the fact that, as virtually all Americans agree, they are engaged in a life and death struggle to maintain scientific and industrial leadership. Ask an American why World War III has not broken out at any time in the past ten troubled years and his first answer will be: because the United States has been strong enough. Strong not only in arms but in productive capacity, and able to maintain and increase [illegible] strength to the advantage of its own citizens an[illegible] those of the newer nations which are determined [illegible] set their own economies on firm footings. To co[illegible] template the passing of scientific, technological a[illegible] productive leadership to nations committed to de[illegible] troy democratic institutions is not merely disquie[illegible] ing; to Americans it is intolerable. Under the ci[illegible] cumstances it is natural, though hardly helpful, th[illegible] in some quarters there have been wild Cassand[illegible] outcries and that educational nostrums are mo[illegible] abundant than ever.

Somewhat surprisingly, the "crisis" has take[illegible] most Americans unawares. Although they ha[illegible] always freely stated their opinions about what ea[illegible] one considered the shocking inadequacies of the loc[illegible] public school system, they have tacitly agreed th[illegible] American schools—and colleges, too—were doing [illegible] basically good job. Underlying the criticism was [illegible] great deal of respect for what the schools h[illegible] accomplished and a belief that for Americans, [illegible] least, no better system could be devised. Its ind[illegible] pendence of centralized control has made them fe[illegible] that it is their system, and they have had a propri[illegible] tary pride in its accomplishments. They have a[illegible] sumed that the schools and colleges would, perha[illegible] with a good deal of creaking, be able to adjust then[illegible] selves to new times and new challenges, as they h[illegible] done in the past. Indeed they have gone beyond th[illegible] for they have believed and often said that whi[illegible] theirs is certainly not an ideal system, it is clear[illegible] superior to any of the alternatives offered in oth[illegible] nations, and incomparably better than any total[illegible] tarian system.

They could show achievements to support suc[illegible] a view. It was in the United States that free pu[illegible] licly-supported elementary and high school educa[illegible] tion was first made universally available. The gener[illegible] establishment of free public libraries was also [illegible] American innovation. And these instruments h[illegible] apparently done what was required of them: th[illegible] had produced a remarkable number of leaders in [illegible] fields and had successfully assumed responsibility f[illegible] the education of many millions of immigrants an[illegible] their children. Illiteracy had been reduced almost [illegible] two or three per cent. Each year's immense crop [illegible] college and university graduates had shown that th[illegible] were able to take their places as useful and capab[illegible] citizens—not ideal, perhaps, but on the average com[illegible] petent, energetic and well-intentioned and ofte[illegible] much better than this. Thus while most citizens, wit[illegible] a profound faith in the vital importance of educa[illegible] tion, were eager to make the schools and colleg[illegible] better and loud in criticising their shortcomings, th[illegible] were comfortable, too, in the conviction that th[illegible] system and its products were essentially sound. [illegible] has come as something of a shock to learn that [illegible] great deal more is required.

NO AUTHORITARIANISM

Specifically, what is to be done to insure that th[illegible] schools and colleges can meet the new and heavi[illegible] demands that they must meet? All are agreed, [illegible] least, that there are several things which must n[illegible] be done. No innovation that has the faintest tai[illegible] of totalitarian control will be introduced. Indee[illegible] everything possible will be done to minimize the ro[illegible] of any central directing or policy-making body tha[illegible] may be established. The local boards of public edu[illegible] cation and the governing bodies of colleges an[illegible] universities have always fiercely defended their in[illegible] dependence from all encroachments by the Centr[illegible]

(*Continued on page* 208

HISTORIC TEMPLES OF U. P.

ontinued from page 91)

ma Navami, the Jhulan and the Kartiki Purnima, ge fairs are held here, which are attended by ntless devotees.

EMPLES OF MATHURA

Mathura on the west bank of the Yamuna is one the oldest towns in India. It is mentioned by an- nt Greek writers, for it was ruled by Indo-Greek traps. It was renowned in the days of the Kusha- s, the Guptas and the Huns. Being the legendary thplace of Krishna who is famed in Hindu mytho- y, it has acquired a peculiar sanctity in the eyes Hindus. But, its ancient temples were all pulled wn by Mahmud of Ghazni in A.D. 1018. The great sque of Aurangzeb marks the site of the old shavadas temple destroyed in 1669. The present rines are thus either late medieval or early mo- rn.

Mathura is a great pilgrim centre, and even its dern temples are architecturally notable. The tem- of Kedareshwar is the loftiest and the most popu- among the temples in the city. The temples of varkadhish, Madan Mohan, Kalbhairava and bja-Mandir are the best among other shrines.

HRINES OF VRINDABAN

Vrindaban, about five miles to the north of Ma- ra and situated on the banks of the Yamuna, is very holy place. It is dotted with innumerable tem- s, of which at least one thousand are regularly ited. Many of them are masterpieces of art. The y famous as the scene of Krishna's early adven- es is very important in Hindu history and dates ck to a very remote antiquity.

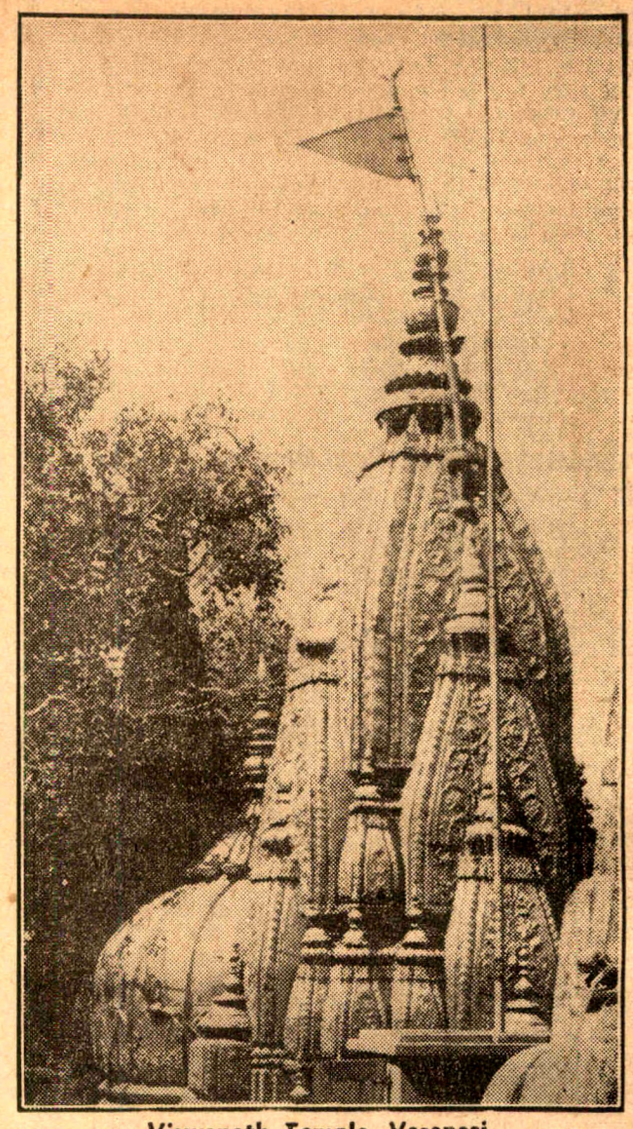
The temple of Govind Deva, built by Maharaja n Singh of Amber in 1590, is undoubtedly the est temple in all North India, and is justly re- rded as an architectural wonder. The temple has ffered much from vandalism, and much of its perstructure has been destroyed. But even as it is, excites the admiration of all lovers of architecture. plan which is cruciform reminds one of the Sas- hu temple at Gwalior. The total absence of figure lpture in the ornamentation and concentration on lars, brackets and lintels form a wonderful feature. e introduction of the radiating arch, built in Hindu le, shows the influence of the Muslim builder on ndu craft traditions. As a work of art, this temple far superior to Akbar's great mosque at Sikri, ich was erected about the same time. There is no ubt that, before its desecration, it must have been e of the grandest monuments in India.

Among other important temples which date from e Mughal period are the temples of Madan Mohan, gal Kishore and Gopi Nath. Indian building tradi- ns are seen at their best in these handsome shrines. e craftsmanship is irreproachable, for each build- g possesses a strong individuality.

VINDHYACHALA TEMPLES

Vindhyachala which is famous in the Puranas is popular place of pilgrimage. It is the next station Mirzapur from which it is only at a distance of ven miles. It is situated on an isolated hill on the ht bank of the Ganga. The Vindhya range begins m this place and the panoramic view from the top the hill is picturesque. No pilgrim on his way to lahabad or Varanasi fails to visit this place owing its special sanctity. It is said that the town once ssessed 150 temples, but all these were destroyed Aurangzeb.

The celebrated temple of the goddess Vindhya- sini is at present the chief attraction of Vindhya- ala. The temple is visited by many thousands of votees every year. The temple is a stone structure,



Viswanath Temple, Varanasi.

and is of rectangular shape. It is surrounded by a wide verandah The top is flat, and the pillars are plain. The head of the image is of black stone, and it has big eyes, the whites of which are made of plates of shining silver. The whole edifice appears to be very old, though it is not possible to ascertain its date. Tradition says that the goddess was specially worshipped by the Thugs.

The temple of the eight-armed Yogamaya, which marks the site where Sati's left foot is believed to have fallen, is at a short distance from the main shrine of Vindhyavasini. The Kali-Khon temple which is only a mile and a half from the town, stands on one side of the hill, and is supposed to be an old place of worship.

BITHUR & VALMIKI'S HERMITAGE

Bithur which lies at a distance of fourteen miles from Kanpur is a place of the greatest antiquity. It has a special sanctity for the Hindus, for it was here that Brahma had performed a horse sacrifice in the mythical past in order to celebrate the fulfilment of the work of creation. In the epic age, Bithur became well-known as the hermitage of Valmiki, the immortal author of the Ramayana.

NAIMISHARANYA OR NIMSAR

Nimsar or Naimisharanya, situated on the banks of the Gomti in the district of Sitapur, is one of the most ancient sites in India. Its antiquity goes back

to the early days of Aryan colonization when the ancient Rishis congregated in its sylvan retreats and composed the texts of the Puranas. Tradition asserts that Nimsar was the abode of 60,000 sages. If this is true, the place must have been specially important as the fountain-head of Aryan culture.

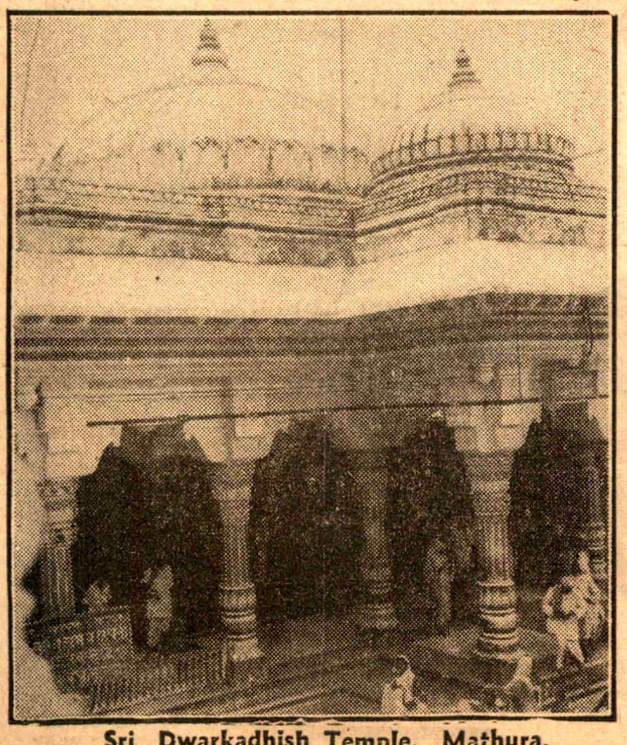
As a place of pilgrimage, Nimsar is held in high esteem. Thousands of pilgrims annually come here to pay their respects to the local deities. Nimsar is one of the fifty-one "Pitasthanas," and so the temple of the local goddess is an object of worship. There are, however, numerous tanks and temples at this place, many of which claim remote antiquity. In addition to the monthly "Amavas" *mela,* a big festival is held at this place on every "Somavati Amavas," i.e. when the new moon falls on a Monday.

HARDWAR & KUMBHA MELA

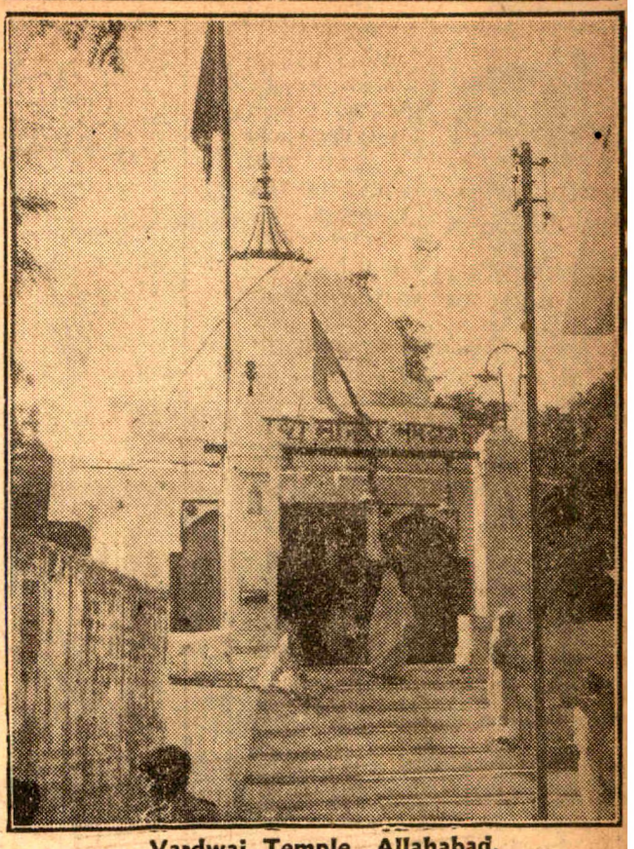
Hardwar—Haridwar—is a holy place of great antiquity. It is situated on the southern base of the Himalayas at the mouth of the gorge through which the Ganga descends upon the plains. It attracts millions of pilgrims during the Kumbha *mela* which is held every twelfth year. Intimately connected with the worship of both the gods Vishnu and Siva, Hardwar is full of temples held sacred by the Vaishnavas and the Saivas.

Of the numerous shrines here, the oldest is the temple of the goddess Mayadevi, which is believed to have been built in the tenth century A.D. It is built of stone, and looks impressive. Inside the temple, there is the remarkable image of the goddess which has four arms and three heads, holding a Chakra in one hand, the head of a person in the second, and a Trisul in the third. Obviously, the goddess is Siva's consort.

The Gangadwar temple is another great object of veneration. It marks the site of the legendary sacrifice of Daksha immortalized in the Puranas. The temple of Daksheshwar at Kankhal is another sacred memorial to the aforesaid sacrifice. The Chandi Pahar temple which crowns the hill of the same name is also a sacred resort which is an object



Sri Dwarkadhish Temple, Mathura.



Vardwaj Temple, Allahabad.

of great attraction. The modern temple of Sarvanath is a pretty monument which overlooks an old image of the Buddha sitting under the Bodhi tree.

RISHIKESH & BADRINATH

Rishikesh which lies fifteen miles beyond Hardwar is picturesquely located on the Ganga on a cliff overhanging the river. It is a holy city of the Vaishnavas, and is considered to be the abode of Narayana. It is a beauty spot and the mountain scenery of this place is so enchanting that it is justly regarded as the home of the gods. There are many temples here, but the most popular one is that of Bharat, named after the younger brother of Rama and Lakshman. The Satyanarayana temple is another important shrine.

Kedarnath is believed to be among the holiest temples in India. Silhouetted against the background of a grim and majestic landscape in the region of the snow-clad Himalayas, the temple has an appeal which cannot be described in words. The way-worn pilgrim forgets all the fatigues of an arduous hill journey as soon as Sri Kedarnath rises before the eye in all its beauty and glory. He feels as if he has seen the fulfilment of his earthly existence and reached the gateway to immortality.

Overlooked on all sides by dizzy and snowy mountains, the temple of Kedarnath stands in the valley of the Mandakini at a height of 11,753 ft. from the sea-level on a ridge underneath the peak of Mahapantha. Though lacking in decorative ornament, the temple is both stately and virile. It is truly suggestive of the austere and sublime grandeur of the god Siva whom it commemorates. It is not known when exactly the present temple was erected, but the site itself has a hoary past, for the Pandavas are said to have first constructed here a temple in honour of Sadasiva, the invisible form of Siva, when they were on their way to heaven.

Badrinath is the supreme place of pilgrimage

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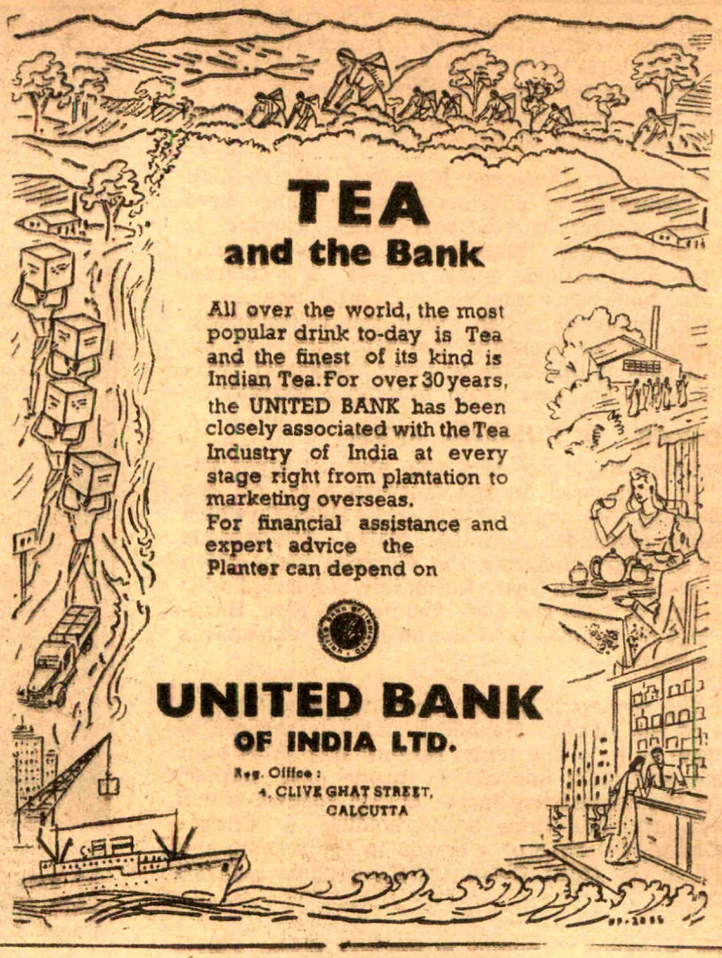
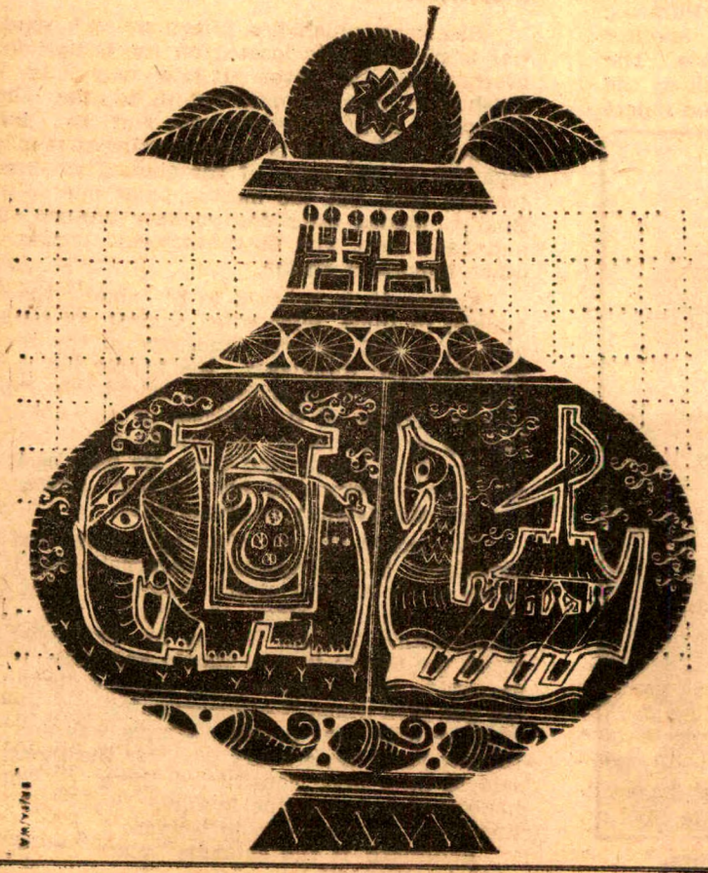
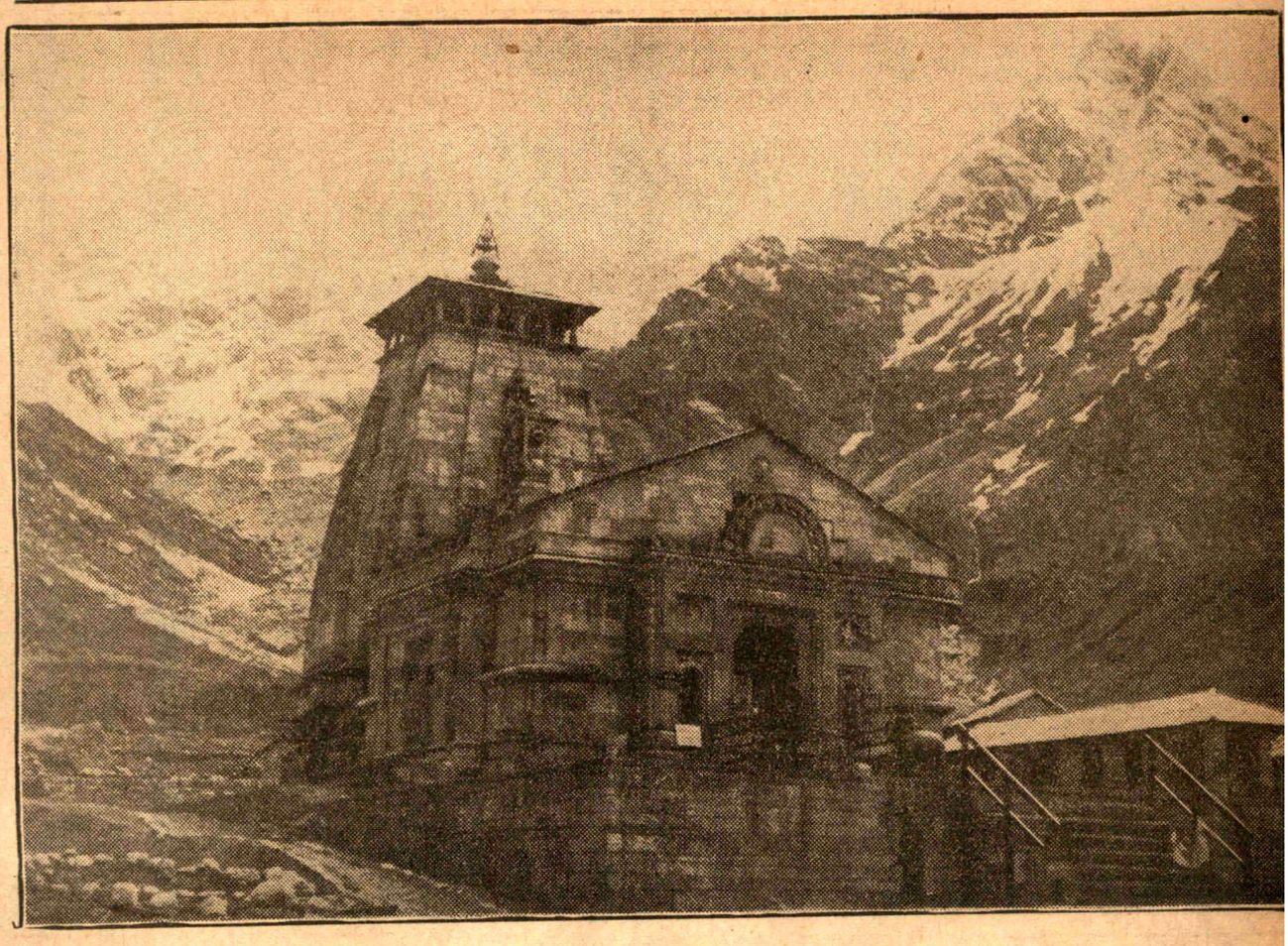




let there be
kindliness
in every heart
and joy
in every home.

EASTERN
RAILWAY



Sri Kedarnath Temple, Kedarnath.

in Uttarakhand. It attracts every year thousands of pilgrims. It is the one spot where every pious Hindu aspires to come at least once in his lifetime. This temple, like Kedarnath, remains covered with snow from November to April, and so the route is open only from May to October.

The shrine of Badrinath, nestling in the valley of the Alakananda and surrounded by snowy peaks, is situated at a height of 10,300 ft. above sea-level. It is dedicated to the god Badrinath who appeared here for meditation. The ancient temple, mentioned in the Puranas, which must have been built in the epic age was destroyed 1,200 years ago either by avalanches or by Buddhists. It was then that Sankaracharya visited the place and rebuilt the temple under divine inspiration. The present temple thus dates from the eighth century A.D. It is an elegant structure, standing picturesquely on the bank of the Alakananda river. It is nearly 50 ft. high, and looks like a cone, with a diminutive cupola, crowned by a spire. The gold canopy is said to have been presented by Ahalya Bai. In the compound of the temple there is the sacred Tapta-Kunda, a reservoir fed by a sulphur spring with a temperature of 130°.

IMAGE OF BADRINARAYAN

The image of Badrinarayan does not resemble that of Vishnu. It looks like a Yogi sitting in the Lotus pose. It is also strange that it seems to have four hands. As it is known that Uttarakhand was once a centre of Buddhism, the image may have originally been that of the Buddha. Thanks to the heroism and tireless efforts of Sankaracharya, the place was rescued from obscurity and brought bac to the fold of Hinduism. After some time the templ again fell a victim to vandalism and it lay unknow until another great religious teacher, Ramanuj came and restored the worship of the image. Th temple is said to have been entirely rebuilt in th sixteenth century A.D. by the ruler of Garhwal Nepal.

The temple is run by attendants who hail fro different corners. The chief priest, known as th Rawal, has to be a Nambudiri Brahman from Mala bar. The subordinate priests are Brahmans fro Devaprayag. Garhwalis of certain specified villag are expected to bring fuel for the pilgrims. When begins to snow in winter, the Bhotiyas of Mar cover the shrine in blankets which they have to pa for.

BEAUTIFUL "DEVABHUMI"

Uttarakhand has acquired a peculiar sancti perhaps because it is the most attractive region all India. No other mountainous region can exc it, hill and dale, rock and snow, river and lake, bir and animals, flowers and ferns, all contributing fund of joy unequalled anywhere else. Truly is deemed the residence of the blessed supernal ar unearthly. Fabled in the holy annals of the Aryan this land was the sanctuary of the Vedas, Puran and systems of philosophy. So, the spiritual magne tism is more powerful here than in any other sacre land. Man-made temple is nothing as compared the shrine of Nature which beckons the pilgrims this beatific "Devabhumi". The eternal India faith has survived in this Land of gods despite th encroaching tide of modernism and unbelief.

"In the pursuit itself of a mighty purpose
there is joy and happiness"

~ Jawaharlal Nehru

THE JOYOUS SPIRIT

SAVARKAR'S ESCAPE AT MARSEILLES

By V. S. JOSHI

SAVARKAR'S spectacular escape at Marseilles represented India's will to be free. It demonstrated to the world that in spite of the prolonged slavery of the Indian Nation, manliness was not yet dead in the land. It set the Chancelleries of Europe fighting for his body and challenged the sovereignty of France, to assert itself against the encroachment of British imperialism upon its power! It focussed world attention, for the first time, in International field, on the question of Indian freedom. For free India, the deed would always be a proud feat and its thrilling account a glorious chapter in the history of the Indian struggle for freedom.

IN BRIXTON PRISON

The case arising out of shooting down of the Collector, by revolutionaries in December 1910, at Nasik and the Nasik conspiracy, discovered in its wake, by the Police in India, had made it clear that the police were after Savarkar, then at Paris and would arrest him, the moment it was possible for them to do so. Savarkar's compatriots therefore, advised him against his return to London. But he replied that when his followers and colleagues were facing the ordeals and risks, the duty of a leader like him enjoined upon him not to evade the ordeal but to face it himself! And so on the 13th March 1910, he left Paris for London. He was accompanied by Perin Ben Captain. He, however, intentionally asked her not to get down along with him at London, in view of his possible arrest. The train arrived at the Victoria Station, London, at night. Savarkar scented the Police some time before. As he detrained, he sighted the detectives of the New Scotland Yard and darted back to his compartment. The police, however, overtook him and arrested him, under the Fugitive Offenders A There was some scuffle while he was being arres But eventually Savarkar calmed down. He was t taken into custody and lodged in the Brixton pri

PLAN TO ESCAPE

Savarkar's arrest simultaneously set in mo the attempt of his colleagues for his release, b on legal and strategic fronts. V.V.S. Iyer, Viren Chattopadhyaya, Niranjan Pal and others str hard to secure his release, in the court of law, various legal grounds. Attempts were also made set him free by force. The most daring of these the one hit upon by David Garnett, the well - kn English author, then in his teens. Garnett had c pletely surrendered to Savarkar's charm and beca deeply attached to Savarkar, like many other i eigners. His well known attempt to kidnap Savar by force, right in front of the Brixton prison, great personal risk, failed. But when he discus the plan with and in the end reported its failure Savarkar while on a visit to him in the prison, latter had exclaimed, "I had also been thinking it (escape). But I have better chances on my way b to India. You have done wonderfully! Do not wo about me. I shall escape somehow!" These wo had the seeds of Savarkar's attempt to escape Marseilles. In fact he had unfolded the plan to closest friends like V.V.S. Iyer and that, too, dexterously that not even the Scotland Yard had a inkling into it! After the Court ruled that Savar can be extradited to India, to stand his trial various political charges, Iyer secretly left for Pa to prepare for the plan hoodwinking the detecti so eager to arrest him also.

SECRET VOYAGE

The British Government feared the possi legal remedies and revolutionary attempts Savarka comrades in France would resort to, to secure his

lease. And so instead of sending Savarkar through France up to Marseilles and then to India, the British Government decided to escort him on a ship, right up from London. He was conveyed at Tilbury on the P. & O. Liner s. s. Morea on Friday, the 1st July, 1910. Its course and timings of halts were kept a closely guarded secret and it was ordered not to call at foreign ports, for long.

The Commissioner of Police, London had addressed an official letter, to the Chief of Police, Paris, requesting him to take all precautions to prevent any interviews with Savarkar, by his friends in France and guard against the prisoner's escape at Marseilles.

Savarkar was accompanied by C. J. Power, Deputy Superintendent of Police, on Special Duty to the D.I.G. of Police, C.I.D. Bombay, H' d Constable Mohomad Siddik of the C.I.D. Poona and Amarsing Sakharamsing of the Nasik Police, specially deputed from India, to bring Savarkar back to India. Inspector Edward Josh Parkar, Detective Inspector of Police, New Scotland Yard, London, was specially deputed by the Commissioner of Metropolitan Police to assist them, during the voyage, at the request of the Government of India. Although a First Saloon passenger, Parkar travelled in the Second Saloon, along with Power and Savarkar, in the same cabin. It was a four-berthed cabin and Savarkar occupied the lower berth and Power the upper one.

ABOARD THE SHIP

Savarkar was sure, the steamer would have to call at Marseilles and with his deep study of the international law, decided that it was the best opportunity to escape and touch the foreign land, end the British authority over his person and claim and exploit the right of asylum, available to a refugee, in such circumstances. He was profoundly engrossed in the thoughts about his escape. But his romantic figure clad in European attire, his curly hair gracefully swept back and the mystic look in his penetrating brilliant eyes taking a view of the things around, from behind his golden framed pince-nez, moved about among the high class passengers on the steamer, while at meals, with such ease and apparent calm of mind, that nobody had even an idea of the thought about the exciting adventure, passing in his mind !

The vessel touched at Gibraltar on Tuesday, the 5th July. But the four hours it stopped there were of no use to Savarkar, for his planned escape. His mind, however, worked electrically. When the steamer entered the Bay of Biscay, the "Morea" began to rock violently in the boisterous sea. The way to escape was obviously through a porthole. Savarkar wanted to measure its expanse. How to do it, without evoking the suspicion and revealing to the guards the possible use he would make of it, was a problem for him. He, therefore, feigned to have been tossed aside, to the wall of the unstable ship and quickly measured the circumference of the porthole, with the palm of his hand !

Savarkar knew that Iyer had hastened to Paris and posted his comrades, including Shamji Krishna Varma, Madam Cama and others there, with the information about his possible attempt and so looked forth for the halt, at Marseilles.

AT MARSEILLES

As luck would have it, the "Morea" developed engine trouble, just when it was near Marseilles and was forced to enter the harbour at Marseilles, on Thursday the 7th July, 1910 at 10 A.M. It was moored alongside the quay in the dock. The repairs to its engines prolonged its halt at Marseilles.

Having received advance intimation, the French Police Official Henri Leblias, "Commissarie Adjoint de Emigration" went on board the "Morea", met Parkar and offered him all assistance. He also introduced Parkar to other French Officials on the shore and ordered them, to render all help to Parkar.

On reaching Marseilles Savarkar requested the Officials of the "Morea" that he should be landed, as he was under a wrongful arrest. But his request was refused. He then tried to contact and speak to the French Officials, but he was not allowed to do so.

Shortly afterwards, Savarkar surprised his guards, by telling them that he wished to have a bath. Their suspicion was aroused. And so while permitting him to go to the bathroom, they watched him minutely, rendering it impossible for him to escape.

NOW OR NEVER

The sun set on the liner holding the disappointed patriot. Savarkar looked on to the shore for his friends. But for want of definite and timely information, about the arrival of the vessel at Marseilles, due to the secrecy maintained by the Government, they did not appear on the shore, in time. Savarkar, however, decided during the night, that if he wished to escape it was his last chance! "Now or Never!" These words stared him in the face and made him restless the whole night.

As the morning broke out on Friday, the 8th July, 1910, the shore of France beckoned Savarkar to dare and act. While at Nasik, he had attained some proficiency in swimming and scaling straight walls. He had also learnt to contract the body to a certain extent. These acquisitions stood him in good stead, now. He had also once read the strange use, a sleeping gown was put to, by quickly flinging it out, by a well-known revolutionary. He, therefore, purposely wore his sleeping gown, as he got out of his berth, at about 6 o'clock on the 8th July, 1910.

IN THE LAVATORY

Parkar sat up in his bed immediately and asked Savarkar to see the time by his watch in the cabinet. Savarkar did and said it was 6-15 A.M. He returned to his bed, as the guard was watchful. Parkar pretended to be asleep but was awake. After about 15 minutes, Savarkar, on a second thought, said to his guard, that he wanted to go to the water closet. Parkar unlocked the door of the cabin and accompanied Savarkar in the direction of the lavatory. The two Indian constables standing in the passage were alerted by him and they also hastened along, buttoning their coats on the way.

Savarkar and Parkar entered the lavatory, immediately followed by the constables. Savarkar was allowed to enter the second water closet from the

end, which was open It appears, that while entering the water closet, Savarkar said he had forgotten something in his cabin and wished the guard to bring it. For this reason or else "to dress himself" as he put it afterwards, Parkar returned to the cabin.

Before doing so, however, Parkar carefully examined the W. C. and noticed that the porthole of the W. C. was closed. In fact, all the portholes were closed the steamer having coaled during the night. Savarkar swiftly got into the W. C. and closed its door. Parkar stepped on the platform outside some distance away from the door and saw Savarkar on the seat, through the 18 inches wide opening, above the door of the W. C. He also directed Amarsing to stand on the platform and keep a watch on the prisoner. Siddik was standing nearer the door of the W. C. which had an opening of a few inches, at the top and at the bottom.

THROUGH THE PORT-HOLE

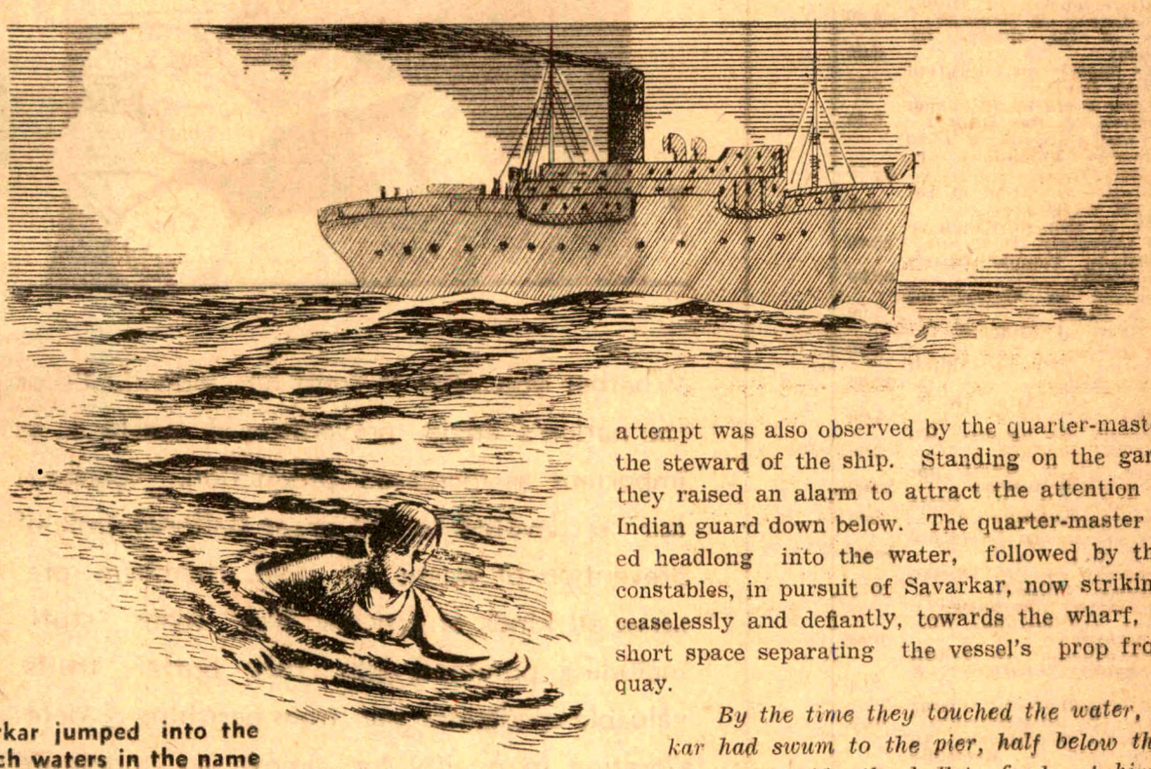
On entering the W. C. Savarkar quickly closed its door and bolted it. He took out his sleeping gown and flung it, on the hook over the door. Amarsing pretended not to be intent upon watching him and half turned his back to the door. Taking advantage of this, Savarkar covered the glass panes in the door from inside, by spreading the gown over them. Savarkar then divested himself of all his clothes, except the underwears and climbing up the porthole, flung it wide open. He then commenced squeezing himself, through the porthole. His chest was 36 inches round and the circular porthole was 12 inches. He, however, contracted his body as much as possible and forced his way out. The operation was very tedious and severely barked his sides in the process!

When Amarsing peeped under the door, he saw two slippers on the seat, as if a person wearing them was seated inside—a clever ruse practised by Savarkar, to make the guard rest assured, which Amarsing did. After a few seconds, however, Amarsing also stepped on the platform, to make sure of the prisoner's presence inside and peeped through the opening over the door, when he sighted Savarkar's body half out, through the porthole and the prisoner endeavouring to get out, through the porthole.

ESCAPE AT LAST

Amarsing shouted at Savarkar and tried to open the door. But it was bolted. He, therefore, smashed one panes in the door and got inside. But just then Savarka had fully worked out his body through the porthole and disappeared from his sight. Heaving a sigh of relief at the successful bid to be free, Savarkar jumped into the French waters in the name of Indian freedom and his Motherland and commenced swimming towards the shore.

Amarsing went up the porthole but was unable to follow his charge through it. He, therefore, ran back on to the deck, raising an instant alarm. Siddik also joined him now. Savarkar's manifest attempt was also observed by the quarter-master and the steward of the ship. Standing on the gangway, they raised an alarm to attract the attention of the Indian guard down below. The quarter-master plunged headlong into the water, followed by the two constables, in pursuit of Savarkar, now striking out, ceaselessly and defiantly, towards the wharf, in the short space separating the vessel's prop from the quay.



Savarkar jumped into the French waters in the name of Indian freedom.....

By the time they touched the water, Savarkar had swum to the pier, half below the surface, to avoid the bullets fired at him and touched the shore!

Savarkar then tried to scramble up the wharf. But tired and exhausted, he slipped from the wet wall and dropped down, into the water. The art of scaling steep walls learnt at Nasik however buoyed him up and he atlast succeeded in scaling the wharf and reaching its top and landed on the quay. He was, needless to say, quickly followed by the pursuing policemen and the crew.

Unable to meet any expected friends, Savarkar did not lose courage, but began to run, as soon as he gained the shore. While in flight he kept excitedly shouting for a cop. He had not even a penny on his person or else he could have jumped into any passing tram car. His life thus now depended on a

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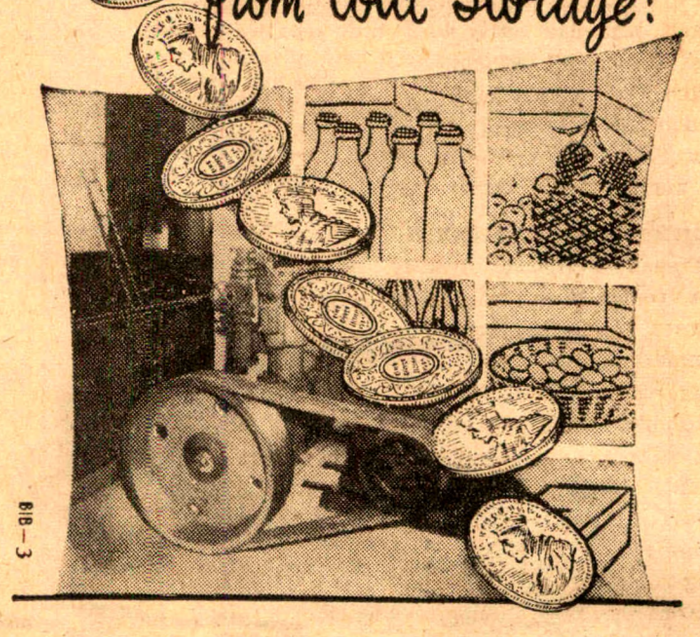

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penny! Yet he did not falter but crossed two and half furlongs in this fashion.

PURSUED & CAUGHT

The policemen on his track now shrewdly began to shout, "Catch him! Catch him! He is a thief—a thief" to induce the onlookers to instinctively catch Savarkar, who had only torn and dustladen wet clothes on his body, which was injured and smeared with dirt! Savarkar could not explain his identity in French and could easily be taken for a thief! The trick worked. A number of French dockers joined in the pursuit and Savarkar was soon overtaken.

Further flight being impossible Savarkar ran up to a French gendarme nearby, at the Customs Barrier, for help and begged to be taken before a Magistrate, "the Commissary of Police." He said to the gendarme, "Take me into your custody. Assist me! Take me before a Magistrate! I am not a thief, but an Indian fugitive, escaping the wrongful custody of the captors — seeking asylum on French soil!" The gendarme did not understand English and Savarkar could not speak French. Partly because of the ignorance about the facts and partly because of the jingling coins palmed off by the pursuers — which afterwards, however, brought the gendarme his dismissal and an imprisonment — the gendarme refused to understand that the fugitive had something to be heard and gave him up to the Indian and British pursuers. Amarsing held Savarkar by the back, the Second Saloon Steward of the "Morea" caught him by his right wrist and the gendarme by his left. And in this brutal fashion, he was taken back on board the "Morea", straight into Power's cabin!

IN BRITISH FETTERS

Savarkar knew the terrible consequences of the failure in his attempt to escape — the revengeful third degree methods that would visit him in that event. But the shame the British Government would be put to, because of his escape was not a small gain. It would, also, demonstrate to the world, he thought, the bravery of the Indians and focus world attention on the question of Indian Independence, in the comity of nations,

One of the indignant guards afforded Savarkar a taste of the consequences, soon after reaching the cabin, when he hit him with a fist, on his head. Savarkar was not cowed down. He slipped out of their grip and, ferocious, warned them that if they dared to do so again, he would not rest without finishing at least one of them! The determined ultimatum stopped the brutality for the time being. Savarkar was then securely handcuffed, fettered and kept in strict secrecy!

Amarsing reported all that had happened to Power in Hindustani. Power informed Parkar of the same, in the latter's cabin. When the "Commissaire" M. Le. Blais came to the "Morea", he heard the account and examined the porthole. He said he will have to report the matter to higher French authorities. Parkar also telegraphed to Superintendent Quinn of the New Scotland Yard: "Prisoner attempted escape. Recaptured, Report follows!"

LESSON FOR GUARDS

Although the escape was in a way fruitless, the news of Savarkar's daring escape rapidly spread through Marseilles and people thronged on the quay, throughout the day, to have a look at the "Morea". Some French Officials also visited the steamer and saw Savarkar. After nightfall, the Indian guards pictured to themselves the gloomy future in the service Savarkar had created for them One of them lost his temper, and exclaimed, looking in the direction of the prisoner, who was half asleep "Kya, Avalad Hai!", began to abuse him in filthy language and threatened him with torture, taking him to be frightened and humbled. The prolonged abuses exasperated Savarkar. Stirring himself up in his bed he, therefore, bluntly told the guards that he would not dread any torture, as he had already set his home and life on fire, when he ventured to work for Indian Independence. But if *they* cared for their children, they should not measure strength with a desperate prisoner like him and per chance, die at his hands! The spirited reply silenced the guards and toning down their temper, they tried to explain to him the predicament in the service, in which Savarkar had placed them. Savarkar told them that it was the mutually opposite duties of theirs that were to blame. Were they not holding him in custody as a matter of duty? He was also in duty entitled to escape, if possible! The lucid analysis ended the threat of torture for Savarkar during the remaining sojourn. The steamer hurriedly left Marseilles, on the 9th July, at 11 A.M. after finishing its repairs.

IN WORLD PRESS

But Savarkar wondered if the news was at all known to the outside world and whether his friends were pursuing the matter of his illegal arrest. It was not till the "Morea" reached Port Said that he got a satisfactory answer, through a waiter, who brought his food. He now knew that the news was published in the world press.

How it happened? Although without any definite information of the timing of the arrival of the "Morea" at Marseilles, Madam Cama, Iyer and others had still started from Paris and reached Marseilles. They had also started for the harbour in the morning of the 8th July and were only two or three furlongs away, with a car ready for Savarkar, when Savarkar was rearrested. They arrived near the quay, shortly afterwards and gathered the account of the episode, from the excited people. They correctly

guessed that the fugitive involved was Savarkar! But before they could subsequently move the Court of Law for Savarkar's release, the "Morea" left the port.

They then met M. Juares, the French Socialist Mayor of the City and narrated the account of the illegal arrest of Savarkar to him. They also telegraphed the news to Paris and when it was published in the Paris edition of the "Daily Mail" on 11th July, it was impossible for the British Government to suppress the news of the escape and the rearrest of Savarkar. Madam Cama also telegraphed Barrister Baptista, the well known Christian patriot-lawyer, at Bombay — See immediately professionally Savarkar, Arriving Bombay. Steamer "Morea". French Government demand his return. Choose your Solicitor, letter follows. Juares and other leaders of the opposition in Paris took up the cause of Savarkar and the violation of the right of asylum and of French Sovereignty involved in his rearrest on French soil. It was through their virulent campaign that the L'Humanite, the influential newspaper of Paris, edited by M. Jean Languet, grandson of Karl Marx, in its issue of 12th July, immediately roared,

> "This abominable violation of the right of asylum was effected in absolute secrecy. Had it not been for a telegram, published yesterday, in the Paris "Daily Mail," we should still have been ignorant of the incident.
>
> "But it is quite impossible that the matter can be allowed to rest there. In delivering up a political refugee, the Marseilles authorities—admitting that they had acted on their own initiative—have committed an outrage of which, account will most assuredly be demanded and in respect of which, the sanction of the State itself is necessary!"

CAMPAIGN FOR RELEASE

The campaign for Savarkar's release was initiated in London itself by Guy Alfred Aldred, the Editor of "Herald of Revolt" and one of Savarkar's English followers, who formed a "Savarkar Release Committee" in London and carried on a ceaseless campaign through his paper for Savarkar's release. The international conscience was aroused. Newspapers in Germany, ever hostile to Britain, pilloried the British for their action! Many embassies all over the world supported Savarkar's demand. Monsieur Pierron and Jambon, Assistant Ambassadors of Spain and Paraguay respectively and the Portuguese Consul at Calcutta expressed a similar opinion. At the Socialist conference at Copenhagen, the British M.P. Keir Hardie himself moved the resolution demanding Savarkar's return to France! The British people, traditionally liberal and legal-minded, would often not shun the truth even if against them. And so the *Daily Mail*, although unsympathetic to Indian aspirations, at last said in its memorable editorial in August 1910 :

> "The illegality of Savarkar's surrender is so plain, that the only defence, so far attempted has been to suggest, that the British Government cannot be responsible for the errors of a French Policeman. That argument is utterly fallacious, because the error and the offence were committed by the French Policeman, in conjunction with British officials and would have been impossible without the co-operation of British officials. We do not dwell upon the fatal consequences, if we insist in not returning Savarkar to French custody and taking chances under the extradition treaty. Having ourselves maintained the legitimacy of our action, we should be unable to protest, if a British policeman were, in future, to hand over a fugitive Garibaldi or Kossuth to a foreign Government. The right of asylum, instead of being under the protection of the law, would be at the mercy of the arbitrary caprice of the corruptibility of the meanest police constable!"

The reference by the paper to Garibaldi and Kossuth in connection with Savarkar was noteworthy. Savarkar's life was published in many languages all over Europe, after the event and the nations freely compared him with Mazzini, Garibaldi and other heroes!

FRENCH PREMIER'S VIEW

The French Premier M. Briand was reluctant to fight Britain over the issue. But the virulent campaign against Savarkar's rearrest in France all over the world forced him on the 19th July to declare, at last, that "as a result of the official inquiry into Savarkar's escape at Marseilles, the French Government, in view of the fact that he was actually on French soil, have requested the British Government to suspend the trial, till full report of the case is received. It is stated that according to International Law it may be necessary to bring back Savarkar to France, for extradition."

Barrister Joseph Baptista, in the meantime, pursued his request to Bombay Government, to allow him to see Savarkar, in the capacity of a counsel and when the interview took place, Savarkar sent through Baptista the authentic account of his escape to Paris papers in September 1910. Its publication gave a fresh impetus to the international discussion of the issue and Britain and France were forced to refer it to the International Tribunal at the Hague, on 4th October 1910. The Tribunal gave its decision in February 1911 admitting the irregularity in the arrest; but it refused to ask Britain to restore Savarkar to France!

BRIAND RESIGNS

Denial of justice to India in the international field, even at present experienced by us, thus dates back to 1911. The battle was lost! But it had its repercussions. M. Briand had to resign and quit office within three days, rather than face the angry Chamber of Deputies. Britain was put to shame, for her illegal prosecution of Savarkar, in India! The Indian Nation has ever extolled the bravery of one of its bravest sons—Savarkar and would not forget him in spite of his transportation to and incarceration in the Andamans subsequently and holds his services to the nation and his sacrifices in its cause, in grateful recollection and honour, till today.

A trekking party admiring a fine and well-grown specimen of Buk tree (oak)

TREKKING IN SEARCH OF HIMALAYAN FLOWERS

By Dr. D. CHATTERJEE

IN 1848, the renowned British botanist Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker visited India and went to the Eastern Himalayas on a plant collecting expedition. In those days, there were no railways or motor cars and the journey from Calcutta to Darjeeling had to be done mostly by country boats up the river and through poor roads. This method was slow, difficult and full of danger. From Darjeeling, Hooker proceeded to Sikkim and was accompanied by Dr. Archibald Campbell, the then Superintendent of Darjeeling. Dr. Campbell was authorised by the British Government to establish a friendly relationship with the Sikkim Raj. They were perhaps the first two Britishers to visit Sikkim in those days but somehow, the Dewan of the Sikkim Durbar did not like their presence. After some initial difficulties, the two *sahibs* succeeded in having an audience with the Rajah but failed to complete the negotiation favourably owing to the difficulties of language and reluctance of the Dewan to grant a longer interview. However, as per prevalent custom, they exchanged presents and the Rajah was apparently pleased as he gave them Chinese silk, woollen clothes, bricks of tea, salt, and a few ponies and yaks. They were also allowed to move freely in Sikkim, collect plants and visit some monasteries.

COSTLY ARREST

Hooker then proceeded towards lake Cholamo (source of river Tista) and tried to climb two lofty peaks of Sikkim and later crossed the Donkia pass (18, 130 feet) and came to Lachung Valley. Here he joined Dr. Campbell and when both of them were planning to return to Darjeeling, they were suddenly and treacherously arrested and imprisoned at Tumlong. Dr. Campbell was further tortured by some Sikkim Bhoteas who were employees of the Sikkim Raj. The Dewan had evidently planned this arrest as the Rajah was too good and old. The *Sahibs* were later released on 24th December, 1849 after about two months' imprisonment. The Sikkim Raj had to pay dearly for this incident, as a large part of its Terai area which was very lucrative was confiscated and the annual subsidy paid by the British to the Rajah was withdrawn.

This brief account gives an idea of the conditions and risks of trekking in the Himalayas about a century

ago. Things have, however, very much changed now and trekking in the hills of Darjeeling and Sikkim is now an assured pleasure. These improvements are mainly due to better communications, construction of rest-houses and youth hostels, availability of guides, ponies and porters from places like Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Gangtok. Even places like Tonglu (10,774 ft.) and Sandakphu (11,929 ft.) are now negotiable by means of jeep. The road being chiefly a pony track is still somewhat dangerous for wheeled traffic and unless one is in desperate hurry, this should be avoided.

ALLURE OF THE HIMALAYAS

The Himalayas, with their lovely hills and valleys, their colourful and fragrant flowers, their terraced fields of rice and maize, and their monasteries with poles of elegant prayer flags fluttering in the breeze, have a peculiar charm to the visitors from far and near. These are of great interest to many who are fond of long walks and particularly to those interested in biology, geology, geography, mountaineering, and other allied subjects. Recently, there was a talk that the students of the mountaineering school at Darjeeling will be given some lessons on the common plants and animals of the Himalayas. These hills and the unsophisticated people are of interest also to scholars of Buddhism and oriental language. Sir Francis Younghusband, the great Himalayan explorer, wrote, "For natural beauty, Darjeeling is surely unsurpassed in the world". Hooker also recorded in his most interesting travel book *"The Himalayan Journals"* that in point of comfort, the climate of Darjeeling is above the average and the scenery is unequalled in variety, interest and grandeur.

It is, however, unfortunate that in spite of improved amenities, only a small percentage of people who visit Darjeeling or Kalimpong are actually energetic enough to undertake these wonderful and memorable trips. This may be due to the fact that they consider such trips as troublesome as these involve long walks through the hills for a number of days. But the pleasure derived from such trekking is so much greater that it more than compensates the little initial trouble.

HOW TO PLAN A TREK

In planning a trekking trip in Darjeeling or Sikkim, the most important points are the following (i) choosing the correct season i.e., either April-May, or October-November (ii) limiting the main party preferably to four persons because most of the rest houses have two bed rooms with two beds in each. If the number exceeds four, it is advisable in such cases to carry one or two camp cots (iii) selection of a reliable *sirdar* and porters and ponies (iv) purchase of complete food rations and other necessities for the whole trip so as to make the party self-contained (v) the party should carry a liberal quantity of common medicines like quinine, aspirin, dettol, some sulpha drugs, chlorine water and a first aid box. These medicines are in great demand in the villages which the trekking party must pass frequently. (vi) securing the necessary permits from the Deputy Commissioner, Darjeeling or the Political Officer, Sikkim to occupy the bungalows on fixed dates.

Another important point is to start in good time every morning so as to reach the next bungalow preferably before evening. This is very important as trekking after nightfall is dangerous in view of the difficult roads. It is better to take help of the ponies in climbing steep ascents but it is always advisable to leave the pony and walk when the path is descending.

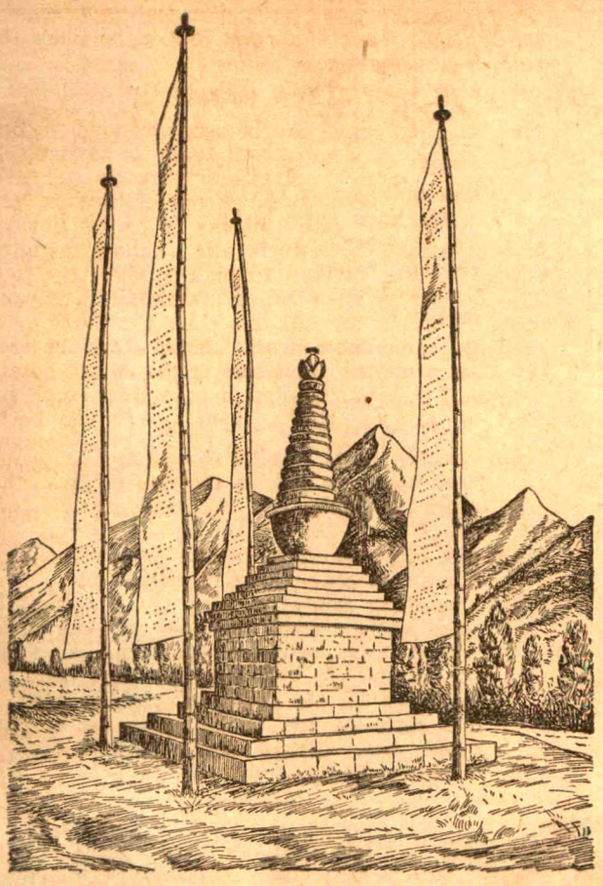
COLOURFUL SINGALELA RANGE

The Singalela range can be recommended for one week's trekking. This mountain range is particularly rich in varied scenery, mountain streams, terraced fields, cardamom plantation, rhododendrons in full bloom, virgin forests with masses of orchid flowers, festoons of mosses, liverworts and lichens hanging from the barks of trees. In making this trip, it is possible to reach a place called Manibhanjan beyond Jorepokri by car or bus. At this place the party must bid good-bye to civilisation and should start the trek on foot and on ponies. It is also impossible to obtain any newspapers, food supplies or consumer goods for the next few days. After a steep ascent, the party reaches Tonglu (10,774 ft.) and halts at the bungalow. Next morning, Sandakphu (11,929 ft.) is reached after a walk of 14 miles. If the day is clear, a wonderful view of the snow-capped ranges of Nepal including Mount Everest (29,002 ft.) and Makalu (27,790 ft.) can be obtained. After spending the night at Sandakphu bungalow (the present new bungalow is very much improved and comfortable) the party can proceed another 12½ miles and reach Phalut (11,811 ft.) next day. There is also a good youth hostel at Sandakphu where small parties of students can be accommodated and blankets are provided and rations can be purchased from the Chowkidar. Sandakphu is also known for its beautiful alpine meadows with coloured anemones, blue gentians and dwarf rhododendrons in the valleys. From Phalut the party can return to Darjeeling by the same route or may proceed to Sikkim and reach Darjeeling in 4 or 5 days via Dentam, Pamionchi, Rinchinpong and Chakung halting at night in each place. Both these trips are particularly popular and visitors will not have much trouble in making necessary arrangements, with the help of a good *sirdar*. The expenses are reasonable.

THINGS FOR SPECIAL STUDY

The trees and shrubs comprising the vegetation of these hills are of profound educative value to those interested in botany, agriculture and forestry. They also make a deep impression on the minds of other visitors by their grandeur and variety of forms and colour. On the whole, the plants found in these hills are totally different from those found in the plains of India. For example, plants like oak, chestnut, maple, birches, magnolias (excepting the American *M. grandiflora*), rhododendrons and conifers are not found in the plains. Of the common shrubs and herbs, mention may be made of the magnificent blue poppy (*meconopsis*), certain species of *strobilanthes*, aconites with roots containing a deadly poison, anemones and *arisaemas*.

While plants like oak, chestnut, maple, birch and magnolias dominate the hills between 6,000 and 8,000 feet altitude, the rhododendrons and the conifers are the dominating species between 8,000 and 12,000 feet. There is a great variety and diversity of the rhododendrons in the Eastern Himalayas as compared with the Western Himalayas. As many as twenty different species of rhododendrons have been found in the Darjeeling and Sikkim areas. These species exhibit a wide range of flower colours. *Rhododendron arboreum* and *fulgens* have crimson and scarlet flowers respectively. *R. campanulatum*, *R. hodgsoni*, *R. decipiens* and *R. vaccinioides* have pink or lilac flowers. For yellow or pale yellow flowers, one should look for *R. triflorum* and *R. lindleyi*, and for white or creamy white flowers the species are *R. grande*, *R. griffithi-*



A Chait or memorial to some important Lama with long prayer flags fluttering in air with writings from Buddhist scriptures.

anum and *R. dalhousiae*. The last one is often found as epiphyte and has very large showy flowers.

MAGNOLIAS & EPIPHYTES

Besides oaks, maple and birches, there are four species of the magnolia family. Of these the most important is *magnolia campbelli* which commemorates the name of Hooker's friend in distress, Dr. Campbell. Others are *M. globosa, michelia excelsa* and *michelia cathcartii*. Several species of berberry (*berberis*), *symplocos, skimmia,* and *strobilanthes* are also found. Various kinds of ferns and the snake plants (*arisaema*) with the flower cluster looking like the hood of snakes are found. An epiphytic plant with attractive red pendulous flower is often noticeable on tall trees of the upper hill forest. This plant is *pentapterygium serpens*. There is also a reed like bamboo which is called the *maling* bamboo (*arundinaria*) which grows almost gregariously at high altitude. Masses of pink *liculia* flowers may be observed in November.

The conifers in the higher zone are mostly silver-fir (*abies webbiana*), Himalayan spruce (*picea morindoides*), hemlock (*tsuga brunoniana*), juniper (*juniperus recurva*) and a few introduced species like the Douglas fir (*pseudotsuga taxifolia*) and *cryptomeria japonica*. From the botanical point of view there are two plants of unusual interest and may be found in the oak and maple forest. These are (i) a tree (*leucosceptrum canum*) of the common *tulsi* family (*labiatae*) which are all known as herbs and shrubs and a giant epiphytic tree (*wightia gigantea*) belonging to the *antirrhinum* family (*scrophulariaceae*). This tree produces a large number of thick arm-like clasping roots and permanently hold a neighbouring tree and grows upwards. The wood of this tree is us by the Lamas for making idols for their temples. S veral species of beautiful and showy orchids may seen growing on the trunks of old trees.

The agricultural crops in the mountain villa are different in many ways. Besides paddy which grown at lower altitudes, the main tendency is to gr some short duration crops, like maize, finger mil Italian millet, buckwheat, potato, peas, and c damom. A number of cold weather vegetable l cabbage, cauliflower, radish, tomato etc. are grown lower altitudes mostly for sale in Darjeeling mark It was reported that some quantity of wheat is a grown but this is not easily noticeable although sm patches of barley and oats may be found.

CHAITS & MONASTERIES

Besides the wonderful scenery, the trekking pa may pass a number of *chaits* with bamboo poles car ing prayer flags fluttering in the air. These *chaits* memorials to important personages and these w the prayer flags make a characteristic feature of t landscape.

Visitors must avail themselves of the opportun of visiting a Buddhist monastery. Perhaps one of t oldest is the monastery at Pamionchi. Here, the d nified atmosphere and the kind behaviour of the mo (Lamas) make a deep impression on the visitors. T temple is about 500 years old and the interior is m beautifully decorated and the design and ornamen tions have a predominance of lotus flower or so Tibetan designs. The walls have allegorical paintin The monastery at Ghoom near Darjeeling is also ve old and can be easily visited by all. In 1848, wh Hooker visited the Simonbong monastery in Sikkim was struck, amongst other things, by a human thi bone perforated at both ends. These bones are usua collected from bodies of Lamas and the longer they a the more value is put on them. Hooker stated th in view of the fact that bodies of Sikkim Lamas a burned, these bones are most likely obtained from t bodies of Tibetan Lamas whose bodies are said to cut into pieces and thrown into the water. The bones are used in monasteries in connection with ce tain pujas and specialised functions. It has be stated that the monastery in Bhotia *bustee* below Ra bhavan in Darjeeling has a drum made from hum skull and a trumpet made from a human thigh bo These are not usually shown to all visitors.

ATTACK OF LEECHES

During the trekking one must be careful abo the leeches, specially during the rains.

Human steps must move quickly otherw the leeches reach your shoes and then make the skin through the space in the eyelets left the shoe-laces. It is, therefore, advisable to ca a stick with a cloth pad containing some comm salt tied at the end. Many forest officers use t above and also place small pieces of tobac leaves below the row of eyelets of the shoes a this helps in keeping away the leeches. The auth however, used a few drops of Dettol on the sho before starting on the trek every morni and found this method to be most effe tive in warding off leeches. It is not known if t method is known to those who intend to underta such trips, but this is well-recommended. T is definitely an additional use of this well-kno antiseptic drug !

REST HOUSES & BUNGALOWS

A few words must be said about the rest hous or forest bungalows where the trekking party mu pass their nights. These rest houses are usua located on picturesque spots and like oases in a dese these are eagerly sought by the party specially towar

the end of a long trek. Most of these are well maintained and those under the control of the forest department are particularly clean and tidy and many have small gardens. Most of these forest rest houses have now sanitary latrines and are fitted with water taps. The Chowkidars attached to these bungalows are extremely good and resourceful.

All visitors halting either in forest rest houses or other rest houses must enter their names, dates of arrival and departure in a book called the bungalow register. They are also allowed to record any remarks worth mentioning which might benefit or caution future visitors. A scrutiny of these remarks reveal that some of these visitors maintained a high sense of humour and expressed much of their genuine appreciation and feeling in a few sentences in these books. This account of the Himalayan trekking will, therefore, be incomplete without a few interesting extracts from the familiar "bungalow register"

(i) One judge who visited a forest bungalow gave the verdict, "An ideal bungalow and a symbol of the artistic sense of the Forest department."

(ii) An unknown poet who did not like the company of leeches wrote:—

"A hungry leech would latter be
So he sucked the blood from me."

(iii) One forest officer after being relieved of an important item of food, wrote, "The bungalow dog ate our ham !! Otherwise, very comfortable bungalow, very good chowkidar and excellent stable."

(iv) The same officer visited the bungalow again after a few months. This time he wrote, "Ham remained 'ringo intacta', but this time the shock was greater as the whole bungalow was shaken by two earthquakes".

(v) One ornithologist celebrated the Christmas day in 1940 in a forest rest-house and wrote, "*Pinus patuda* made a splendid Christmas tree. Religion before silviculture. Lovely view of Kanchenjunga seen through four empty fire buckets ?"

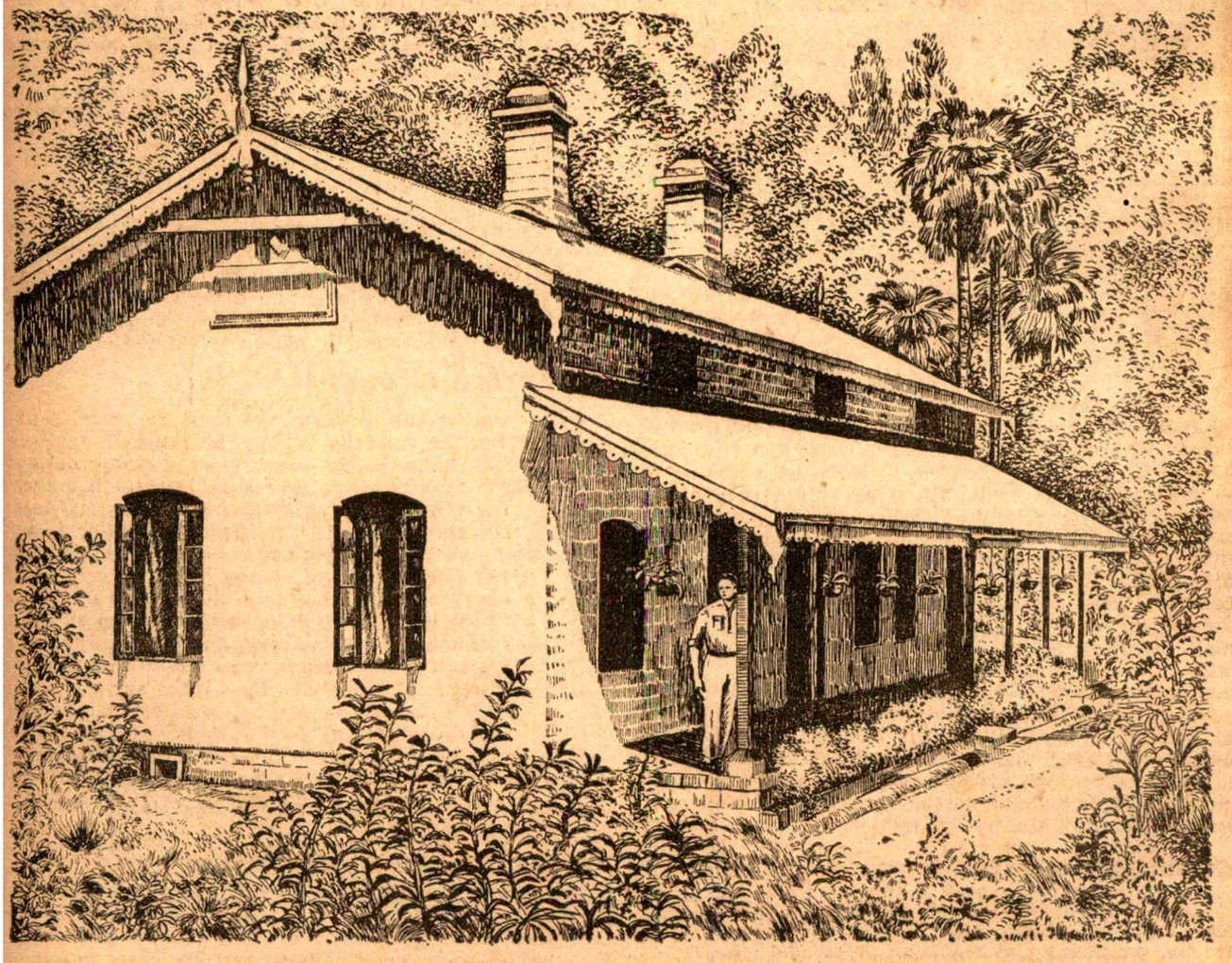
(vi) One geographer wrote, "Deeply regret have not yet made the acquisition of the ghost."

(vii) One conservator of forest wrote in 1939, "Wireless reception very good."

(viii) Another wrote, "Might I suggest that a new floor board be put in the outside lavatory. I weigh 12½ stone and the present planking is weak."

(ix) One visitor wrote in October 1934, "Charged by a bear, otherwise lovely holiday."

(x) One officer wanted to know the altitude of the place where a forest bungalow was located and wrote, "Could anybody kindly let me know what the height of this bungalow is ? Only the height of the old one at Mamring is stated." The reply in the margin given by a forest officer was, "Height about 17 feet over an 'elevation' of 6875 feet."



Forest Bungalow of Takdah, Darjeeling district — a symbol of the artistic sense of the Forest Dept.

IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN FACTOR IN ECONOMIC PLANNING

(*Continued from page 22*)

formance of duty is apparently lacking. Closely allied to this is the lack of a spirit of service, disinclination to be of help to others, and inability to co-operate, which present a woeful contrast to what one can see in foreign countries. For when duty is performed under duress, it is done grudgingly and without grace. The public have long since given up expecting courteous treatment from public functionaries of all grades, except during artificially contrived "courtesy weeks" when courtesy is, so to say, thrust on them. Perhaps there may be exceptions. But there is little appreciation among public servants as a class, whether in railways, post offices, hospitals or police stations, of their proper attitude to the public. Most of the employees seem to think that their jobs entitle them to behave like little dictators and treat the public like dirt. Such an attitude would have been bad enough when Government confined its activities to collecting taxes and maintaining law and order. But it can be fatal in a Welfare State which has extended itself in all directions, if every rule framed for proper transaction of official business is turned, as often happens, into an opportunity for delay, vexation and illegal exactions. From public institutions, the infection has also spread to large establishments in the private sector.

POPULATION AND WORK-FORCE

Though we have a large population to maintain, the age composition is unfavourable to economic progress. On account of the high birth rate and low expectation of life, a large proportion of the population is below the working age. The work-force in India constitutes less than one-third of the population. The following table gives the figures (in millions) of total population and work-force for India and some other countries.

	Population.	Work-force.	
		Males	Females
India ..	356.8	35.5	16.3
U. S. A. ..	150.6	43.5	16.4
U. K. ..	50.2	14.1	6.3
Japan ..	89.3	23.8	15.3

Another relevant fact about the work-force which may be noted in this connexion is the low percentage of working women in India. Whereas nearly one-third of the work-force in the U. K. and the U. S. A. and more than one-third in Japan are women, in India women workers constitute less than one-sixth of the total work-force. The position in this respect has been deteriorating over the last fifty years. A study jointly undertaken by the Labour Bureau of the Government of India and the Labour and Employment Division of the Planning Commission, has drawn attention to an unmistakable trend towards progressive decline in the number of women in gainful employment. The number of working women declined from 43.0 million in 1911 to 40.7 in 1951. During the same period the female population has increased from 149.9 million to 173.4 million. While the female population has increased by 23.5 million, the number of working women has declined by 2.3 million.

CONDITION OF HEALTH

The general condition of health of which the high infant mortality and low expectation of life are the symptoms also reacts on productive efficiency and standards of living. Expectation of life in India is only 32 years as compared with 65 years and more in the prosperous countries of the West. And infant mortality in India is as high as 113 per 1000 whereas it has been reduced to as low as 25 per thousand in Western countries.

The cumulative effects of inadequate diet and lack of educational and medical facilities can be seen in the low average level of physical and mental development. A recent health survey of students in Calcutta revealed that 37.9 per cent were suffering from malnutrition, 35.7 per cent from caries and 30 per cent from throat trouble. Is it any wonder that children in such physical condition are not in a position to acquit themselves well in their examinations and the percentage of failures is high? The deterioration has been going on for some years and the position has been getting worse. And worst of all it has affected the very class of people, who have to provide leadership in the tasks of national development, the alumni of our universities.

PROGRESSIVE DECLINE

Those who have had occasion to serve on Boards set up to recruit officers for big commercial and industrial establishments have noticed a progressive decline in the calibre of candidates appearing for selection. This finding is confirmed by the experience of Public Service Commissions, as indicated by decline in the highest marks scored and the average performance over successive years. The figures of the West Bengal Civil Service examinations for the years 1952, 1953 and 1955 are given below:

	Highest aggregate marks scored out of 1000	percentage of candidates scoring over 45% marks.
1952 ..	655	27
1953 ..	623	19
1955 ..	618	13

While these figures deal with the recent past and may not serve as a basis for firm conclusions, the contrast in capacity and achievement stands out if we compare the conditions in India with those of other countries or with those prevailing in our own country in earlier and more fortunate periods of our history.

SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS

Achievement in the field of science and invention can be regarded as an index of intellectual accomplishment. An international almanac lists 365 important inventions made in the course of the last three centuries. Of these 202 inventions were made by citizens of the United States, 61 by British inventors, 34 by Germans and six by Austrians, 29 by Frenchmen 14 by Italians, four by Swedes, three each by Netherlanders and Belgians, two each by Russians, Czechs and Danes and one each by Brazilian and Spanish inventors. The list probably is not exhaustive. For a similar list of discoveries in Physics and Chemistry does not mention Jagadish Bose, P. C. Ray or C. V. Raman. Nevertheless, the absence of even a single Indian entry in the list of inventions is not without its significance. Even in the case of applications for patents submitted to the Indian Patent Office, the great majority comes from foreign sources.

The poverty of inventive genius at the present day raises the question mentioned at the outset: what has happened to all the talent and enterprise

which enabled India, from the distant past and till about two centuries ago, to manufacture the best steel in the world or to build ships of such sturdy construction that, as late as the beginning of the 19th century, ships for the British Navy were being built in the shipyards of Bombay? At the present day we have to depend on foreign equipment and technical talent for every single item in the construction of steel plants. We do not even have the men to check the advice given by our consultants. For that we have to appoint another set of consultants, thus doubling the cost. Is it possible that all the wealth of talent which made India great in the distant past has been washed out of the racial stock? Or is it only remaining dormant waiting for favourable circumstances to manifest itself?

GLARING CONTRAST

Why go back to the distant past? No one can miss the glaring contrast between the atmosphere and intellectual ctivity of the opening years of this century and conditions at the present time. In spite of the restricted opportunities under foreign rule, that was a period of creative activity in all fields of national life, in literature, art, science and pioneering industrial enterprises. In all these fields we had men who could hold their own with the best in other countries We then had a Tagore, a Jagadish Bose, an Acharya Ray and an Ashutosh Mookherjee. To the same generation belonged Acharya Jadunath Sirkar. The race suddenly appears to have lost its capacity to produce men of that calibre. I shall not refer to politics which was the main preoccupation of the people of that generation and absorbed the best part of their energies. Even what we have today of leadership in the intellectual fields, we owe to people who derived their inspiration direct from the leaders of the modern Indian renaissance.

But that heritage unfortunately is not being transmitted in unbroken succession. After a spectacular rise, the curve appears to be pointing steadily downward In this situation what has been achieved in one generation is lost in the next and the third generation has to build anew from scratch. And unless strenuous efforts are made to check the drift, the investments that are now being made in building up costly industrial establishments on borrowed capital and talent, will remain infructuous for lack of competent hands to maintain them in working order.

PRIORITY TO PROGRAMM E

I am, therefore, anxious to emphasize that the authorities responsible for drawing up plans for industry, should from the very beginning pay as much attention to the human factor as to the material resources. Efforts carried out to enlarge the productive potential by investments in capital equipment must be matched by investments in raising the quality of the human resources. For this purpose two programmes are of paramount importance and should be given the highest priority. These are:—

(1) A programme to improve the nutritional level of the population, especially of the growing generation.
(2) A campaign for the eradication of illiteracy.

In view of the shortage of traditional foods, it will be essential to make fullest use of the latest discoveries of the science of human nutrition so as to assure to the entire population balanced diet out of the materials available. And propaganda must be undertaken to persuade the people to make the necessary adjustments in their dietetic habits. The urgency of the problem of improving nutritional standards is underlined by some of the untoward results of the progress of medical science. Medical science has achieved spectacular success in dealing with the familiar epidemic diseases which in former years were responsible for most of the deaths. With the elimination of epidemics, the malnourished and defective persons who would have fallen victims at an early age are enabled to live longer along with their disabilities only to lead a miserable life suffering from the diseases of malnutrition or degenerative diseases which run a long-drawn course. With control of cholera, small-pox and malaria, T.B. and cancer are emerging as the principal killers. To be cut off by small-pox in childhood will entail far less misery to the individual as well as his family and the community, than survival to adulthood to fall prey ultimately to the dreaded T.B. or Cancer. The defences have to be built up sufficiently early. And unless immediate and fruitful action is taken to improve nutritional levels, the work-force will soon be saddled with the responsibility of looking after an equal number of the sick and disabled, a very large number of them permanent liabilities.

As regards literacy, while knowledge of reading and writing will not by itself create the citizens to run an efficient industrial democracy, literacy is the indispensable instrument for all types of progress. The problem no doubt is vast. But it will not appear insuperable, if efforts are made to stimulate the enthusiasm of the people and to mobilise voluntary effort behind a nation-wide campaign to root out illiteracy.

Such a campaign of adult education can be launched immediately without waiting for the disappearance of the foreign exchange crisis, for it will not involve any expenditure of foreign currency. Even the rupee cost can be kept down to a very low figure by utilising the voluntary services of persons who have the necessary facilities for running night schools on a voluntary basis and in their spare time. The prosperous classes of society owe a duty to set an example of national service. And they will surely respond, if the appeal is made to their spirit of patriotism and backed by a practical programme of action.

RED BANGLES

By SHEILA CHATTERJEE

THE stalls displayed myriads of glass bangles. In between were shops which sold rich Banaras saris, magnificent with silver and gold woven into fine crepe silks, saris of every hue. There were bell-metal shops, the piled up ware competing in glitter with the gorgeous textiles. Tiny cubicles sold coloured powder which women used for putting the round beauty marks on their foreheads. With the coloured powder would be found cones of glistening silver and gold dust. Mirrored shelves held bottles of rose water from Ghazipur, keora water, phials of thick heavily scented attar, and joss sticks in gaily wrapped tubes. Women sat selling garlands of flowers amidst heaps of marigolds and bright pink roses. The pan - sellers spread out their heart-shaped leaves on blocks of melting ice, sprinkled scented sweet spices on the leaves and folded them briskly to serve customers. Always there were crowds pressed against each other in the narrow lanes which led to the temple of Viswanath in Banaras. People came from all over India to the holy city where the river Ganga curved like Shiva's crescent moon. For those who breathed their last in Banaras there was no rebirth. So the old and the sick poured into Banaras from all over India to die in bliss.

Surath's mother was one of those who had come to end her days here, only for her it was not a pilgrimage but banishment self-imposed. Surath came to Banaras as often as possible to be with his mother. He did not remember his father, having lost him very early in his childhood. Since he was a small boy he had wandered through these lanes of Viswanath, yet they still fascinated him. When his zamindari was taken away by Government he accepted the change as one which was inevitable. Maharajkumar Surathendra Nath Roy of Madhugarh clipped his name of all that superfluous splendour and called himself Surath Roy. But his mother, the Maharani of Madhugarh could not be known by any other name. She thought all this was a calamity specially visited on her head for no sin of her own. She could not live on in Madhugarh in her new ignoble position and fled to Banaras to hide her shame.

One evening the customary procession of tall handsome priests went through the lanes of Viswanath to perform the ceremony of evening worship. They carried lamps and giant water jars, peacock feather fans and white yak tail fly whisks. Drums and cymbals played before them and the crowd hastily made way going into the big shops in the lane. Surath took his mother inside a sari shop. "Glory to Viswanath, Lord of the world!" the slow-moving Brahmins repeated in a deep solemn chorus. "Glory to Viswanath, Lord of the world!" the crowd chanted after them.

The shop was crowded. A group of middle class Bengalis was scrutinising some cheap Banaras saris. There were three ugly dark women who talked in loud voices. Some lanky men chewed *pan*, standing about the women and commenting. The place of honour was given to a widow, the head of their family probably, who said at times with authority, "This will suit you, Maya", "This will suit you, Indu", "This is just the right colour for Durga", as she selected saris for her three ugly daughters. At the edge of their group stood a young married girl. She had a pretty soft face, very gentle. Her quiet eyes looked longingly at the saris which were being bought. No one asked her to see them or said that any would be bought for her. Surath who stood near her could hear a stifled sigh.

"Get out of my way, make room for me to see the saris", one of the ugly women said pushing her back, thrusting her against Surath accidentally. "Can't you see where you go? There is a man behind you", the woman shouted then, jerking her sideways.

The young girl stood all this without replying.

She was like a puppet thrust about by others at will,—depressed, expressionless. When Surath got down from the shop after the procession went away he could not help glancing back to watch the girl again. She was then gazing in wonder at a red and gold brocade spread before some other rich customers. He wondered which one of the thin men could be her husband.

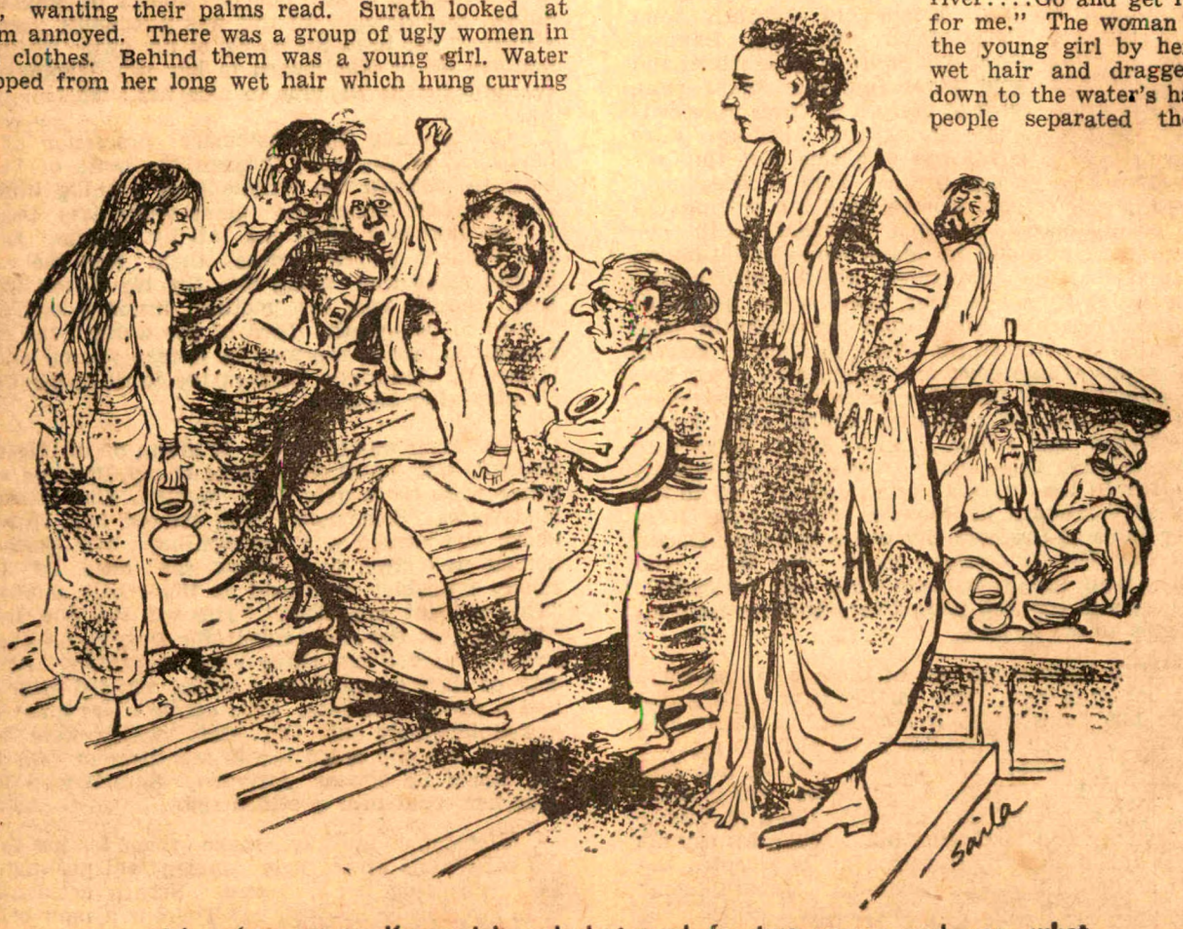
All great ruling princes and big landholders from every part of India had built small palaces on the riverside. So had the zamindars of Madhugarh. When the rains came the water lapped rising against the foundations of the Madhugarh palace. There was a bathing ghat with wide steps in front built for the public as an act of merit. A lane skirted the palace and led to the ghat. People went bathing all day, from before dawn till night. Brahmins sat under big fixed umbrellas reading holy books or discoursing on religion. Surath liked to go and sit on the steps unobtrusively listening to the talk which went on. At times when he was lucky he found a great scholar hidden behind the unkempt beard and ash-smeared body of an ascetic. Surath had studied Sanskrit and philosophy in his university. So it was a pleasure for him to listen to such people.

Of late he had traced one such recluse who had come down from a cave in the snow-bound Himalayas.

Surath sat at the feet of the Sadhu watching the first red colours of sunset steal up the sky and tint the river pink. The Sadhu was dilating on the abstruse philosophy of the Vedanta. Some people finished their bath and going past the Sadhu stopped, wanting their palms read. Surath looked at them annoyed. There was a group of ugly women in wet clothes. Behind them was a young girl. Water dripped from her long wet hair which hung curving down on shoulder in front. She was modest. So sh had wrapped a dry sari loosely about her wet clothe Her face seemed vaguely familiar. There was gentle melancholy about it. He remembered whe she walked past him that she was the girl he ha noticed at the shops the other day.

"Be careful, don't spill all the water from n *kamandalu*", shouted the old widow who led t women. Surath saw that the girl carried a sma spouted brass copper pot of holy Ganga water. S seemed to tremble visibly at that voice and in h effort to be extra cautious, she slipped on the w steps. The copper pot rolled clattering down to t river. With a frightened gasp the girl stood terrifie looking at the old woman with the despair and drea of a wild animal caught in a trap. Filthy abuse wa showered down upon her in a chorus. The old widow came running down the steps to hit her. Surath ros to speak for the girl. The Sadhu restrained him intervened instead.

"Mother, it was indeed not her fault. Do n beat her", he said. A crowd gathered round once, everyone wanting to know what had ha pened. The widow paid scant attention to t Sadhu. With her arms akimbo she addressed t crowd and shouted, "See, this is my daughter-in-law I married my son, precious as gold, to this witch She was to be the goddess Lakshmi of my home Instead she is ill luck personified. Her evil parents taught her to do no work properly. I and my daughters teach her night and day, yet she is clumsy, stupid and wicked. I bought a new copper *kamandalu* only last week for two rupees and see what she has done She has thrown it into the river....Go and get it back for me." The woman seized the young girl by her long wet hair and dragged her down to the water's had not people separated the old



I bought a copper Kamandalu only last week for two rupees and see what she has done. She has thrown it into the river. Go and get it.....!

woman from her daughter-in-law. A lanky lean-faced man came then and took hold of the old woman. "Mother, it is my evil fate. Let us go home now", he said. He glanced at the young girl. "As for her, I will deal with her properly at home. Here a crowd will collect round us." The man's thin lips curled in pleasure at the anticipation of torturing the girl. "Is she your wife?" people in the crowd asked him. "Yes", the man said, nodding his head curtly.

That night Surath went out on the river in his barge as it was a full-moon night. He had asked some friends and a few musicians, also a professional singer, a bejewelled beautiful hard-faced woman. They drank the fragrant intoxicating sherbet mixed with *bhang*, with rose petals floating on top. The silver moonlight on the water was displaced by the orange glow of burning funeral pyres lit on the river bank. The delight of music with moonlight rippling on the river, perfumed garlands of jasmine and rose water sprayed from gold syringes were but a thin veil of pleasure over the stern inflexible reminders of death, the funeral pyres of Manikarnika where the flames did not die out day or night for endless years ever since man could remember. The singer's voice was drowned by the sound of bursting skulls and the howl of the undertakers who burnt the dead bodies. "Glory to Viswanath, Lord of the world!" they shouted. An acrid smell of burning flesh came drifting over the river.

"Take the barge to the other bank", Surath ordered. His secure leisured life had ended for good, but still he liked at times to forget, to go back to the old ways of pleasure. It was impossible to forget anything while near the burning ghats. There was his wife Rukmini for instance.

Against the wish of his family he had married Rukmini, daughter of a ruling prince in Central India. He thought he was noble enough and rich enough to afford a wife like her. But Rukmini had left him and gone back to her father's estate long before the abolition of zamindaris. She was brought up in too westernised a manner. She had spent most of her life in France. There was strict purdah in Madhugarh. Rukmini would not listen to any one. Surath reminded her there was purdah in her father's estate too. She said, that was why she did not live there, she was either abroad or at some hill station. When Surath stayed with her in Europe it was tolerable, but whenever he returned to Madhugarh with her there was a crisis. Surath was fond of Madhugarh. He loved his mother. He was the only son and his mother would not leave Madhugarh then for any reason whatever. He did his utmost to please Rukmini, with clothes, jewellery, cars, pleasure, but she went away. And Surath was a very handsome man.

Since then he had not married again. His mother had been alarmed about the want of an heir. What need had he of an heir now that his estate was gone? At Banaras time seemed to stand still. The ancient India was here in all its traditions, colourful, crowded, deeply religious, somewhat mysterious. It was a great contrast from the world which Rukmini had loved. He remembered her most lying sprawled over a table at a night club in Paris. She clutched at the wide collar of immense rubies round her throat, rubbed her face against the table and kept saying, "Go away, Surath. I hate you, I hate you!" She was heavily drunk then. Her champagne glass had splintered on the floor sliding from her lovely hand. He had shaken her, tried to get her properly seated on her chair. She had repeated continuously with her eyes closed, "Go away. I hate you, I hate you." It was a slurred whisper not shouted at him. He squeezed his eyes and covered his ears to shut away the voice even now when he recalled it in memory.

"Play an Iman Kalyan, Dinanath," Surath said to one of the musicians. The singer was silent then. All were silent while the musician played on his *sarode*. The water rippled chuckling against the sides of the barge. Surath thought, if he had married a girl from an ordinary home, an unenlightened girl as Rukmini defined them, would she not have made him happy, adored and worshipped him? How would he have liked that, he wondered. Would he have been bored, would he have found such a wife insipid? He remembered the terrified face of that gentle girl he had seen on the river steps at sunset. There was no light in her life. Rukmini would be right, but it was not the girl's fault. Were there many others like her? He felt very sorry for the girl. She could scarcely have been seventeen.

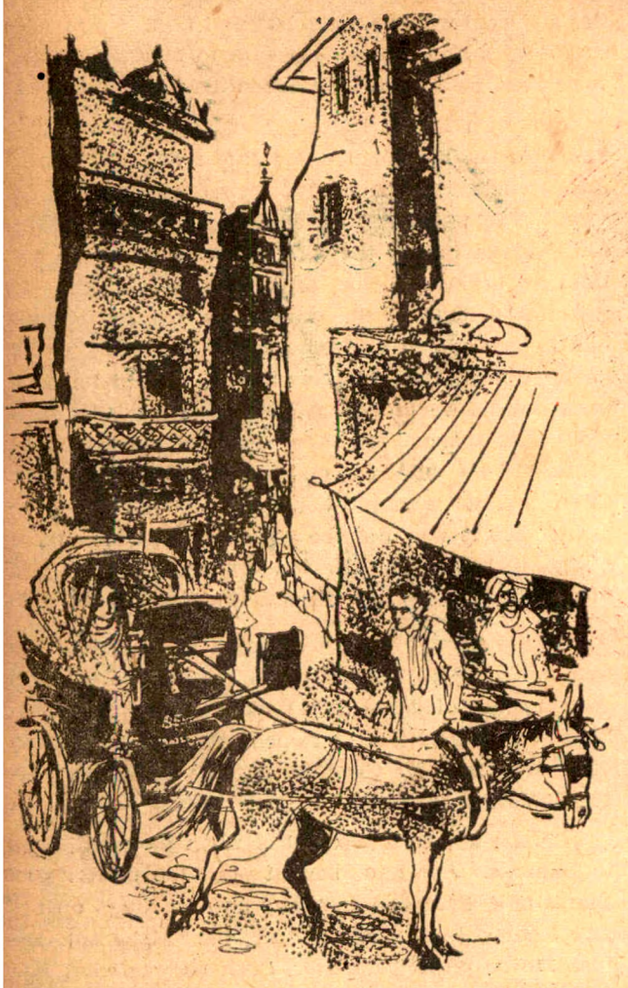
The next day Surath returned to Calcutta. He was trying to set himself up in business. He had a good amount of liquid cash unike other former landholders who were almost ruined after the acquisition of their estates by Government. He could not return before a fortnight.

Surath was in a good mood when he went back to Banaras. He had bought up the majority of shares of a European company now winding up before leaving India. His mother, the Maharani refused to be pleased however. Business was what Baniyas of the merchant caste earned their living by, not the son of a Maharaja.

"Well I am going to the temple of Viswanath to offer puja. I have cause to be grateful, mother," Surath said.

The Maharani laughed. "I go to the temple whether I get anything or not. So your new business has made you religious too? That is good."

On the way to the temple Surath saw the young daughter-in-law morosely waiting beside the three ugly women and the old widow. The others were buying coloured glass bangles which looked atrocious on the dark bony hands of those ugly women. As usual there was a hungry look in the eyes of the young girl. Glass bangles were cheap enough, yet no one bought any for her. After a while she quietly slipped away to a bangle shop on the opposite side of the lane. She enquired about the prices of all the glittering bangles which caught her fancy, put on a pair of gold painted red bangles, held up her fair arms to admire them, then carefully took them off and returned them. She shook her head and said she would not buy any. She smiled a little then. It was a shy embarrassed smile, innocent like a child's. Surath stood to stare wondering what made her smile so attractive. She was not given the money to pay even two annas for a pair of glass bangles. Surath wished he could buy them for that childlike girl. He was about to slip a rupee into her hand making sure that the girl's people were not looking his way. His mother called him, "What do you find to admire in that stunted, anaemic little girl? She is quite plain looking." Surath hastily thrust the rupee back into his pocket. He did not argue with his mother.



Surath saw in surprise, it was the young girl he saw in the lanes of Viswanath.....

He could not explain to her what grace he found in that gentle sad young face.

Then for some days he did not meet the girl in the lanes of Viswanath. He thought she had gone away from Banaras.

One evening he was going to the home of Dinanath, the *sarode* player. Dinanath lived in one of the cobbled lanes which went turning and twisting like a maze through the ancient city. To help find out the house Surath took with him one of his durwans, a local man who knew the lanes and alleyways. It was past ten at night. There were identical-looking houses on either side with small thick doors ornamented with brass knobs and steel spikes. All the doors were closed, barred from within, but from the tiny windows inquisitive faces looked down at him in silence. The eeriness was broken only when they came out of the lanes to a small square, where there would be a temple, some street lamps and stalls, lanes branching out from four sides of the square. At one such opening Surath saw a tonga standing some distance away from the little white painted temple of a minor deity. The horse munched grass from its nosebag. A veiled woman sat in the back seat, the sole occupant of the tonga. Her face was hidden by the shadow of the hood of the tonga. The driver was buying *bidis* at a *pan* shop. The square was deserted. The horse jerked its head. The carriage bobbed up and down behind it. Light fell on the face of the seated woman. Surath saw in surprise it was the young girl he saw in the lanes of Viswanath. He wondered why she was left there alone.

"I am tired, Choube. I want to rest here a little. How many miles have we walked? I think you have lost your way," Surath said to his watchman. He went and sat down on a bench before a sweet shop, from where he could see the girl directly. Her big childish eyes peered fearfully into the shadows of the lanes about the opening. She looked longingly at the temple. There were several parcels on the seat beside her. Then Surath understood the cause of her being left alone. She was to guard the purchases while the family went to the temple. As he sat there he saw a handsome well dressed man in a grey sherwani emerge from the lane in front and stand quietly looking at the girl. From another lane came a pock-marked shaven-headed ruffian. He was soon joined by a burly moustached man whose muscles and fancy meshwork undervest showed through a transparent muslin punjabi. From behind the shadows of the temple tree another ruffian stepped out. All four now looked on steadily at the young girl. The handsome man in the grey sherwani idly lifted one hand. They all began to stroll near the tonga from four sides. The girl got scared. She called to the tonga-walla and tried to get down from the tonga. The edge of her sari got entangled on a nail. While she bent down to tear her sari away, one of the burly ruffians jumped up beside her and covered her mouth with his hand to stifle her shriek. Another leapt nimbly on to the driver's seat, drew out a dagger and snatching the whip out of the driver's hand cut the horse on its flanks. With a jerk and a terrified neigh the horse raced into the dark lane in front. The handsome man continued to stroll leisurely in the direction of the running tonga. Surath was stupefied for a moment, then with a great cry he ran after the tonga, his watchman close behind him. Some men from the sweet shop also came out to join in the chase. They ran shrieking, tearing the silence of the unlit alleys and people came out of their homes to swell the number of pursuers. The handsome man quietly slipped into one of the houses and was seen no more. The watchman caught up with the tonga first. He stopped the horse hanging on to its bridle. Then the two ruffians fell on him with their daggers. The crowd closed about them and in the darkness and confusion they got away. The watchman being a professional tough was not very badly wounded. He too had his own dagger with him. Surath went up to the girl. She was unhurt though extremely scared.

"Did they try to rob you?" Surath asked.

She shook her head and clung to him clutching at his clothes. Her teeth chattered and she could not speak. Some one got her a glass of water. Surath sat by her in the tonga. It was some time before she recovered. The driver had by then come to his tonga, having cautiousy waited at the edge of the shouting crowd till the trouble was over. He was able to drive them back to the temple. The priests said the people who had last visited the temple had been greatly disturbed for their daughter-in-law who was waiting outside in the tonga had been abducted. They had come out of the temple hearing the hue and cry, waited wailing a long time, then knowing there was no chance of her recovery had gone away to inform the police.

Surath asked the girl her family's address. She said her husband had a month's leave and had brought his mother and sisters on pilgrimage. She was frightened. She said they would blame her for what had happened.

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My Indian Summer

By DEBESH DAS, I.C.S.

I AM falling in love again. And with the same old wife of mine. It sounds strange even to me. There are no precedents among my people of trying to fall in love with one's own wife. She could as well be treated as a doll or a chattel, essential for the household but not for the heart's requirements.

But my wife is not so surprised. On the other hand she is pleased that her efforts are now bearing fruit. Her newly acquired town friends have been taking a hand in training her in the art of make-up, conversation and sophistication. She has taken it for granted that all these are now producing results and that is why she is pleased with herself? No wonder she does not notice the struggle within me.

I am sure my readers will not find me out. Nor my orthodox wife who belongs to the last century but is fast growing into a woman of the next.

The winter of Calcutta is just over. There is a spring feeling in the air. In tune with it I also take special care to look more dashing and interesting before I go out for the office. After a little touch of cream on the face I vigorously back-brush my hair. With a light touch of fingers I produce waves on my hair and cast half a glance on my silk suit before I run out to catch a street car. I have got a new job and I must be punctual. Stray lines of romantic love poems memorised during the college days come back to my mind. But away with them.

Here comes my wife dashing across the room like a bellow of waves. She carries a pair of nicely packed leaves in her hands. She realises that her hands are still wet and slyly wipes them with the flying ends of her newly bought georgette sari. It is really meant for a smart modern *shiff* of a dream but not the rust wife. My whole personality which was about to bloo into radiant manhood at the thought of going to th office gets a rude shock and there is an end to all th summer yearnings I was beginning to feel.

But the daughter of the ancient baronial fami would never realise all that. Our parents only unde stand that it is enough to lock four hands togeth in marriage. Nobody cares to work out whether th girl would come up to the requirements of a moder educated husband or develop herself into a suitab partner in life. I realise all that and cannot get angr with Sewa. I can only blame our parents and m luck and take refuge in all those poems of lov After all, Sewa means nothing more than devote service.

The net result is that as soon as I cheer up, m heart starts drooping at the cold sight of her fatef presence. I curse my luck and try to put on an air o indifference. Nothing really matters. It is just th time for a routine departure for office.

TRYING TO BE MODERN

But she would not take note of the change in m mood. Nor is it her function to do so. Is she not afte all, my wedded wife? Does she not claim my attentio as a matter of right acquired by the process of repeat ing some age-old hymns of marriage? She has he rights and exercises them without question. The war time opportunities of Calcutta have enabled me t land a big job in the city. I have taken a smar modern flat and brought back my wife from the vil lage home just for domestic convenience. In the othe flats round us there are many happy families wit modern husbands and wives, wives as streamlined a the latest American automobiles. As I pass them i the staircase or at the landing, I cannot but think o Sewa and I am sure she also notices them. For the las

month or so, I have observed her having long discussions with some of them. What they discuss they alone know but the result is quite apparent in her dress and behaviour. She has changed the manner of putting her sari and her hair style. She struggles daily with high-heeled shoes. Today I am amazed to see her putting on a diaphanous georgette sari. Her hair-do is modern indeed with locks of hair coming down the crown of her head with a negligent air. And, oh ! the wonder of wonders, she has put on lipstick too.

No, she does not feel ashamed of it all. But I do feel like crying aloud that all this does not befit her. Who would explain to her that this style of hair-do does not suit her face? Nor does the shade of the lip-stick match her complexion.

But really, really she is not ashamed at all. Rather it is me, my poor self, who begins to feel embarrassed. For the first time I realise that the veil over the face of an eastern girl can also be a blessing. But she has denied herself its protection and here she comes forward with a smile on her curling smeared lips.

Of course, she is beautiful even after seven years of marriage. But she is only beautiful and not charming. She has a fair complexion but no attraction. Like the bamboo reed on the mouth of a rustic cowherd, she could produce a sweet note or two in the meadows of the countryside. But my heart does not respond to it. It fails to any chord in me while I am hungry for the symphony of European orchestra.

She comes very near me and tilts her neck to say, "Here are the betel leaves for you. Just see how nicely I have made them."

THAT IRRITATING KISS

I do not feel any excitement. Of course, it is the custom in old families to give a few betel leaves to the breadwinner when he goes out to work. But it is just a custom and she has continued it. I know that there is nothing more in it. But she does not seem to worry. She tries to become even more modern and practically thrusts a betel leaf in my mouth. Instinctively, I feel like closing the lips forcibly. But then it might look like making faces at her and I cannot bring myself to do that with all the education I have had at the university. How can I treat her with coldness even though I do not feel any warmth for her? So I put forward my hand to take the betel from her and put it in my mouth.

Probably she thinks . . . . Dash it all . . . . Let her think whatever she wants to. Probably she thinks that I have been pleased at her sudden promotion in modern manners by coming to see me off and staying with me for a few minutes before parting. I know this she could not have even imagined back in her village home. Probably she thinks that she has now come up to my expectations.

Encouraged at this idea, she does something unusually bold for her. It is broad daylight and anybody might be nearabout and might watch our parting. But she suddenly comes forward and gives me a kiss. Rather nonplussed, I try to move my lips away but I do not know if I have escaped. Actually, the kiss misses its objective and trying to hide my irritation I ran away pleading that it is getting late for the office.

II

The clang of the street car may not produce any musical note in your ear. None of the people rushing towards the office early in the day care to waste their thoughts on this infernal noise. But there is a music in it — a music which I could have enjoyed more were I left alone. I know that the 8-30 tram is not my personal property. But I do also feel that the other people should have no right to board it.

A young girl also takes her seat exactly opposite me in thi s tram of mine.....

For the last six days I am occupying one particular seat, just opposite the seat reserved for ladies. A young girl also takes her place exactly opposite me in this tram of mine. I am so happy to imagine that the tram is mine even though she does not belong to me.

The very first day she boarded the tram and occupied this seat I felt the magnetic charm of her presence. Probably you would consider her not as beautiful as Sewa but she has something in her which my wife has not. She has smartness, has presence. She is not only young but her thoughts. Above all, she is not in love but is meant to be loved.

I have made private enquiries and found out that Malini works in the Civil Supply office. It is not difficult to conclude from her dress that she has to work for her living. But what of that ? Even the dark border stitched to her old cream coloured georgette shows her taste. She might have to work for her living but she has life in her. She might be a girl of ordinary means but she is extraordinarily rich in her personality.

All these six days, I have taken my seat in her front and observed her closely. The very thought that I too shall be noticed by her makes me self-conscious. Hardly realising what I am doing, I lift my hands to check up the slim knot of my Continental tie. Quietly I press my fingers on the head to set right the waves of hair. I cast a stolen glance at the crease of my trousers and take in the whole landscape through which the tram car is passing. I have a close look at this beautiful world, a new discovery for me.

All those love poems stream back to my mind. The Indian poet of the fifteenth century must have

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The Tiger

By AUGUSTUS SOMERVILLE

THE early history of the tiger is as interesting as the animal itself. A comparative newcomer to India, the country of their origin can only be traced by their fossil remains. The earliest known remains of the tiger,—similar in every respect to the skeletons of animals now living—were discovered in the New Siberian Islands well within the Arctic Circle. That was the period when under a genial climate, Northern and Central Asia supported a rich vegetation and an abundance of animal life.

From Northern Asia, the tiger extended its territory over the greater part of the Continent, establishing itself wherever conditions were favourable. Contrary to popular belief it did not colonise the high tableland of Tibet, its presence high on the slopes of the Himalayan ranges being due to other and mostly economic causes, nor did it enter the great Palaearctic Desert which stretches from the confines of Sind and Baluchistan through the greater part of Persia, Mesopotamia and Arabia. The most westerly limits of its migration appear to be the eastern slopes of the Caucasus, the forests of the Elburz Mountains, which lie between the shores of the Caspian Sea and Persia and the northern frontiers of Afghanistan. It is still found in these regions.

It is difficult to conjecture how long ago the tiger entered and established itself in India. Its absence from Ceylon suggests its arrival at the most southerly point of its distribution in this country after the land bridge between India and Ceylon had disappeared. That the tiger was established in this country fifty centuries ago is again suggested by the recent excavations at Mohenjodaro where the records of a pre-Aryan civilization which flourished 5000 years ago include numerous seals engraved with the figures of the tiger. Of this we are certain that the tiger entered India through the hill ranges of Assam. It colonised the thickly forested slopes of the southern Himalayas and subsequently established itself over the greater part of the peninsula.

DISTRIBUTION & APPEARANCE

In India the tiger is found under varying conditions of climate and environment. His tracks are to be found in the winter snows of the Himalayas at an altitude of 10,000 ft.; in the humid evergreen forests or in grassy swamps or in the amphibious terrain of the Sundarbans, where trees and mud and water fight for supremacy.

A question most frequently asked of Game Wardens as well as sportsmen, is "How many tigers in your opinion are still to be found in such and such a district?" The question is almost impossible to answer. Although a record is kept, in Reserved Forests particularly, of the number of tigers shot, changes in the environment in which the animal community lives, the constant and senseless destruction of all game animals that form the staple food of these animals as well as the destruction of vast tracts of forests, cause a speedy exodus of all tigers from that particular district, so that a forest that a few years before was teeming with game of all types, is soon barren of wild life. The reverse is also true. The hot weather with its scarcity of grazing and water supply may cause a concentration of cattle and game in a favoured locality and with it a concentration of animals that prey on them. Given favourable conditions a tiger may settle in a forest for an indefinite period and establish his rights over this territory. On his death his domain is taken over by a successor within a short period. It is essential to remember that three things are necessary for a tiger's existence: the neighbourhood of animals of a

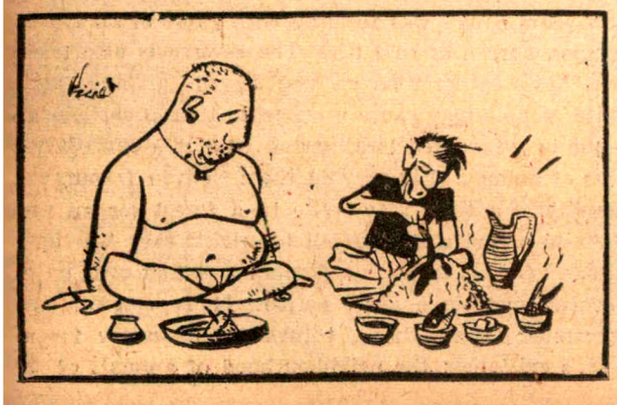
size commensurate with his needs, ample shade to sleep in and water to quench his thirst. An emigrant from cooler, northern climes he is still intolerant of tropical heat.

The tiger, unlike the lion, is exclusively an Asiatic animal. Pocock recently summarised the difference in tigers in different Asiatic countries. Taking the Indian tiger as a standard for comparison, he describes it as a rich-coloured well-striped animal with a short coat. The Caucasian tiger is distinguished by a tendency to brown both in body colour and stripes. More or less distinct races are said to inhabit Mongolia, Manchuria and Amurland, Northern and Central China, Sumatra, Java and Bali. Little is known even about our Indian tiger. Although it is a common belief that tigers vary in different parts of the country, nothing definite is known, although tigers living in more humid forests are generally darker and richer in colouring than animals found in dry forest tracks. Black and white tigers have been known, but melanism among tigers is rare. White tigers are more frequently encountered, especially in dry hilly country. They are not a distinct race, albinism, like melanism, being due to the excess or absence of pigment in the skin. In the case of white tigers it is believed that the predominance of this colour in some districts is due to inter-breeding, as in the old Rewa State.

SIZE MEASUREMENT

A subject that has always been of keen interest to sportsmen and one that is open to constant debate is the size of tigers. Published records fluctuate between 9 and 14 ft. and some attain more ambitious lengths. My contention has always been that a tiger 14 feet in length and standing only 3 ft. at the shoulder, will need an additional pair of legs in the centre of his body to keep his stomach off the ground. These discrepancies are easy to trace. Some sportsmen make it a practice to measure a tiger "along curves". This is obviously wrong. The correct way to measure a tiger is to lay it on its side on the ground. Stretch the body straight and then fix a peg at the tip of the nose and the extremity of the tail. This is called measuring "between pegs" and is the only correct way of ascertaining the length of the animal. It is of course preferable to measure the head and body and the tail separately as this gives a better idea of the size of the animal.

Few Indian tigers exceed 10ft. in length,—the average being 9 ft. to 9 ft. 6 ins. The height varies between 3 ft. and 3 ft. 6 ins. The weight ranges between 400 and 500 lbs. Females are smaller in build. The average length is 8 ft. 6 ins., the weight being about 100 lbs. less than the male.



Tigers mate all through the year. Females are likely to come in season at any time, but the recognized period is shortly after the rains, the majority of the cubs being born between February and May. The period of gestation is fifteen weeks. The tigress gives birth to her cubs in heavy jungle, or in a cave or rough shelter amidst rocks. As many as six cubs may be born in a litter, but these rarely survive. A tigress is seldom seen with more than one or two cubs at her side when hunting, but instances have been known when the cubs of the previous litter still accompany the mother when she is with her new litter.

HOW TIGERS HUNT

A tiger hunts mainly at night. This is not because he is nocturnal in his habits, but, living in the vicinity of human habitation, his prey, mainly sambur, chetal and other deer, feed at night and this forces him to adopt a similar procedure. In the dense forest, where the game is undisturbed, the tiger will seek his prey at any time, day or night. In the gathering dusk he prowls through the forest, along game trails, fire-lines or on the edge of cultivated fields. His acute sense of hearing and sight gives him ample warning of the approach of any animal. He crouches down, concealing himself behind a bush or rock, till his quarry is within striking distance, when, with a savage roar, he springs and the animal surprised and terrified goes down. The tiger's method of killing is not regulated by any particular set of rules. He kills just how and when opportunity offers. There is no truth in the belief that the tiger invariably breaks the neck of his victim or that he sucks its blood. The breaking of the neck is incidental to the method of attack and the absence of blood in large quantities at the site of the kill is not due to the tiger sucking the blood, but owing to the fact that when once he establishes his hold on the neck of the quarry, he holds on till the animal succumbs, and it is this that prevents excessive bleeding.

The tiger invariably drags or carries his kill to some cover, a deep nulla or dense jungle, where he can leave it safe from vultures or other animals. He invariably disembowels it first, placing the entrails to one side, then starts feeding from the hind quarters. In this he differs from the leopard who starts his meal in the region of the breast bone or stomach. The man-eating tiger is fortunately uncommon. Insufficiency of natural food or inability to secure game may convert any tiger into a man-eater. Once the partiality for human flesh is established, the tiger becomes a scourge in the district he inhabits. He loses all fear of man, taking his victims from the villages in broad daylight and soon establishes a reign of terror that closes all communication between villages, disrupts the supply of food and other essentials and reduces the people to such a state of despair that they start leaving their homes and converging

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MY INDIAN SUMMER

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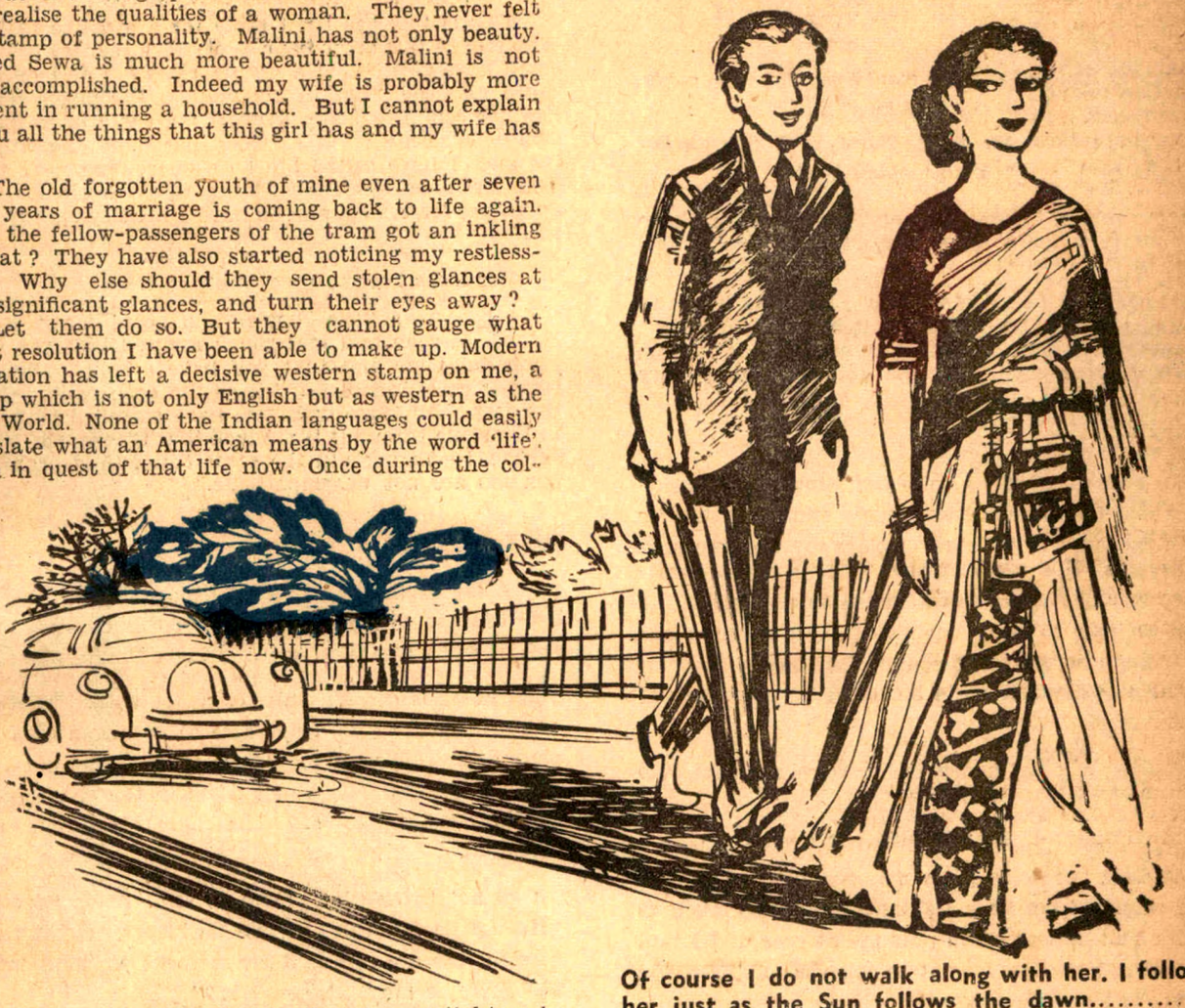
had a tall, slim willow of a figure in his mind when he wrote :

"I shed tears as I yearn for beauty;
My heart is full with her quality;
All my limbs crave for her limbs."

But in that age poets used to see only the beauty and realise the qualities of a woman. They never felt the stamp of personality. Malini has not only beauty. Indeed Sewa is much more beautiful. Malini is not only accomplished. Indeed my wife is probably more efficient in running a household. But I cannot explain to you all the things that this girl has and my wife has not.

The old forgotten youth of mine even after seven long years of marriage is coming back to life again. Have the fellow-passengers of the tram got an inkling of that ? They have also started noticing my restlessness. Why else should they send stolen glances at me, significant glances, and turn their eyes away ?

Let them do so. But they cannot gauge what great resolution I have been able to make up. Modern education has left a decisive western stamp on me, a stamp which is not only English but as western as the New World. None of the Indian languages could easily translate what an American means by the word 'life'. I am in quest of that life now. Once during the college debates, I raised a fist in the air and tightened the muscles of my neck while shouting for the charter of life. Now I want to enjoy that life in all its beauty and intensity to the last dregs. Yes, this is life—ever awake and burning for ever and full of fire, a life which does not sit back to take count of risks and losses and other consequences.



But where could I run away with Malini ? This country is not at all suitable for such adventures. Our traditions do not appreciate the exuberance of life. Actually I am rather afraid of the wagging tongues of scandal. In that college debate years back I tried to warm up the atmosphere and with a sardonic smile I had affirmed this country of ours has got no life at all. Alas ! I did not know that the fire of life will burn me in this fashion.

To speak the truth, this country of mine which gives so much emphasis on so-called morals is not suitable for any adventure at all. I should, therefore, leave the country for good and go away to South America with Malini. I could go to Brazil, Argentina, Peru, in fact wherever I like. The Antarctic Ocean may be the limit. But I would prefer a cheap country and a country not too cold. Perhaps I shall find out a place near the vernal equinox where it would be neither too cold nor too warm and where the air would be sweetened by the happy breath of Malini under the moon-lit sky. Probably, South America is the right destination. All right, let us leave this orthodox country of ours and my orthodox wife Sewa. Let them stay behind.

But the tram car is moving rather fast today

Of course I do not walk along with her. I follow her just as the Sun follows the dawn.....

Let it do so because my imagination has taken wing and can fly even faster. The only question is whether Malini will agree to take her place by me on the Persian carpet.

I am sure she will. I have no doubt about it. After all, I am still quite young. May be that I am not as young as those immature young students of my country who go abroad and start dreaming of love whenever a girl looks and smiles at them. But I am not as raw as all that. I understand very well the heart of a woman and the language of her glances. I have no doubt that today she is particularly interested in me and is prepared to respond. I have been able to read the silent language of her eyes and lips quite well indeed. Indeed I have noticed fleeting smiles around the corners of her eyes.

At the next stop Malini gets down from the car. Perhaps she is unable to control her emotions. But her silent call does not go in vain. I follow her quietly to the green lawns which the tramlines bypass. Of course I do not walk along with her. I follow her just as the sun follows the dawn.

III

I am not like those callow young men who can

ıly imagine and not plunge into action. Whatever do, I do thoroughly, I am not the type that feels shy hile face to face for the first time with the sweet- art. Nor would I lower my eyes in shyness when nfronting her. I feel a courage which is only pos- ble when one really falls in love. To guard against ıy weakness in my resolution, I tighten the knot of y tie while following her.

I am prepared to go as far as South America. I nnot cry halt by only reciting those lines of weak ntimentalism:

"How far and yet further would you take me away,
Oh my love?
Tell me where, on what shore will you anchor
Your golden boat?"

I remember those lines of Tagore, "You have ade me an emperor by giving me your love." I feel roic in my resolution.

Of course, I feel another shiver also. Is it due to ıe cool morning breeze? Or is it mere imagination? hatever that may be I tighten my belt. After all, have started putting on the European dress very cently.

AGIC WAND

We walk for hardly a couple of minutes. This side the meadows is somewhat lonely and quite suitable r an exchange of feelings. I place my fingers round ıe neck to find whether the corners of the white llar are still neat or have started to crumple up. I ugh a little to clear my throat, and try to smile ıen Malini herself turns round. Her face is a mirror light, just like a lotus in bloom in the morning of e.

Pouring a lot of honey in her voice she asks, "Do u want to tell me anything ?"

"Anything?" I want to give her my all.

Anyhow her voice gives me some sort of assur- ıce. I should not have tightened my tie so much as stifle me. Her question puts me at ease and I find e reply, "Yes. Yes, I want to tell you many many ings. You know everything."

A faint smile plays over her face as she purrs, ah ! How should I know ? I can't know your mind."

I reply, "No. No, I am not saying that. But I did ant to tell you something. Actually I was just going tell you . . . I mean I wanted to say . . . ."

A maddening smile plays over her face. I guess is left to me to continue the conversation.

I feel my drooping courage coming back again as say, "Somehow I feel sure that you'd pardon me if tell you something very bold even though I am eaking to you for the first time."

Malini smiles again and says, "How could I do that less I know what your boldness is."

I reply, "Please understand. If at the touch of the agic wand somebody's sleep breaks and life awakens, u cannot blame the person who was sleeping."

Rightly had I guessed that Malini was sympathe- tic. She immediately understands what I want to say. Surely this is what our poets have described as 'feeling her with one's own heart.'

Aha ! This is the supreme expression of one's deepest yearning.

She agrees with me completely, "No. Certainly not. But surely you can't excuse the magic wand for all that."

This is just the right reply for a girl like Malini. Who else in this orthodox conservative country of ours could have given such a daring reply ? I feel encou- raged and say, "But in my opinion the magic wand has not committed any wrong. So, there is no ques- tion of excusing it. If anybody has done any wrong, it's me. I have tasted life by even coming near you. Your presence has changed the whole world for me. So, please forgive me and do have a little sympathy for me."

Her looks become perceptibly soft.

I become a little bolder and continue, "Please listen. As soon as I met you, I realised that you will understand me and that you have a heart. This is what is described in English as the deep calling unto the deep. All these days, you have travelled with me in the same tram. It is my luck that it's me, the fate- ful me, that travels in the same tram. And probably you too are not unsympathetic."

JUST A SMILE

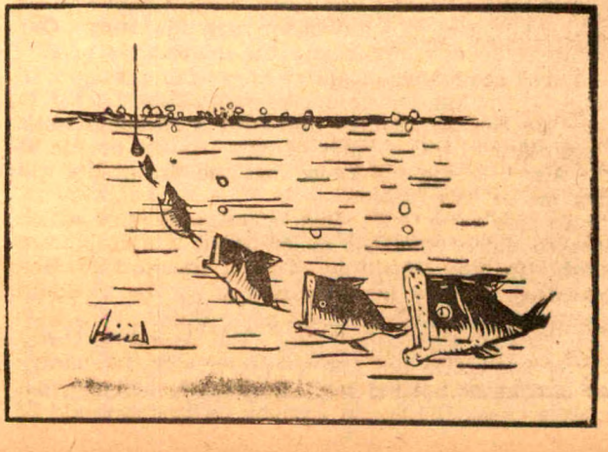
After saying this much I look at her to observe her response to my approach. On this depends the rest of what I have to say and my ultimate plans.

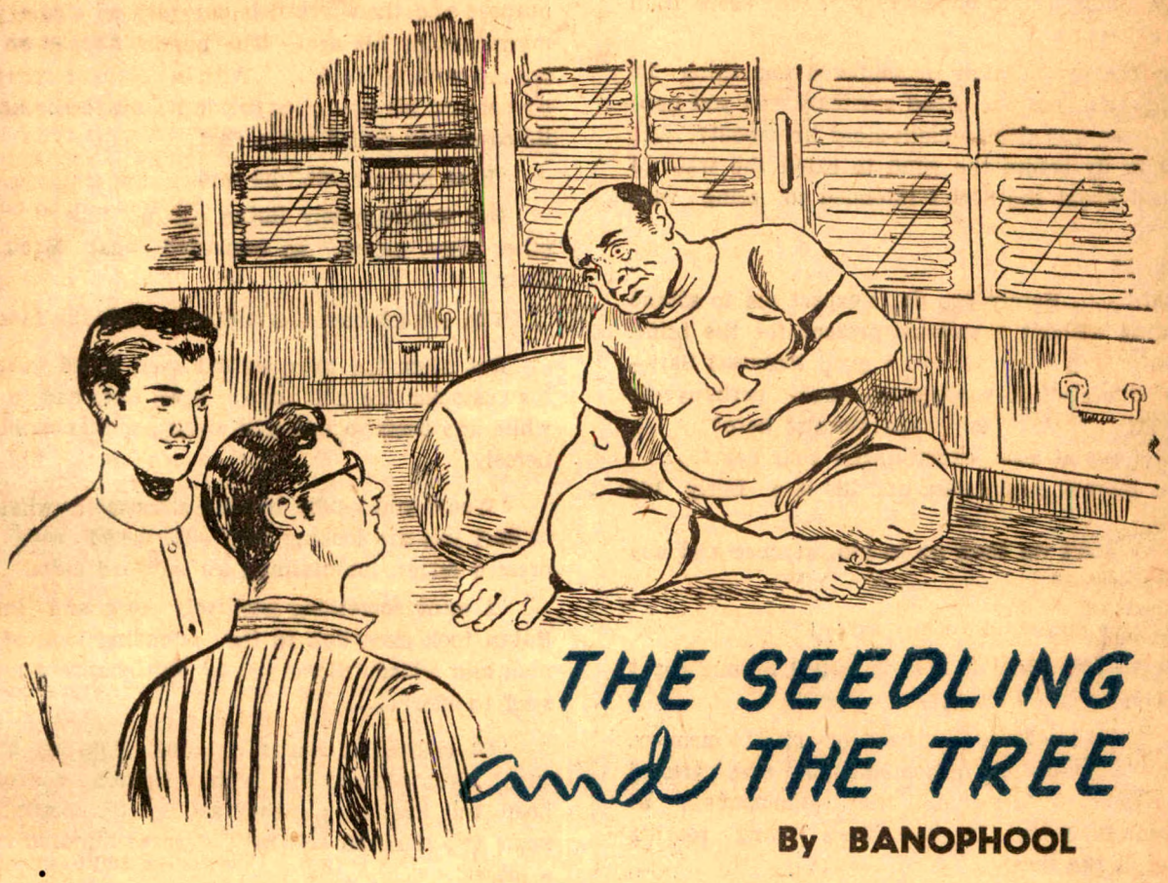
My guess is correct. She is sympathetic. There is every prospect of my being able to go ahead with my plans. She smiles at me. It is just a smile but that is all I want. Shall we sit down in the shade of a tree ? Needless to say she agrees without any objection.

I do not know what more to say. After fidgeting with my tie for a little while I whisper, "Great trea- sures of life are rare and the moment you find one is the supreme moment. Isn't it ?"

Oh, dash it all ! Is that all I wanted to say so long ? All this time, I had prepared in my mind so many approaches and plans. Where are they now ? I can-

(Continued On Page 126)





THE SEEDLING and THE TREE

By BANOPHOOL

THE man was indeed in desperate straits, and he put me in an extremely awkward position. . . . A matter of a couple of thousand rupees . . . . Surely some money, that . . . Could I reasonably hope to persuade his creditor to forego it? . . . . Of course I had influence over the man, yes . . . But to make capital of it would be to overstep the bounds of propriety. . . . .

Still, the man would not be shaken off. "For God's sake, doctor, please have mercy on me," he suddenly joined his palms in supplication and pleaded imploringly. "Believe me if I say that for three days running I haven't had a single square meal."... Tears welled up in his eyes and rolled down his hollow, sunken cheeks.

I was much distressed.

There was, in the circumstances, nothing for me but to submit to his importunities. . . . In the end I assured him that I would put in a word or two of remonstrance with the man he owed, and request him to excuse at least the amount of the interest that had accrued from the principal. I would point out to him that even if his debtor disposed of the very house he lived in, he could hardly clear all his dues. So, if he accepted what was coming to him he would be the wiser for it. . . . Of course he could clap him in civil jail if he liked. . . . But then, instead of helping his cause in the least, he would rather stand to lose by it. . . . . .

My promise apparently steadied the otherwise hopeless man a bit. . . . He wiped his eyes and left me without another word. . . . .

Clad in dirty, tattered rags the half-starved wretch presented a picture of utter helplessness and misery that stirred me to my very depths.

This reminded me of a story,—or, to be exact, an incident—that occurred some two decades ago.

* * * *

One morning an old friend of mine dropped at my place unexpectedly. . . . He was Ratan.

"Top of the morning to you, old horse," my visitor greeted me with warm cordiality. "See you after an age, isn't it?. . . . Well, well, how d'you do?"

He had been travelling to Patna to join a marriage-party,—he narrated with his normal, lively eloquence—but as he happened to pass that way it struck him that he might break his journey here and give me a look up. As the wedding was fixed for the following day he would have enough time to attend it by resuming the journey by the night train.

Ratan was really a dear. The only son of wealthy parents and sole heir to their vast fortune, a pretty brilliant student, he was remarkably plain and simple in dress and unassuming in manners. Not caring much about himself, he was a jolly good fellow of very lovable disposition. It was a valued treat to meet

him again after so many years, and I was really happy. He had changed little with time.

Very recently I started my practice and till now only a few patients came to me. So practically we had the whole day to ourselves. . . . We spent it in merry chit-chat.

"By the bye," Ratan remembered something he had forgotten, and exclaimed excitedly, "do you happen to have any decent cloth-store hereabout?..... Having to fly before the wind to catch the train I forgot all about the Sari I intended to bring with me."

"Sari!"

"Bah!.....Surely you don't expect me to attend a wedding without a suitable present for the bride, do you? ....A piece of really good Benarasi Sari—the genuine stuff, if you please—would perhaps do admirably. . . Well, any such stockist here?"

"Yes, one at least, exactly after your heart. . . . . He is a Bengali gentleman, and his is a fairly big concern."

"Why don't we then go to him at once and buy what we want?"

"As you please," I readily agreed.

Together we went to a shop owned by one Jagat Babu whom I knew. He was a widower.

To perpetuate his deceased wife's memory, Jyotirmayee Devi, he had combined the first parts of their names to designate the establishment as Jagajjyoti Bhandar. It had been doing roaring business at the time.

It was about 2-30 in the afternoon. All his men having left for lunch the elderly proprietor was alone in the shop, reclining lazily on a fat, stumpy pillow and comfortably dozing off. Our surprise visit gave a rude jolt to his nap and cut short his pleasant siesta.

From the way he frowned he was visibly cross. Nevertheless, being an old acquaintance he feigned a smile and welcomed us with cold formality.

"Hullo, doctor, what brings you out at this time of the day in this blistering heat? . . . Pray, be seated first, won't you? . . . Well, what can I now do for you?"

"My friend here is in need of a Sari.....He's going to a wedding, and he would like to take with him a really good piece of Benarasi by way of a present . . . . Could you....."

For a few moments Jagat Babu sat on without a word, peering at the shelves around him against the walls.

"Ah, a piece of Benarasi Sari, you say.....and, really good stuff at that.....Let me see.....Probably I have some within reach".....

With the utmost reluctance he left the pillow and rose heavily to his feet. As he stood up the loose end of his dhoti tucked at the back of his waist dropped to the floor. He picked it up with an effort and then shambled clumsily towards a particular rack.

Here he first selected the bale he wanted for his purpose and then jerked it out with a single swift movement of his arm. The bundle flopped on the ground with a thud.....With a sigh of relief he now sat on his haunches beside it, untied the knot of its cover and pulled out a Sari.

"Here you are, sir," he said.

But unfortunately Ratan did not like it. "Some other piece, please," he requested Jagat Babu politely.

The second one also did not catch his fancy.

But when the third exhibit even failed to satisfy his customer the old man's eyes, that had a little while ago been so dull and sleepy, were now blazing fiercely.

"Would you kindly tell me, sir, exactly what sort of Sari you are looking for?"—He asked with suppressed anger, maintaining an outward calm.

"I want something positively nice and lovely," Ratan took exception to the offending look of the man and added, "Have you by any chance any such stuff to offer?....."

"Of course, of course.....Just lots of them," Jagat Babu assured him with a vigorous nod of the head. But the thing is they are pretty costly..... Some two hundred and fifty or three hundred rupees a piece."

"Well, may I have a look at them if it does not mean any great trouble to you," Ratan politely suggested.

"If you are serious about buying one," Jagat Babu said hesitatingly, "Well, I don't think I'd mind it. Otherwise, to climb that steep ladder and bring down a heavy load from the top-shelf there for nothing more than to have a look at them, is worse than useless.....Are you really serious, sir?"

"Then, please, don't bother,"—saying this, Ratan, still smiling, stood up all of a sudden and left the store. I was taken aback and followed him.

"Well, what's the matter?" I enquired.

"I'd rather go without a Sari than get one from that insolent boor. Come along.....let's try somewhere else," Ratan replied indignantly.

At this point I suddenly remembered a patient of mine, one Mathuradas Seth, who had lately started, a small cloth-shop on his own. To him we now went.

* * * *

On seeing us, Mathuradas rose from his seat, and the enthusiasm with which he received us gave the impression as if he was eagerly awaiting us.

He cordially invited us to take our seats and

when told about the object of our visit he proceeded to display his modest stock. One after another he brought out four Banarasi Saris and spread them out before us. None of these, however, satisfied the fastidious customer and he had no more in his stock. But he was not dispirited. With unfailing courtesy he requested us in his native Hindi to wait just for a few minutes more so that he could bring some fresh specimens from a fellow-businessman and offer them to us.

Heedless of the burning midday sun, he left the shop with amazing alacrity before we could prevent him. In a few moments he returned with a heap of assorted Saris as varied in colour as in prices.

This time the texture of one of them seemed to satisfy Ratan. But he did not like the colour.

Mathuradas looked a bit confounded but he was not to be beaten. He was anxious to know which colour exactly the patron liked.

"I don't know how to explain what's in my mind. Anyway, it's just some sort of light green. Perhaps you follow what I mean?"

After thinking over the matter a little the man said, "Could you not, sirs, step this way any time tomorrow.....I would in the meantime have them all brought over to me ready for you to pick and choose.....Or, rather, why need you take any trouble at all?.....I might as well send them on to the doctor's place.....That would surely suit you better."

"But," I pointed out to him, "he won't be here by then. He's due to leave for Patna this evening."

I'm really so sorry," mumbled Mathuradas apologetically. "Well, in that case.....he could not decide what to do or what he would say.

We came out of the shop.

"Don't you worry, man," my friend cheered me up. "I'm sure I'd get what I want at Patna."

That evening as I was about to leave home to accompany Ratan to the station Mathuradas called on us with three pieces of Benarasi Saris of different shades of light green colour.

This time his buyer was satisfied. He selected one of them, an exquisite work of superb craftsmanship, and paid eight hundred and fifty rupees for it.

Later, on enquiry I came to learn that the irrepressible businessman had made a profit of clear one hundred rupees out of the memorable deal.

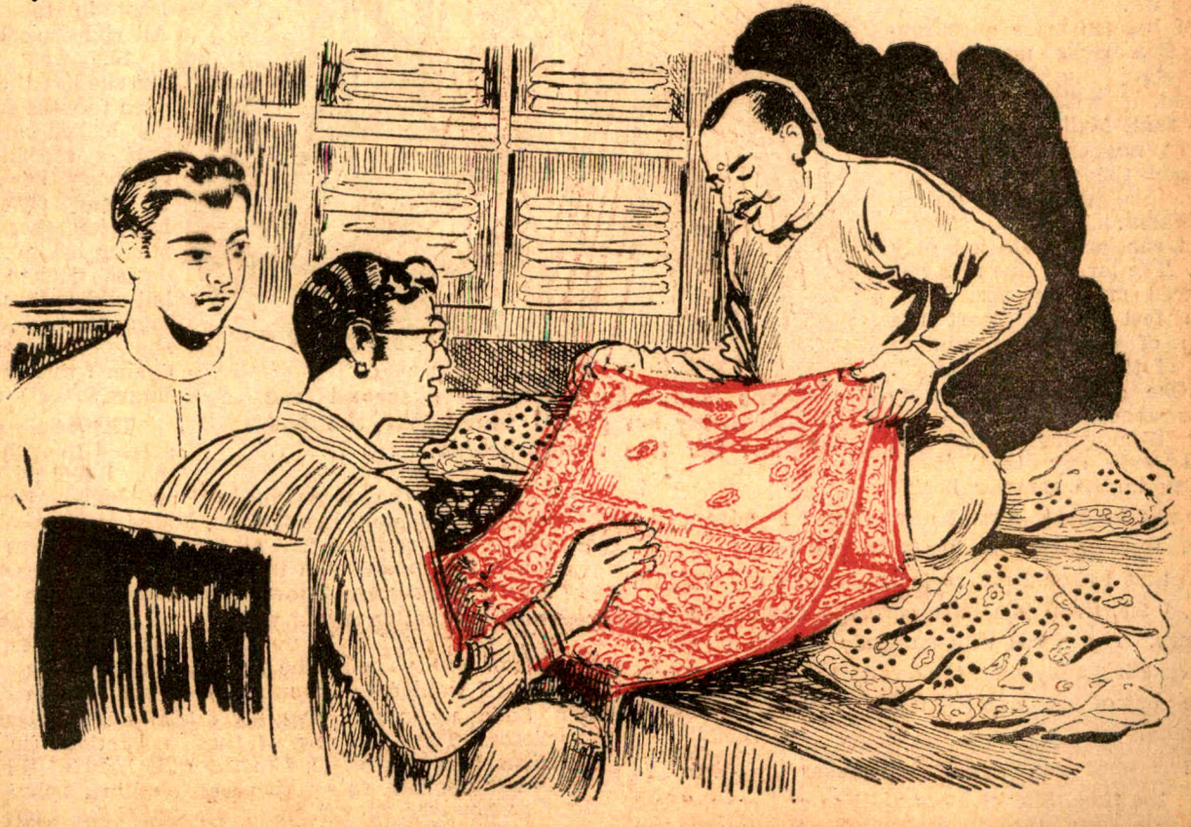
* * * *

Do not think for a moment that this incident which came back to my mind at the sight of the pitiable debtor, had nothing whatsoever to do with him. On the contrary the two things were very closely connected. For, the helpless destitute who was supplicating for mercy was the once prosperous wealthy merchant Jagat Choudhuri. The flourishing firm that had one day been Jagajjyoti Bhandar had long since been swallowed up and subsequently swept out of being by overwhelming waves of debts on debts. And, lastly, the man who had been supplying him his very life-breath and helping him to eke out a miserable existence, was none other than the unbeaten Mathuradas, the same man who came to my house one evening and sold a light green Benarasi Sari to my friend Ratan. He was at the time the proud and exalted owner of four stores, a couple of mills and a pretty fat bank balance.

Let me not forget to mention here the very important fact that Mathuradas obliged me by complying with my request.

Voluntarily, he released Jagat Babu from all the debt.

(Translated from Bengali by Phani Bhusan Maitra)



None of these, however, satisfied the fastidious customer.

MY INDIAN SUMMER

(Continued From Page 122)

not make myself bold enough to bring out all those and I do not know what more to say.

She smiles again and nods her head. She says sweetly, "You must be a poet."

I think of the poets of my country. It is from their poems that I have come to know that in such moments of delight the heart begins to dance like a peacock. Now is the time to spread out my plans before her like the plumes of a peacock.

I say, "You know 'Malini Devi' we two go to the office everyday by the same tram. I go on praying that we should also come back together but unfortunately we don't meet on the homeward journey. But we are kindred souls. We live in the same heaven."

The mention of heaven brings a little touch of blush on her face. She turned it away probably not to let me see her blush. There is also a faint trace of smile on her lips. Now I have no doubt that my words are finding echoes in her heart. Probably she is beginning to feel a little shy. But then this is only natural.

She says, "Yes, you're right. I can easily guess that you are walking in the seventh heaven".

I cannot expect greater self-revelation than this on the very first day of our acquaintance. I feel encouraged and say, "From my childhood I have always liked arts and literature and today I am feeling that all that pursuit has been fully rewarded".

She overflows with understanding as she says, "Fine arts are very well reflected in you. Indeed anybody could notice it".

I become more encouraged. The right moment for expressing my feelings has arrived. I whisper, "It's not only that, Malini".

In my enthusiasm I do not add the word 'Devi' any more. She was just Malini, my Malini.

I continue, "Its not only that. The love of fine arts has coloured my existence. I always feel in my heart the touch of spring the shining light of the world of poetry".

She smiles, "I have no doubt about that. It's quite clear from your face. One could well say that it is shining in the summer heat".

Unable to hold myself any longer I advance a little. But she stretches her hand as if to bid me stop. I feel that I should not rush her. Still I say, "Malini Devi, I feel that you have correctly understood my feelings. The words which nobody has been able to express adequately since the dawn of creation will now come out of my heart in this beautiful summer morning."

The word 'dawn' probably makes her conscious about the time. She becomes restless and says, "Just see. It is clear that the first flush of the dawn has come upon you. I have noticed that the whole world has found it out. But really speaking, it is no longer morning. You probably know that I work in an office and should run for it just now. I only wish that the summer morning will never come to an end."

While saying this she nearly bursts out in a sweet smile. It is not a bashful smile but a full-hearted one. And my heart is on fire. Through a haze of colour I see her bring out a small mirror from the vanity bag. She controls her smile somehow and touches a little powder on her face. It becomes even more beautiful. On it there is a mysterious likeness of Mona Lisa which I have seen in paintings.

FATEFUL LIPSTICK

Somehow I restrain myself and am full of anguish as I whimper, "Malini Devi, I have not yet been able to tell you anything. Of course, today there's no time and we must have to go to office. But shall we meet again tomorrow ? Please do promise. Come down from the tram for a few minutes tomorrow morning also. Shall we meet again tomorrow?"

She looked back for half a second and following her gaze I found that she had left her tiny mirror behind.....

She gets up and assures me, "Let's see what happens. If you remember me tomorrow we may meet again. And it's quite likely that we shall meet again at least in the tram. All right, so long".

She went away but she left the door open for the future. She looked back for half a second and following her gaze I found that she had left her tiny mirror behind.

She looked at it but did not turn to take it back. Yes, she shall meet me again. I thanked my stars.

The whole world seemed to rush past me. I feel so light, I feel all the yearnings of an Indian summer morning blooming like flowers. Malini is sympathetic. She has appreciated that all fine arts and poems have found their expression in my very existence. On my face is the stamp of the Indian summer.

I was beside myself with joy. I was overwhelmed with ecstasy. I took up the mirror left by her, the mirror which holds the reflection of her face everyday. I wanted to stamp a kiss of my own on it.

Suddenly in one shock my dream was shattered to pieces. The meaning of that mysterious smile of Mona Lisa was revealed in the rude light of the day. It was my fate, fate which was laughing, telling me that however hungry for love I might be, there was no way out for me but Sewa. The writing was clear on my forehead. It bore the stamp of Sewa's lipstick.

RED BANGLES

(Continued From Page 116)

"You needn't be afraid. I will be with you. I will explain to your husband," Surath said.

The girl looked despairingly at his handsome face and seemed more worried.

On an impulse Surath ordered the tonga to drive to his home instead. The girl did not protest. She seemed even a little relieved. He did not try to talk to her. She sat in silence peering around her and clutching at Surath's clothes for security. He wondered whether he should put his arms about her. Then he thought it was better not to. She might get more scared by that.

"Why did you bring her here instead of taking her home at once? It is late at night. Don't you understand, with every hour it will become more difficult for her to be taken back into her husband's family? And they are cruel people you say. It is common enough for abducted girls to be turned out on the ground of unchastity", Surath's mother said.

"Let her rest a little. She has been so frightened. You are here, arn't you? You have so many of your maids. There are plenty of women about".

"Why did you bring her here?"

"Well, I thought I would buy her some things before I took her home, things she stares at all the time like Banaras saris and glass bangles. Wouldn't cost me much but they are beyond her dreams."

"It is midnight now and all shops are closed."

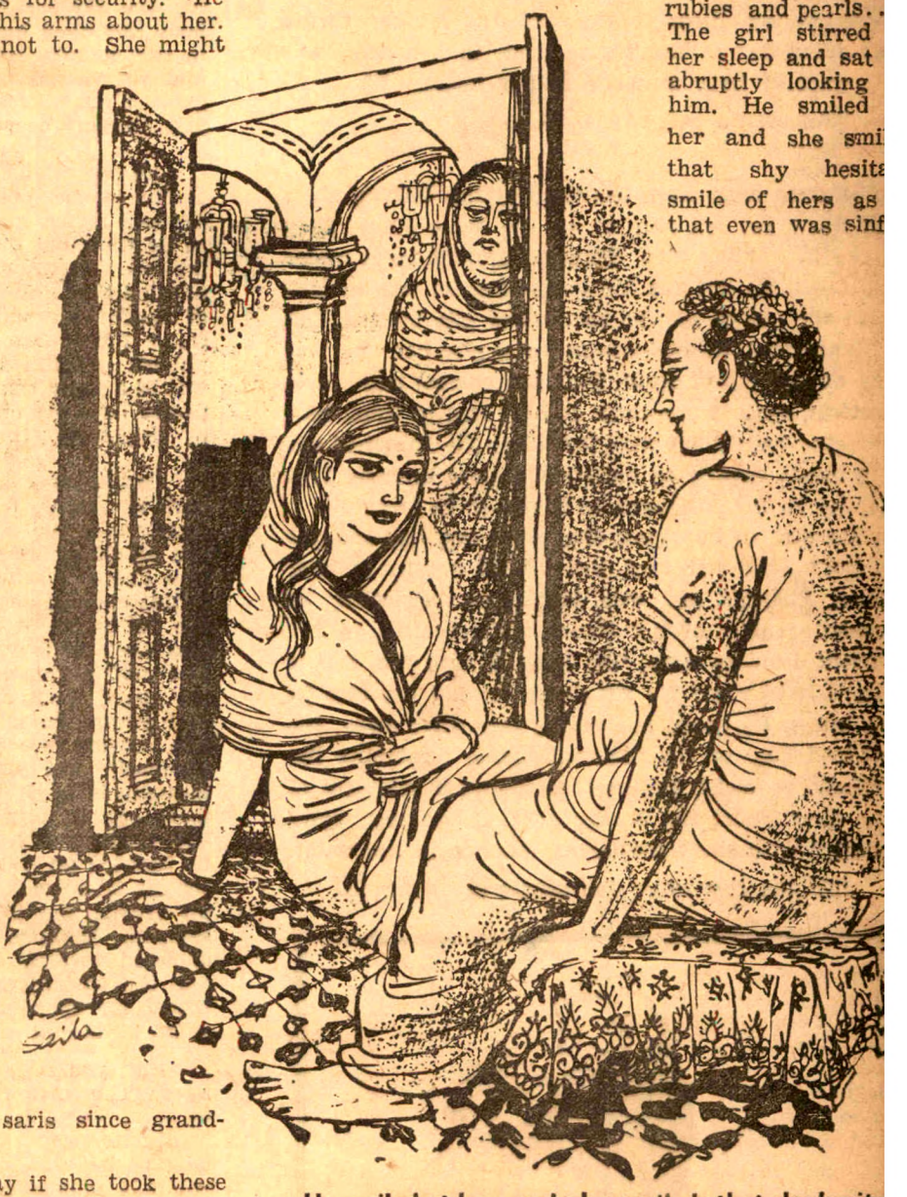
"If I send my manager, Ghanashyam will open his shop for me. He has supplied us with saris since grandfather's time."

"What would her husband say if she took these things home? They would kill her."

"If you said you had given them?"

"My son, don't you understand she has not been brought here under ordinary circumstances?"

"Let me think a little." Surath went to the room where the girl lay asleep on a carpet spread on the floor. His mother had given her a good meal even at that time of the night. Surath had enjoyed seeing her pleasure over it. He sat down on the edge of the carpet to look at her. As always the helpless innocence of her face fascinated him. A reckless thought darted through his brain. What harm wo there be if he never returned her? Her family thou that she was lost. She was a tortured persecu young girl. What did she have to look forward He would be so very gentle to her, so very kind. could make her happy beyond her dreams, give much to the foolish young girl who stared for ho at Banaras saris and glass bangles. There was estate jewellery locked up in vaults, diamonds a rubies and pearls.. The girl stirred her sleep and sat abruptly looking him. He smiled her and she smi that shy hesit smile of hers as that even was sinf



He smiled at her and she smiled that shy hesita smile of hers as if that even was sinful.....

"Supposing you never go back?" Surath s reaching out for her hand.

The girl took her hand away and bowed her he Surath could hear a very soft sigh. Surath's moth stood at the door. "I have ordered a car out. I w take her home myself. Heaven knows what trou the girl will be in. Will you come too?"

"Why don't you let me think?" Surath ask annoyed.

His mother laughed. There was compassion her eyes. "She has to go back at [illegible] a wi

There is dignity in being a wife, even if a person is unhappy. There may not be dignity and honour in some other kinds of happiness."

• The girl lifted her wondering eyes and tried to understand what was being said but it was beyond her.

Surath bit his lips and stood up. He had not thought that way.

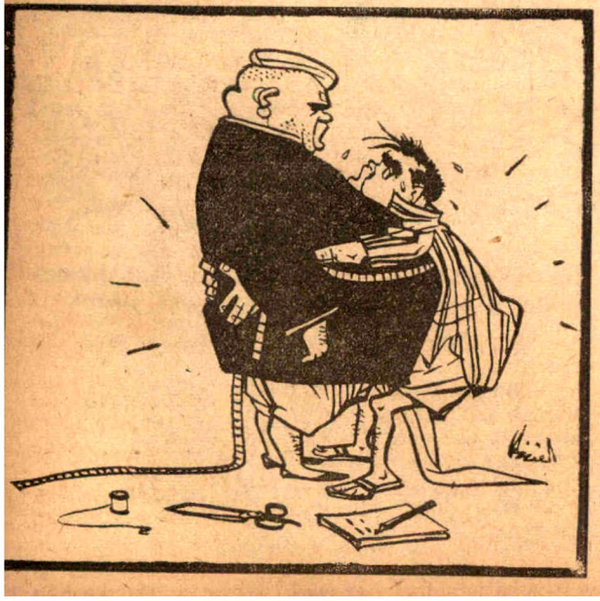
"Take her back to her husband. It will be better for her if I don't go." He delved into his pockets and produced a pair of red glass bangles, gold painted. "I sent one of the servants to get them for you", he said offering them to the girl. His mother thrust his hand away. "Don't give them to her. How will she explain their presence to her husband?"

"Not even a pair of glass bangles?"

"No."

Surath went down the steps of the bathing ghat. He flung the red bangles on the stone steps. They broke in tinkling bits. Then he ground them under his heels. He did not know whether he was in love with the girl or not, he was full of pity for her, full of tenderness. He had the means to give her whatever she wanted but of course that was against man-made customs, against propriety. It hurt him to think how her eyes had lit up with joy when she stretched out her hands eagerly to receive the glass bangles. Was her joy in the possession of things or in gratefulness of the gift, in happiness that some one had thought of her? Then her face was blotted out by another vision, Rukmini, his wife, tearing at the collar of immense rubies at her throat and repeating in her slurred drunken voice, "Go away. I hate you, I hate you, I hate you!" He sat down burying his face in his knees. He heard one of his cars drive away, the subdued purr of the powerful engine scratching the stillness of night, ruffling the immense calmness of the river where the orange glow of burning pyres mingled with silver moonlight poured on the water.

(All the characters and scenes are fictitious)



THE TIGER

(Continued From Page 120)

on the larger towns or villages. In this the tiger is the least to blame. He is simply following one of the basic laws of self-preservation, and this brings us to the vital subject of Game Preservation.

GAME PRESERVATION

Of the many Societies that devote their energies to the preservation of Game in this country, probably the most successful has been 'The All India Society for the Preservation of Wild Life.' This excellent body has done more for the preservation of wild life in this country than all other causes put together, and yet viewed in terms of the actual increase in game birds and animals, our empty forests, jheels and streams bear eloquent testimony.

All over India, reformers and teachers thundered at the people, pointing out the evils of drink, the wrecked homes and broken lives that alcohol brought in its train, but did they do any actual good? It was not till Government had passed laws enforcing prohibition that any appreciable lessening in the amount of alcohol consumed was noticed. It is the same with Game Preservation. Societies may hold conferences, publish pamphlets and give lectures but the results will be exactly the same, till Government steps in and passes laws the observance of which will be enforced by Magistrates, the Police and the Forest Department.

Game preservation has certainly advanced in the past ten years. Today we have sanctuaries, reserved forests and the enforcement of the Arms Act Rules, but all these affect only the legitimate sportsman. How does it restrict the activities of the poacher? It is this class of people that are responsible for 90% of the infringement of Game Laws. Using nets, traps and hand-made guns they lie in wait for their quarry, and with a complete disregard for the aesthetics of the sport, shoot or trap, in season and out, females with young, immature stags, in fact any animal that will provide meat for an ever increasing market. Obviously the only way to put these people out of business is to close finally those shops where this meat can be obtained. Half measures will not do. Prosecutions, with fines and even imprisonment, must be insisted on, till the poacher, finding every outlet for his trade closed, will finally quit. This sounds a bit drastic, but it is only drastic measures that will succeed. India is at the turning point. With her depleted forests, her rapidly expanding population and the vast increase in the number of guns now issued for sporting purposes, the outlook for our game birds and animals is poor indeed.

But, you may well ask how does this affect the tiger. The answer is obvious. The tiger is harmless to man, whom he avoids as much as possible. His legitimate prey are the beasts of the forest and as long as he remains a game killer his destruction is not only unnecessary but also undesirable. In the rare instances when he does become a man-eater or a cattle-lifter, the forest warden should report the matter to the District Forest Officer. When a sportsman applies for a permit to shoot in a particular reserved forest, the D.F.O. should inform him of the tiger's activities and suggest that if he is after tiger he should concentrate on the particular tiger in question. The shooting of ordinary game killers should be restricted if not stopped. With the activities of the poacher drastically curtailed, the number of game animals in our forests will automatically increase and this in turn will do away with the cattle-lifter and the man-eater.

NO REPLY!

By GAJENDRA KUMAR MITRA

THERE is nothing surprising in road accidents. It is a daily occurrence. Every day many people die of them; women, children and old men even are not spared. But what happened on that particular day at the corner of Palpara was, to say the least, peculiar.

In broad daylight—the road was not crowded at that hour—a heavily loaded lorry swerved, mounted the pavement and dashed against a house. The lorry was scarcely damaged, the load was not disturbed: damage was done only to a Corporation lamp post, which got twisted, and Sribilash Babu of No. 13|1|F was a casualty. He had died before the ambulance could arrive.

Was the engine of the lorry to blame? No. The police caused the engine to be minutely examined by competent persons, but nothing was found wrong with it.

Was the driver drunk? Again no. Because, even the furious crowd, which suddenly collected round the place out of nowhere, and tried to make the driver accompany Sribilash on his eternal journey, could not allege this. Everybody admitted that whatever else he might have done, he did not smell of liquor. The driver himself swore again and again that he had not touched liquor that day upto that time. Drivers of lorries usually enjoy themselves after finishing the day's work. That was no time for recreation.—Then ?

Even the driver, Ramlagan, could give no satisfactory reply to this. He said again and again, "How this happened is beyond me. I was quite well; there was nobody on the road, to save whom I need have swerved the lorry. The steering was perfectly under control, but how the thing swerved and mounted the pavement I cannot explain. Babu Sahib, it appeared as if somebody suddenly caught hold of the lorry

So the mystery was not solved. There was an official enquiry, the newspapers discussed the matter, there was a question in the Assembly, the leaders of the Opposition delivered impassioned speeches and wanted an unofficial enquiry, adjournment motions were attempted—then everything settled down. Only in the small circle in which Sribilash Babu lived and moved and had his being, the piteous fact again and again intruded itself in numerous affairs and small wants to remind that Sribilash Babu was no more and could not pay the first premium on his proposed insurance policy. In short, he had left his wife and children completely stranded.

But the cause of the accident was not the only problem that remained unsolved. Those who read their daily newspapers might have been struck by another strange fact, but perhaps they did not pay any close attention. When the tragic accident occurred, Sribilash Babu was going out of his house with a load of books. The books were tied in a tattered towel. Nothing mysterious in that, but the peculiarity was that all the books were about After Life and Rebirth. "The Other World", "Beyond Death," "The Mystery of Rebirth," "Behind Darkness," etc. in all the books with such diverse titles, the one question discussed was whether there is any existence after death. Where was Sribilash Babu going with a bundle of such books tied in such a manner ? Moreover the office was open on that day; it was not a holiday. Then what was he doing at home at that time of the day?

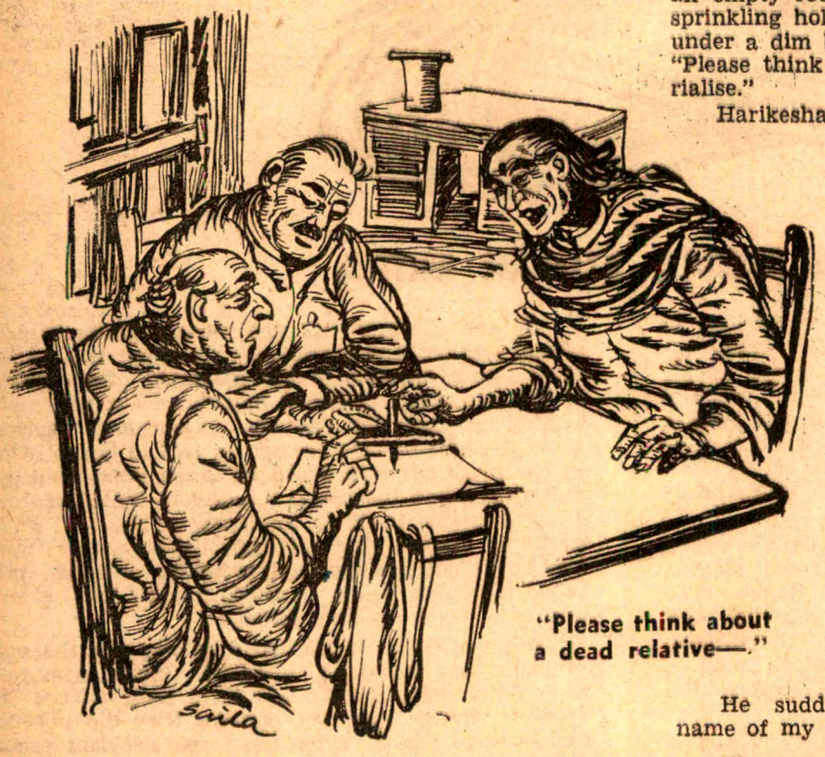
All these questions remained unanswered for ever. Of course, neither the public nor their leaders bothered themselves with these questions. Only some particular person or two became curious.

The real mystery also remained unsolved. Why did such a thing happen at all ? Why had Sribilash Babu to die?

Only one person perhaps could to some extent attempt a satisfactory answer. He was Harikeshab

the never-failing opponent in all his controversial discussions. The amusing thing is that during investigations nobody thought of questioning him.

Harikeshab was in the same college with Sribilash, and then, mainly through his efforts, they became co-workers in the same firm. So for long twenty-four years (Sribilash is understood to have died exactly at forty), a good part of their days and nights they spent together, and most of this time they spent in discussions refuting each other's arguments. Both of them liked to argue, and the arguments were not of a nature to be mistaken for a pleasant way of utilising their leisure, because though they argued daily and whenever they met, they were very serious about it. They pursued their controversies till their eyes and faces became red, the veins in their necks and temples became distended and saliva gathered at the corners of their lips; but even then they did not stop. The debate began in the morning, remained adjourned for the office hours, was resumed after office, and went on till late at night. How they managed their family affairs and the inevitable daily necessities of life, was a subject of wonder and discussion among their acquaintances.



"Please think about a dead relative—."

In early youth, the subject of controversy was, of course, politics. But as they grew older, the subjects changed by turns to Literature, Philosophy and then to Life beyond Death through Theology. For the last two years they had not discussed anything else, had not argued about any other subject except "Whether everything finishes with death," or "Is there an existence after death?"

Harikeshab's arguments ran like this: "Pooh! Waves rise in the sea and fall back into it—we are merely bubbles in the elemental ocean; we have risen as suddenly and will vanish as completely. Where is this other world? There are millions and millions of stars in this universe and there are milions of planets like the earth which revolve round each of these stars. On all these planets there are so many creatures. If innumerable creatures, poor Mr. God will be in a tight corner."

Sribilash grew excited at this. Recently he had purchased a lot of English and Bengali books on the subject. In these books there were amazing descriptions of, and evidence about, life after death. He used to read them over to his friend and ask, "Are these false then? Are all these people lying?"

Harikeshab used to say, "I don't care. Unless I myself see or feel, I cannot believe. Produce a wholesome, healthy and tangible ghost and I am prepared to believe. Only words can cut no ice with me."

Naturally such discussions could never reach any conclusion.

At last one day Sribilash said that one of his acquaintances could operate planchettes and proposed that they should go there.

Harikeshab agreed. He said, "Let us go and demolish this spiritual bunkum, once for all."

They fixed up an auspicious day, and went in the evening. The spiritualist gentleman took them to an empty room and, after burning incense and sprinkling holy water, sat down to a planchette table under a dim blue light. He said to Harikeshab Babu, "Please think about a dead relative. He will materialise."

Harikeshab glanced at Sribilash and said, "Let me think about my father. You saw him often. You may also think about him. Things will be easy that way."

The three persons settled themselves to quiet contemplation. Shortly the table showed signs of vitality. The gentleman whispered, "Your father has come. Now ask your questions." Harikeshab Babu was certainly moved. He asked some questions. Correct answers appeared on the paper, as for instance, the names of Harikeshab's wife, sister and children.

Suddenly he observed that Sribilash's hand was on the planchette. Possibly it was moving spontaneously, and yet.....

He suddenly demanded, "Please give me the name of my great grandfather."

Three or four names appeared on the paper, none correct.

Harikeshab cried out, "Stuff and nonsense! I have now understood it quite well. It is all a sort of self-hypnotism."

The spell was broken, Sribilash woke up as if from a trance. The host, very much annoyed, put on the light and sent for tea.

So the incident became the prelude to further heated controversies. Sribilash said, "Where is the proof that your father knew his grandfather's name?"

"My father used to make us commit to memory the names of ten ancestors in our childhood. He was an old-fashioned man. It is extremely unlikely that he should forget the name of his own grandfather. Particularly in after-life they should become omniscient. You yourselves claim that the honourable ghosts sometimes give information and things previously unknown to them."

The host lighted a cigarette and said, "When how

doubted him even after he came near you, may be he got annoyed. Confusion is natural after irritation."

"That explanation can hold good for embodied beings only. If disembodied beings forget the names of their forefathers when they are irritated, it must be presumed that they are in a worse condition than we. Come on Sribilash, let us make a move."

Sribilash did not respond. When tea arrived he took it absentmindedly, though he was uncommonly fond of the beverage—even on the way back he did not talk freely to Harikeshab Babu. Taking this as a sign of the shame of the vanquished, Harikeshab was much amused though he kept it to himself.

After this everything went wrong with Sribilash Babu. Even what had been so far his life's chief occupation, the pet controversies, lost their zest. He remained silent and moody, responded only with monosyllables when addressed. He did not bite at the most tempting baits of argument. All Harikeshab's skill and artifices failed to draw him into discussions.

And what was he doing all the time? He began to read: except the time spent in the office he appeared plunged in books. When Harikeshab came at his usual time, he pushed some book or periodical towards him and again laid his chest on a pillow in front of which a book always lay open and immediately became absorbed in it.

In fact Sribilash's *amour-propre* was deeply wounded. None of his defeats in argument had moved him so much as that day's small incident. He took it as a personal defeat and insult. Are all his studies and thoughts in vain? Is he such an ignoramus? Has he so little commonsense that he could not detect the fraud, if there was one?

No, he could not have been mistaken. Harikeshab was a fool. It must be brought home to Harikeshab that he is a fool and a humbug. He must be made to admit that there is a life beyond death, there is a soul—everything is not finished when this body is reduced to ashes!

But how!

He again went over his authorities with the closest attention. He wanted to strengthen his own faith. All his study confirmed his faith. There was hardly any room for doubt. If only Harikeshab were not such an impossible fellow!

He studied and applied all the methods described in books for making contact with the beings beyond. And when he actually established contact with any spirit, previously known in body or not, he prayed earnestly to them: "Instil some sense into Harikeshab by some means or other, so that he can no longer deny your very existence. Teach him such a lesson that he is sincerely repentant and is no longer impudent enough to deny—". But none of the spirits seemed to pay any attention to his supplications. Days, weeks, months passed. Harikeshab's taunting eyes stung him to the core; even his frank and friendly smiles looked like contemptuous sneers.

At last Sribilash Babu lost his patience. In a friend's house he summoned his father's spirit on the planchette (at least Sribilash sincerely believed that his father's spirit had left his heavenly home to

He summoned his father's spirit on the planchette.

dingy room situated at 99|5|3, Dindayal Basu M jumdar Street) and presented an ultimatum that, within three days Harikeshab did not get the deser ed reply to his impudence, impertinence and foolis ness, he himself would cut off all his connections wi the After-Life. He would also be led to assume th that he had so long been deceiving himself; a tually there was no after-life, no ghosts, no spirit

The stipulated three days passed without a portent. Harikeshab's amused and affectionate smil did not suffer any change. Nothing worth mentio ing happened from which, even by stretching it the utmost, anything could be proved. Harikeshab, the meantime, could not even suspect that he w the subject of such a strong challenge.

How these three days and nights passed f Sribilash is indescribable. Hope and fear—faith a doubt—between these his mind oscillated every m ment. He did not dwell only on his triumph—tha would be doing injustice to his genuine affection f his friend—he also felt apprehensive on account Harikeshab. Some harm might come to him. The was no knowing how the spirits would manifest them selves. Will he not then become the cause of injury t his friend to satisfy his pique?

But neither hope nor apprehension materialised After spending the third night on tenterhooks, h went to Harikeshab's house in the early morning an said with a shaking voice, "Brother Keshab, I hav come to apologise. After all, you were right. It is who was a fool and a humbug."

Harikeshab was taken aback. On the last tw days he had not been able to pay his usual visit t Sribilash's house due to a daughter's illness. Now h became speechless at the sight of his friend. Coul

ep shadows under the eyes, the cheeks had sunk, ie eyes were distraught. What did it all mean?

After listening to his tale, he eagerly pressed his iend's hands and said, "Had I known that you ould take the matter so seriously, believe me, I ould have readily admitted the existence of devils, hosts and elves—of everything of the sort—not to peak of gentlemanly spirits. What a pity! To what state you have reduced yourself!"

"Never mind. Everything is finished today. I have one with all that. After office I will throw all the ccursed books into the Ganges; and then I will ave some rest." Sribilash smiled wanly.

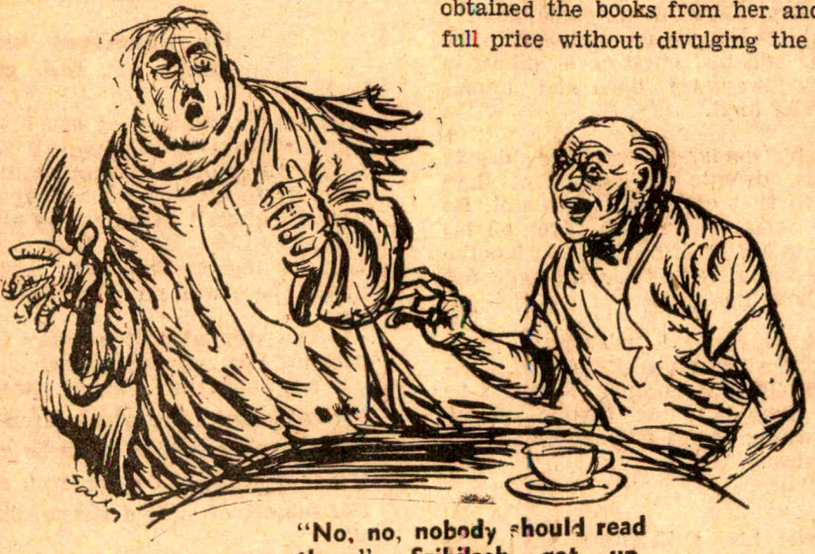
Harikeshab Babu laughed aloud: "What a fool! Vhy throw them away? Rather give them to me, so nat I also may become a fool like you."

"No, no, nobody should read them." Sribilash got p.

"Sit down, sit down, take a cup of tea. What is ne hurry?"

Harikeshab Babu forced him to resume his seat.

Though Sribilash Babu had planned to carry out is resolve in the ve ing, he could ot wait so long. is faith was sha- en to its roots. is self-respect was lso hurt. He had ever suffered such defeat in his life. ll his controversial ature rebelled at is cruel trick of ate.



"No, no, nobody should read them". Sribilash got up.

When he sat own to his meal fter bath, re re- olved to absent imself from office. t midday, when ie roads were com- aratively empty, he would quietly do away with the uisance.

But he did not divulge his resolve to anybody. ot even to his wife. He went out as usual for his ffice, but spent the whole morning in Dalhousie quare. Sleep! There was no sleep for him. He sat n the grass and thought profoundly. He was restless vith suppressed rage.

Then he returned at about one. Nobody saw him. he children were at school. The wife was having her iesta with the youngest child. The maid-servant pened the door. She also was feeling sleepy and did ot ask any questions about the unexpected time of is return. He went into the sitting-room and took ut all the books from the book-case. He bound them p in a bundle and went out of the house without elling anything to anyone, quietly shutting the door ehind himself.

And after that he knew nothing more.

If there is really any life after death perhaps he nows by this time how and why the lorry swerved

Harikeshab Babu was not summoned by the Coroner. The police did not examine him. He was not concerned in any way with the events that followed.

But his amused smile and benevolent look, to wipe out which was Sribilash's earnest endeavour,—Sribilash, had he been alive, would have been glad to see—were lost for ever,—both the smile and the look—after he received the news of the accident. He lost zest for his work, zeal for his favourite arguments, and sleep in the night.

Was Sribilash triumphant in his death? Was his challenge successful? Was he right, after all? But why had Sribilash to die? Harikeshab might have died? Of course, in that case he could not have the opportunity to profit from his defeat. This is plain.

But the three days had passed—the three days of the ultimatum!

And yet again, this might only be a coincidence!

Harikeshab proposed to Sribilash's wife to sell the books and offered his help for the purpose. He obtained the books from her and himself paid the full price without divulging the name of the customer. Sribilash's wife had no head for figures. She was grateful at receiving the unexpectedly large sum.

Then Harikeshab himself became absorbed in those books. His entire leisure was occupied in poring over the books with a pillow under his chest.

His wife sometimes complained; she even threatened to burn the accursed and fatal books. These books appeared to her to be the direct cause of the catastrophe. Was Harikeshab also intent on bringing down a similar doom on himself?

He persuaded his wife to abandon her project, almost on his knees. He begged for a few more days, a little more time to go through them.....

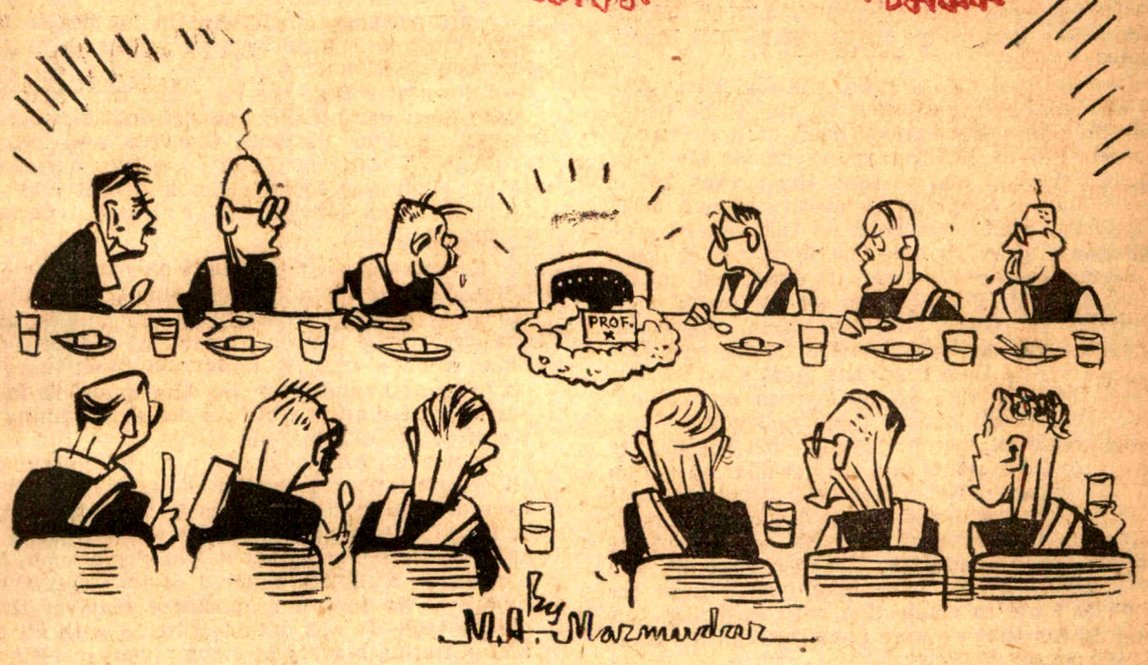
In secluded spots and in the dark he tried to concentrate on his dead friend. Often he muttered an entreaty. "If there is really a soul, Sribilash, please appear to me. At least make it clear that you still exist. Give me a proof, a single one, for God's sake."

But days and weeks passed. No sign appeared from anywhere. Harikeshab Babu still goes on oscillating between faith and doubt, belief and disbelief, every moment of his existence. Nothing can be known, nothing happens which can be taken as a decisive proof, this way or that.

Only Harikeshab pines away from day to day. His whole life has become poisoned.

(Translated by Shubhendu Mitra)

THAT PUJA FAREWELL



PROFESSOR X was about to retire. We all very deeply regretted the coming event. Not because we would lose him and miss him, but because we would have to give him a farewell party. Even the simplest type of farewell party means money, and that money has to come from the pockets of those who give that party. And, my dear sir, financially, we were not very much better off than a consumptive church-mouse in rationing times. Again, some of us felt that Professor X had always been a bad-tempered old humbug, that his only professorial qualifications were a slight deafness and a serious absentmindedness, and that to pay out even a naya paisa for any sort of function connected with him was a criminal waste of good cash. And yet, my dear sir, if you are a man of the world, you will agree that certain things have got to be done. Shows must be put on. Appearances must be kept. Forms must be observed. Farewell parties must be given even to bad-tempered, deaf, and absent-minded humbugs who happen to retire from service. And so I convened a meeting of my colleagues at my own house. They came. They wore faces which would have made a graveyard look cheerful in comparison. I motioned them to their seats. They took the seats, slowly and sadly.

"Gentlemen," I immediately set the ball rolling, "you all know why we are met here."

"We don't," barked the Professor of Economic

"Ah," I said. "Well, Professor X is retiring ve shortly, very shortly, I must say."

"When?"

"Soon after the Puja holidays."

"I am very glad to hear it."

"Oh. Professor X is retiring after a long and d tinguished service".

"Long, yes; distinguished, no."

"Well, we shall not go into that. We have n here today to fix up a farewell party to him."

"I cannot understand your interest in this ma ter".

"Let me explain. The Principal is unfortunat ill, and he has asked me to see this job through."

"So we must have a farewell function in hono of Professor X, eh?"

"Precisely."

"Let me warn you that Professor X will forg to attend it."

"He won't."

"How do you know he won't?"

"He himself is very keen about it."

"Who told you that?"

"Professor X himself."

"Ah. I might have expected that. There really no limit to the wickedness of the man. Fancy

ing keen on a farewell function in his honour! ell, what does he mean by it? Is he going to pay r it?"

"We couldn't in all decency, expect him to bear e expenses".

"Gentlemen, in that case, I declare myself op- sed tooth and nail to the proposed farewell party."

"Hear, hear!" chipped in the Professor of Logic d Moral Philosophy. "There is no rule of Logic or inciple of Moral Philosophy by which we are bound stand a farewell treat to that highly septic old ffer, Professor X".

"Gentlemen," I appealed, "let us drop these per- nalities. They are unbecoming. Let us remember that colleague is leaving us for good. Let us respect the stom that governs such departures. Let us discuss e matter in a cool, calm, dispassionate, and digni- d manner."

And we plunged into a noisy chatter. There was loud and confused a clamour as any to be heard an evening in the neighbourhood of a spreading nyan-tree full of healthy young crows My two ds began crying. I had to send them away to a ighbour. Then a couple of inquisitive women look- in, satisfied themselves that no riot was in pro- ess, and went away. At long last some sort of order pt into our babble. We began to hear and under- nd one another. There was a lot of questioning d replying, proposing and rejecting, suggesting d accepting The conference lasted for the best part three hours. And then I had the great good fortune witness the departure of my learned professional others I overheard one of them delivering this lished professorial speech: "Miserly old beggar! He ut us up for three hours and did not offer us a drop tea! Just imagine! Not a wee little droplet of tea! would put any down-and-out Scotsman to shame!" could not quite appreciate the spirit of this utter- ce. But I found comfort in the idea that all the cessary decisions had been taken. It is hard for ofessors to unite in connection with anything. But am glad to say that we were unanimous in the deci- ons taken at my instance.

Let me sketch out to you our programme, my dear sir. We were to contribute ten rupees each. Knowing human psychology, I had proposed twenty rupees per professorial head and then come down to ten. The trick had succeeded, and the proposal had been accepted. One must know how to deal with professors, and being one of the tribe, I know it. Well, there was to be a grand dinner at the Hotel Magnifique. A splendidly-phrased address (drafted by me), printed in golden characters, was to be formally presented to Professor X. Gushing speeches were to be made in appreciation of the retiring man, and the old thug was to be finally garlanded. There was to be a flash-light photograph of the farewell gathering. We were to meet in the lounge of the Hotel Magnifique exactly at eight in the evening, Wednesday week. The Professor of Politics was put in charge of all the necessary arrangements including the formal invitations. Two things were made patently clear to every man. The contribution of ten rupees per head was to be paid down at college the very next day, And we were all to keep our private and personal feelings, sentiments, emotions, passions, thoughts, and ideas about Professor X strictly bottled up within ourselves. The old gumboil was to be given a decent and proper farewell, in an atmosphere of happy comradeship, during the Pujas.

Everything went according to plan. Not a single hitch, my dear sir, not a single hitch. And then came the great evening. Punctual to the minute, we foregathered in the luxurious lounge of the Hotel Magnifique. Anon a smartly uniformed functionary came up to us and saluted us. He shepherded us to a brilliantly lighted and beautifully decorated dining saloon. We were all in excellent spirits. Even the Professor of Economics, who looks like a dyspeptic porcupine in all circumstances, looked lively now. Our bitterness towards Professor X was totally forgotten. We were determined to make good every naya paisa of the amount we had contributed. The Professor of Politics, our charge d'affaires, assured us that everything was in order. We took our appointed seats at the long dinner-table. It was a table littered with all the gay and glittering bravery of a sumptuous meal. And then

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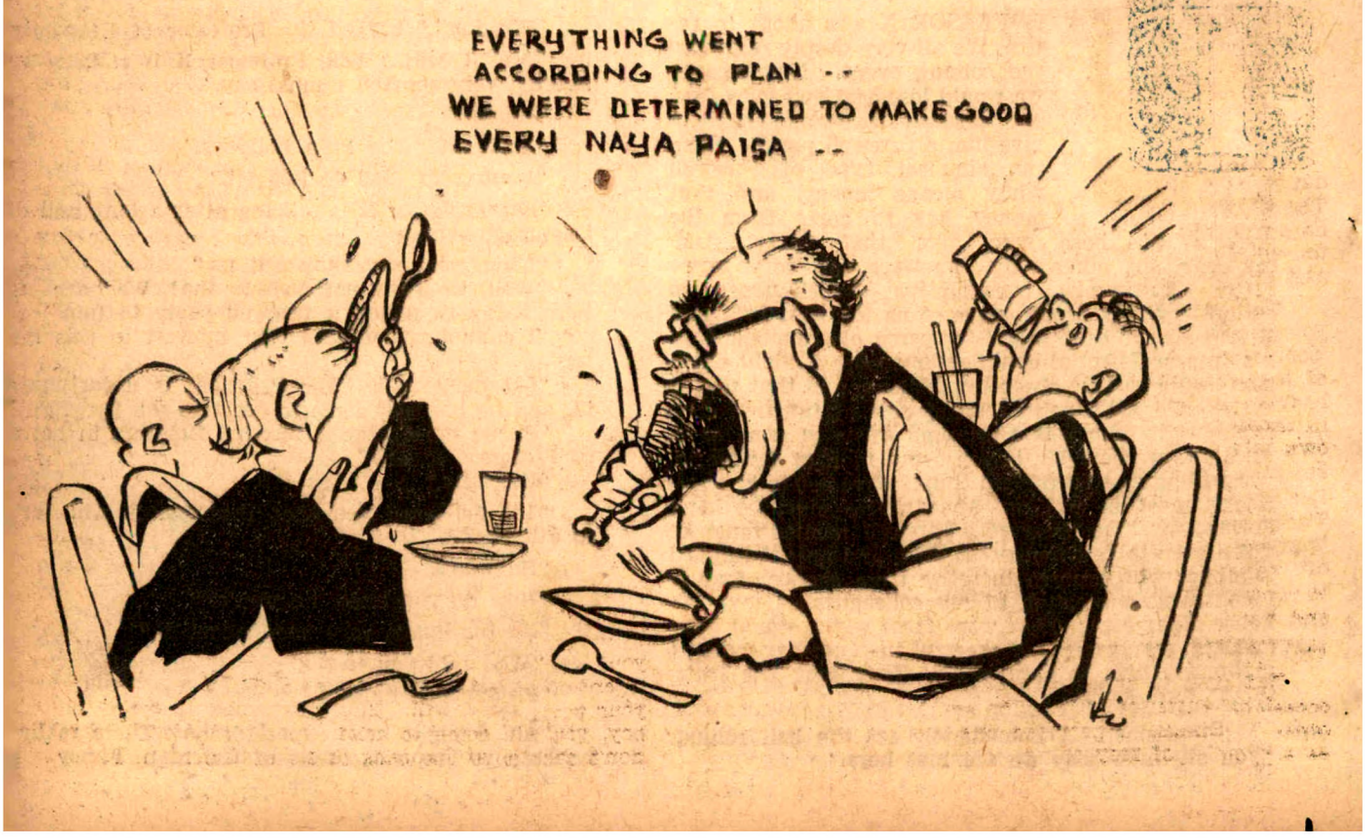
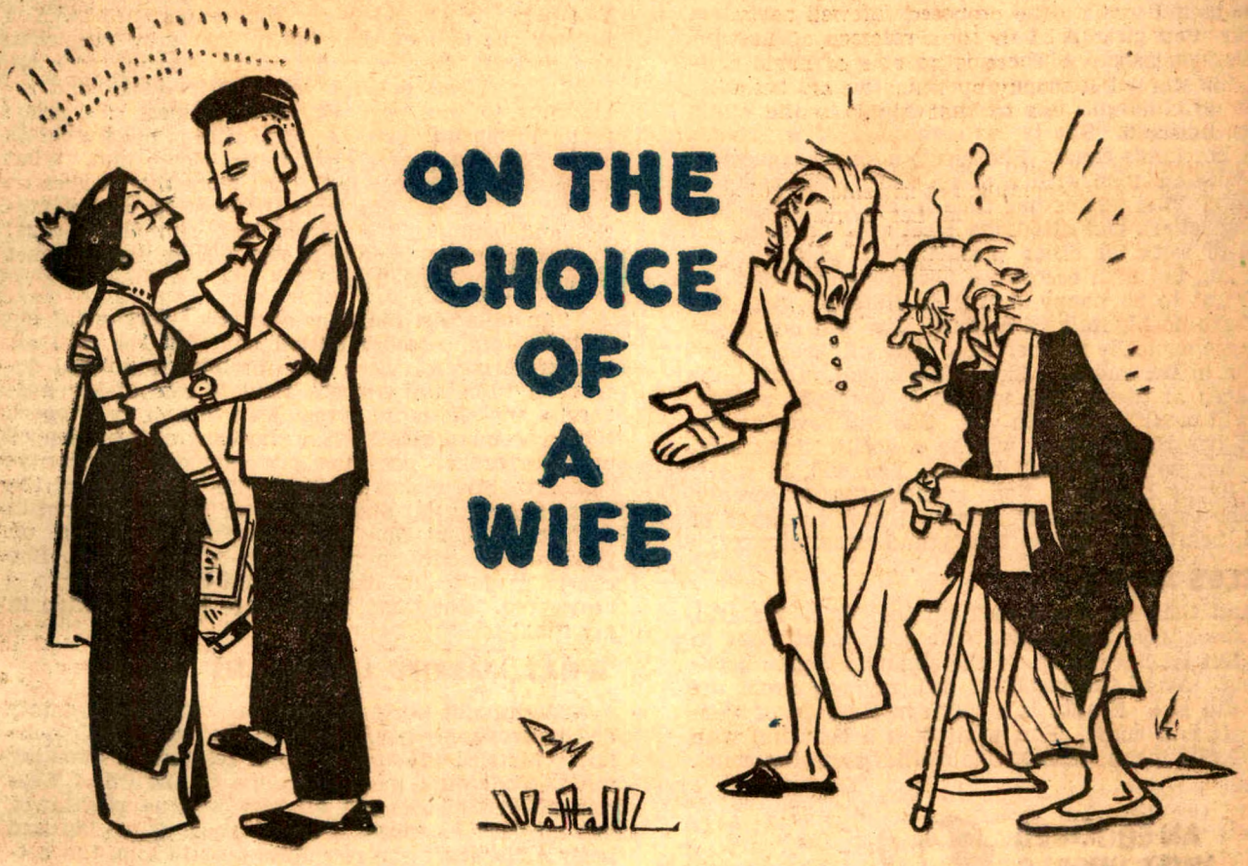




ON THE CHOICE OF A WIFE

BY

I envy the young people of today. They have a free hand in the matter of marriage. A piece of great good luck. They have broken through a hundred shackles. They mix freely. They even indulge in what the technical experts call 'zizzipompomming'. They pick and choose their life-partners in accordance with their own particular taste and fancy. The oldsters can no longer order them about. They dare not poke their dilapidated noses into what is now universally acknowledged to be their own personal and private affair.

Things were different in the days when I was young. Such words and phrases as 'love', 'beauty', 'education', 'culture', 'affinity of souls', 'compatibility of temperaments', 'marriage of minds', 'union of hearts', and so on never entered a talk about marriage in those days. We young people didn't belong to our own selves. We were the property of our elders. Our betrothals and weddings were none of our business. Decisions in these matters were taken by the old. Those decisions were forced upon us. We were rarely 'married'; usually we were just 'settled' or 'disposed of'. Marriage was something in the nature of a post to which two young donkeys were tethered for good and all.

INSTANCE OF REBELLION

But even in those orthodox times there was an occasional instance of rebellion against the established order of things. I provided one such. I started out as a promise of rosy things to my family, but slowly and imperceptibly turned into a problem and then a puzzle. For the first time in the history of my clan I raised my shaggy head and declared in a vibrant voice that I would have my own way in the matter of my marriage. I would select my life-companion all by myself. I would not tolerate in the least the slightest meddling by any member of my family however old and mouldering.

After the reverberations of the bomb-shell had died out, the most aged representatives of my tribe gathered together. They summoned me into their august presence. I didn't know what I was in for. But my blood was up. I was fully prepared to lam every mother's son of them into silence and inactivity if need be. You see, revolt, a great blaring revolt, ran hot and fast in my veins.

My grandfather, a pompous and overbearing personage, opened fire. He said, somewhat in the voice of a cannon, "Listen, you foolish greenhorn; you raw, rash, and ungrateful young viper; you graceless young lump of outrageous stupidity. I'll tell you what. I wish, I earnestly wish, that I had not lived to see this day. What's the good of living in a world where inexperienced young fools won't respect and revere their elders and betters? But I am alive, and I am here. I must exert my pull in the interests of my noble family. You are the black sheep in my family, in my fold. You have refused to allow us to arrange your betrothal. You have shamelessly declared your intention to settle the matter yourself according to your own sweet will. You will come to grief, silly boy, you will come to grief. Mark my words. But I don't care what happens to a disobedient duffer like

you. I do, however, care very much for the prestige of my line. You may choose your mate yourself. But you shall not choose a girl who does not possess the qualifications we lay down before you here and now. If you do, you'll be disowned, disinherited, and packed out of this house and home. Now don't stare at me as if I was a ghost. Listen well. Do not select an educated girl. A bookworm makes a bad wife. She cannot cook. She cannot wash and mend clothes. She cannot manage a house. She cannot raise and tend children. She cannot attend to the wants of her husband. She is wrongheaded. She claims to be her lord's equal. She meets a single request of that luckless man with a dozen sharp arguments of her own. She wastes her time in reading books and writing letters and attending meetings and doing all kinds of work for other people. Her house runs to seed, and her man becomes a henpecked husband. If you want to be happy, marry an illiterate girl. She will have no highfalutin notions. She will not desire to be economically independent. She will keep a quiet tongue in her mouth. She will not gad about; she will keep at home. She will be a domestic wonder. She will never argue with you. She will never prattle about her rights. She will be a docile dependent. Unto her your will shall be law. You will, in short, be a happy husband. Your grandmother is seventy. Yet she cannot sign her name. I owe my peace of mind, heart, and soul to that grand circumstance."

UNCLE'S ADVICE

And then my uncle took up the tale. He said, "An absolutely uneducated wife is a great asset in life. But let her not be, in the slightest degree good-looking. Avoid the beautiful girl, my boy avoid the beautiful girl. Beauty is a thorn in the side of wedlock. It is a curse. For, what does a beautiful wife mean? She means fashionable clothes and ornaments.

She means visitors and guests by the dozen at all possible and impossible times. If your wife is attractive, your house turns into a hotel. Young and old, high and low, claim acquaintance with you and pester you with their company and cackle. They buzz around your wife like flies around a jar of honey. You play the eternal host. Your purse shrinks. You become the talk of the town. You grow suspicious and jealous. Discord and misery become your lot. Book the ugliest one for your better-half, and my blessings to you, boy. Feminine ugliness is a prime factor in marital bliss. An ugly wife is her husband's own. She is for ever anxious to please him. What she cannot do by her face, she more than makes up for by her hands. She costs the least by way of fabrics and baubles. I have not met your aunt's equal in sheer physical repulsion. But I have also not met a happier husband than I."

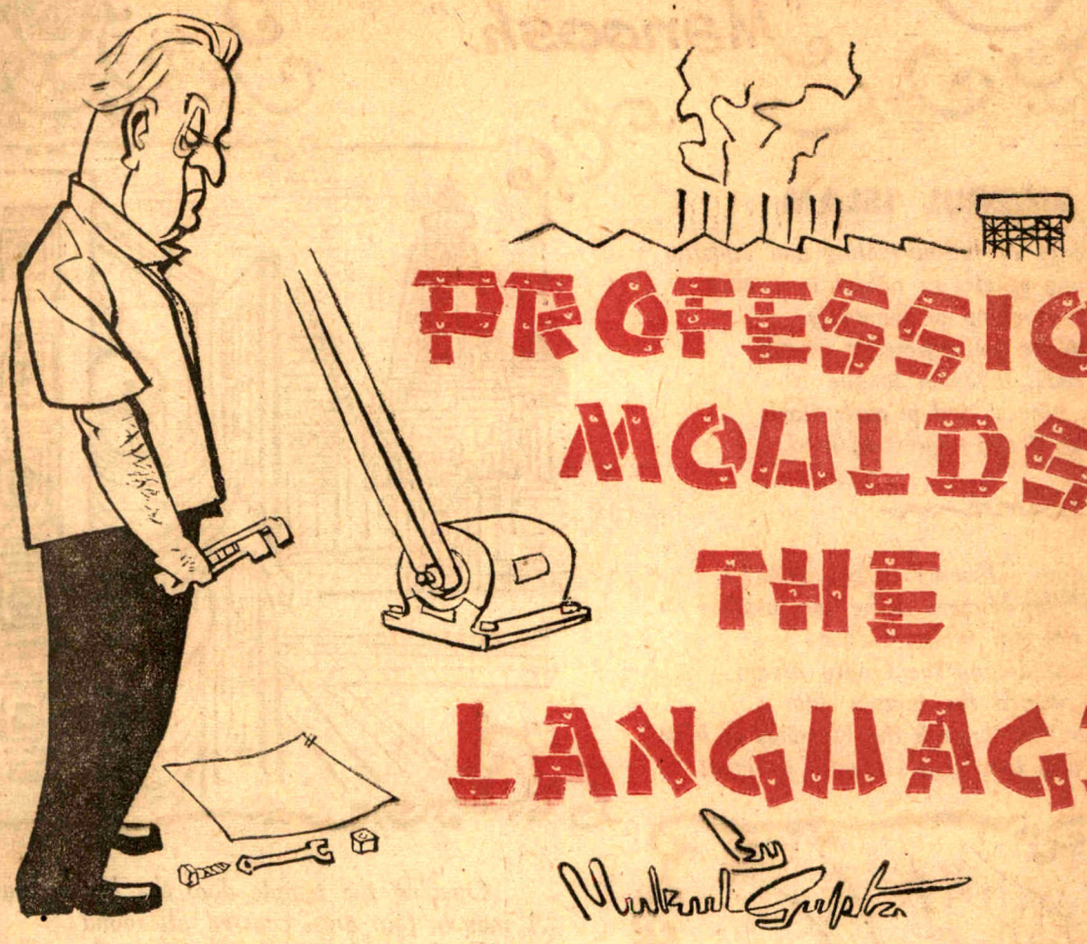
"An illiterate and ugly wife is all very well," my maternal-grand-father butted in. "But she isn't all. She must possess some quite prominent natural defect. A wife must always stand in awe of her husband. And she must always lean to him for support. Now a woman with such a shortcoming as a lopped ear or a broken nose has a pronounced inferiority-complex. She makes an ideal wife, a creature of the home and hearth. She need never be pranked out in fashion's follies. She need never be taken out on picnics. She can be ruled with a mailed fist. She can be made to toil like a draught-horse. My wife is cross-eyed. But what a difference that has made in my life!"

'WHAT MARRIED LIFE MEANS'

"A draught-horse is right as surely as a dainty doll is wrong, my boy," observed my uncle's father-in-law. "Married life means work, real tough sweating work. That work has to be done by the wife. Western flibbertigibbets are all very well as playthings, but no good as wives. Choose your wife big and hefty. The more she resembles a battleship, the better for you. Once at dusk a short-sighted farmer mistook my wife for one of his buffaloes. I am proud of that fact, boy. A huge wife means a happy life."

And my maternal grandpa's brother-in-law said, "A well-built girl is generally a poor girl. I am all for a pennyless match. Never marry money, my boy. A rich man's daughter will lead you to devil's dance. She will look down upon you. Now a wife must at all times look up to her lord and master. She must be economically subservient to him. If you marry money, you will be shorn of your self-respect. You will be made to lead a parasitic existence. If you buy a thing for your wife, people will attribute the gift to your father-in-law. If you honour your wife, you will be called servile; if you are honest to her, you will be called greedy; if you quarrel with her, you will be called ungrateful. 'I am off to my father's' will always be hovering on your wife's lips. I married the eleventh daughter of a very poor man. I am all right, thank you. My wife has never talked of going to her father's."

The harangues were over. Now I knew all the eligible girls in my community. None of them came up to the combined standard prescribed by the moth-eaten old relatives. So I boldly said, "I am reminded of the fox in the fable who'd lost his tail and who wanted all the other foxes to lose their tails, too. However, if you find me a bride graced with all the very charming qualifications you have detailed just now, I'll see if I can find in me the necessary conscience to marry her. Thank you."



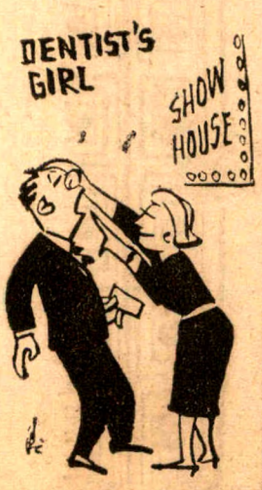
PROFESSION MOULDS THE LANGUAGE

By Mukund Gupta

IF "the apparel oft proclaims the man", his everyday words and expressions no less declare his profession. Indeed, a profession has a most potent influence in moulding the language of both the gentlemen and ladies associated with it. If every profession has its schedule of etiquette, so it has its code of words and phrases in which its clientele find the most effective media for the precise and faithful expression of their thoughts and ideas. Not only so, but they develop a chronic love for and incurable attachment to the professional vocabulary and hardly suspect that by their words and deeds they provide food for a merry laugh for those in occupational sectors other than their own. They believe that there is nothing unusual about them and in their honest failure to appreciate the odds and angularities of their expressions lie the silver linings of a delightful and innocent humour. Here are a few gleanings from a random harvest.

THE DENTIST'S GIRL

The sprightly auburn-haired blonde had long worked as a dentist's assistant. She got sick and tired of the long and stricken faces of the troubled clients of the dentist. Indeed, with a tooth stubbornly aching, no one can possibly wear a smile and the patients of the dentist remembered him only when the wicked tooth-ache made it impossible for them to continue to forget him any longer. She badly looked for a change and succeeded in getting a good job as an usher girl in a respectable show-house. On her first night on duty a pretentious gentleman with his assuming wife demanded of her the identification of their seats. Theirs were the corner seats in the higher row of the Dress-circle. "There you are," she smilingly pointed out, "the *molar* seats on the upper *arch*." The visitors could not quite make out what she had told them but, meanwhile, she had corrected herself, realizing that she was no longer in the dentist's chamber.



(*Continued On Page 140*)

"Human Being"

"Manoosh"

By NAZRUL ISLAM

"I sing the songs of fellow-feeling and equality
There is nothing greater or nobler in quality
Than the human being or humanity.
There must not be any difference among
Countries, creeds, foods or tongue
At all times, places, and in each clan,
He is the dearest and nearest of man.

"Open the door, Priest! Open anon!!
The Lord of Hunger at the gate waiting on
The time is ripe for prayer reckon!"
The Priest dreamt the Godly dream
And merrily opened the temple door
And thought, through the blessings of Him
He'll today win the King's wealth or more.

Opening the temple door the Priest found
A man in torn dress covered all round
Frail, feeble and bodily unsound
With voice sunken, in hunger he whined
"Open the door O good gracious be kind!
I had no meals last seven days, mind!!"

With a cruel jerk, suddenly the door
Of the Temple of God slammed before!
Dejected the hungry soul walked right
In the gloomy darkness of the night
With burning hunger flaming inside.

Bursting out in rage said the hungry soul
"Alas! the Temple belonged to the cruel priest!
And not to the great God at all!!"

Yesterday at the mosque, an offering was made
With a heavy surplus of meat and bread.
The greedy Mullah rejoiced with wild laughter,
Soon came a rundown feeble sojourner after.
Said "O good gracious listen, be kind
I had no food for seven days, mind!!"

The rude Mullah furiously replied
"What's all this Hell!" he angrily cried.
"Hang your hunger! What's that to me?
Do you say your prayer? You Dummy?"
"No O good gracious" said the stranger
"Be off straight! If you mind a danger!!"
Thus abusing, the Mullah robbed all meat and bread
And locked up the door of the mosque dead.

The hungry soul disappointed walked on
Said "O Lord, long eighty years are gone,
I never for a moment remembered You
But O Kind, for that You never stopped my due—
The food for my hungry stomach though a few"
"In your mosques and temples, My Lord,
There is no room for any human sort;
The Mullas, and Hindu Priests ever more
Have cruelly locked up all the door!"

"Where are the Chenghiz, Ghazni, Kalapahar!
Break open all those locked up doors
Of temples, mosques and throw ajar!!
Who dares to shut up the doors
Of God's House and lock the stores?
All its gates must remain ever open."

"Fetch hammer and shovel! Break open!!
Oh pity Thy Holy Place for Prayer!
On Your very minarets climb and declare
The demons, devils and all hypocrites
To triumph their devilish selfish feats!!"

(Translated by: Amir Hossain Choudhury,
A Chapter from his book
"MARTIAL SONGS OF NAZRUL ISLAM")

PROFESSION MOULDS THE LANGUAGE

(*Continued From Page 137*)

If the dentist girl could not easily forget her master's vocabulary overnight, the young Armyman also lived sub-consciously in the atmosphere of army drills even when on home leave. He came home after a long absence and his mother was naturally anxious to see to the best comforts of her dear son for the few days he would live with her. She made sumptuous dishes for him and herself saw to the service. And one day as she had been serving, she was somewhat taken aback by a soldierly shout to "halt". Well, the military son just wanted to tell her that he would have no more!

POLICE OFFICERS' FIR

The Police officials attach an inviolable sanctity to their code of professional words which they liberally use even in the precincts of their home. One of their most favourite codes is FIR — the abbreviation of the First Information Report. They have to register the FIR in all cases of complaint and it is an important legal document. One evening a Sub-Inspector of Police returned home after an exhausting duty. As soon as he entered, his wife, angry and agitated, complained about the misconducts of her quarrelling sons and pleaded for an exemplary punishment being given to the one in guilt. She could not decide for herself who was really to be penalised as she did not know which of the two provoked the fracas. The husband was annoyed that she, having been the wife of a police officer could not decide this very simple issue. "Who lodged the FIR to you first?" he asked, "and proceed accordingly."

PROFESSOR'S PRECISION

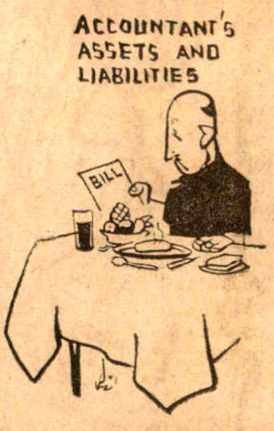
Professors of science have a reputation for accuracy and precision. Those who are orthodox amongst them would not permit any errors to creep in in any statement about scientific facts. A Professor of Physics, lately married, was taken to the Lakes, during the honeymoon. The full moon was in her golden glory which inspired a thrill of romance in his wife who had had a poetic tilt. "How sweet and soothing is the light that the moon owns, isn't that so, dear?" lovingly asked the wife in the hope of getting her thrill shared by her husband. At once came an emphatic contradiction from the scientist-husband who would tolerate no such scientifically inaccurate statement even from his wife. "How often would I have to tell you, my dear, that the moon has no light of her own but she borrows it from the sun?"

The railwaymen beat all others in their obstinate love for the railway language. They would even claim that the philosophy of "ups and downs" of life has its association with the "up and down" movements of the trains! They have their own similes, phraseology and metaphors and cannot be persuaded to depart from them. Once the railwaymen convened a farewell meeting to celebrate the retirement of their colleague in the Engineering Department. They spoke of the many qualities of head and heart of the departing official and paid a respectful homage to the manifold traits of his character. Then rose the Chairman, himself an engineer of the railways all his life, to give his address.

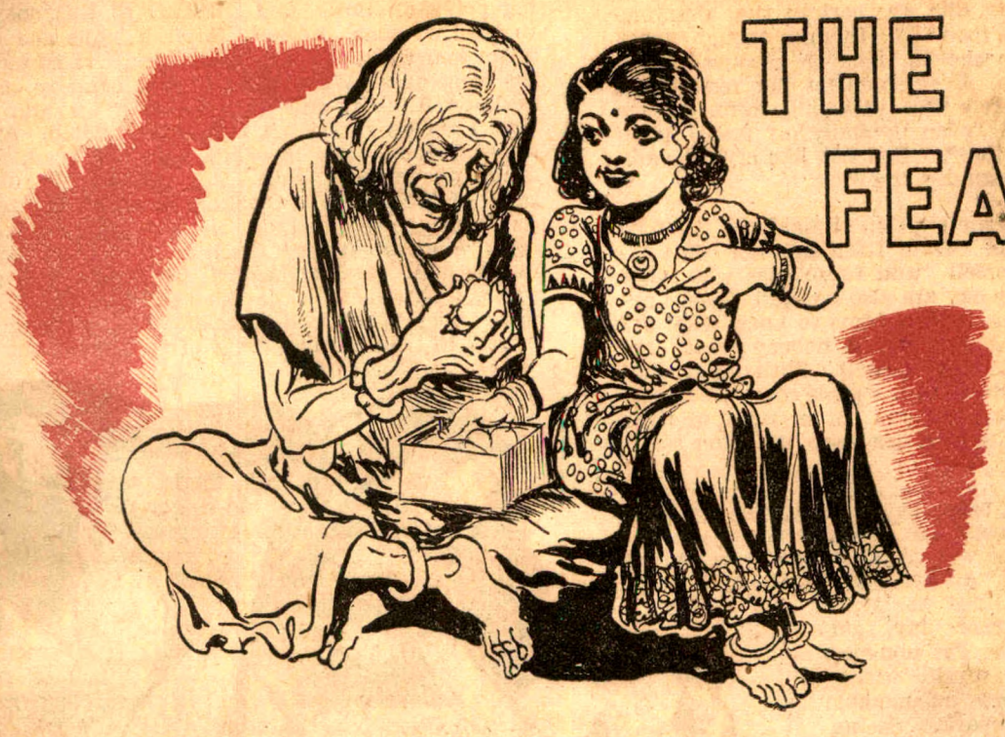
"Here is a person", he began with a measure of gravity appropriate to the occasion, "who has had the energy of a steam-engine that never failed however long-distant the run might have been. During the last thirty years of his career, he has never been off the track, equally detesting late arrivals at, and early departures from, the time-table of his duties. He has all along been a person of progressive ideas and so purposeful has been his planning that he has had no need of an alarm signal to stop the movement of any of his schemes tending to outlive. In the heart of everyone of us who has ever crossed the broad platform of his life there is reserved a berth of warm affection and kindest regards. Now that he has been given the red signal, we wish him the very best in the retiring room of his life."

ACCOUNTANTS IN SAME VEIN

Like the railwaymen, the accountants also find it very uncomfortable to bid good-bye to their usual stock of professional words and expressions even in social functions. If the Railway engineer could not get rid of the frame-work of the railway portrait, so was the weakness of the accountant whose outlook of life has the linings of perpetual debit - and - credit. There was a farewell function in the office of a reputed firm of Chartered Accountants. The Senior Partner was leaving for England in retirement. The farewell address was written by a senior member of the staff who had the reputation for the command over his English. After a fairly long prologue, came in rich profusion the words of praise and appreciation. "The balance-sheet of Mr. Richardson's career in the service of the company is certified to be an honest and straightforward document. A man of exemplary character and rare virtues, he has created in every heart a reserve fund of regard and respect. There is no one amongst us who has not been benefited by the over-draft of his generosity. The rate of his interest in the welfare of those who have worked with



(*Continued On Page 144*)



THE FEAST

By PREM CHAND

OLD age is considered to be an extension of childhood. The old grandmother had no other desire left except for tasty food. And she had no other means of making her existence felt except by crying. Old age had made her a cripple and nearly blind. She used to spend her days lying in her room. When, however, anything was done against her wishes, or she was not given food at the right time, or the quantity was not enough, or if something new came to the house and she was not given her share, she used to resort to crying. And her cries were loud enough to attract the whole neighbourhood. She had lost her husband years ago. Seven of her sons had also died at a ripe old age. All that she had in the world now by way of relations was a nephew. She had given all her property to this last male survivor. Before he had got it, he used to hold out all kinds of promises to her but once it was securely in his hands, he had turned a different man. Although the property gave him nearly two hundred rupees a year, the old woman did not even get enough to eat. Whether the fault lay with the nephew, Pandit Budhoo Ram, or his wife Rupa, it is difficult to say. Panditji was a kind-hearted man, but only so long as it did not affect his pocket adversely. Rupa, on the other hand, was a short-tempered woman but was God-fearing. Therefore the old grandmother had to suffer more from Budhoo Ram's kindness than from Rupa's temper.

At times Budhoo Ram used to feel qualms of conscience. If he could mend matters without affecting his purse, he would have done so. But the fear that any reformation in the status quo may lead to a drain on his finances, deterred him from taking any steps. On the contrary, if he had visitors and the old grandmother started on her fits of crying, it used to annoy him exceedingly and he reprimanded her severely. Children take after their parents. Budhoo Ram's were no exceptions. They also took part in teasing the old woman. Sometimes they used to pinch her and run away; at others they would spill water on her. The old woman used to shriek; but since everyone believed that her cries were only for food, nobody paid any attention. If at times things became unbearable, she used to start abusing. This instantly brought Rupa to the scene. The old woman therefore resorted to this weapon very sparingly.

In the entire household if anyone loved the old grandmother, it was Budhoo Ram's little daughter Ladli. She used to find an escape from her two brothers in the company of the old woman. She used to prefer her company even when eating her sweets, although such a practice was costly because she had to share them with the old grandmother. This constant companionship had brought the two very close to each other.

It was late in the evening. Music was playing at Budhoo Ram's house. The children of the village were all standing in a crowd completely entranced. On the beds were lolling the guests. One or two young men who had been educated in the western ways were standing aloof, eyeing with disdain the whole scene, and considered it below their dignity to join the festivities. The occasion was Budhoo Ram's elder son Sukh Ram's engagement. Inside the house, the women were singing. Rupa was busy arranging for the feast. A number of cooks were preparing

various delicacies. The aroma of the freshly cooked food was spreading all over the house.

The old grandmother was lying in her room. The smell of food was making her restless. Every moment she feared that they might not give her all the things being cooked. She was certain that everyone must have taken his food. The thought brought tears to her eyes but she choked them on account of the auspicious occasion. Every moment her restlessness grew. "Highly unlikely that they will think of me today", she thought, "even normally my meals are a secondary consideration". She felt like crying again but fear of Rupa strangled the sobs.

For a long time she kept on thinking of the food being cooked outside. "Even Ladli has not come today", she said to herself, "and those boys who make life hell for me every day are also not to be seen anywhere. I would have at least come to know what are the items being cooked". When nobody came, she decided to risk going out herself. With great difficulty she crawled outside to the place where the cooks were busy. And she went and sat in front of them feeling the same calm as a dog feels watching someone eat.

Rupa was very busy looking after the arrangements. For one moment she was with the guests, the very next minute she was called away to give this or that to the priests. An eye had also to be kept on the room where the food was stored. She had not a moments rest the whole day, not even a glass of water. The non-stop going about was naturally tiring and no wonder she was inflammable with the slightest spark. Seeing the old grand-mother sitting by the side of the cooks, she lost her temper. She was certain that the assembled neighbours would get the impression that the old woman was being starved. The thought made her more angry. Taking hold of the old grand-mother by the shoulders, she gave her a hard shake-up and said, "Haven't you any sense of shame left ? Fancy sitting here like a hungry dog ! There ought to be a limit to greed. When will God take pity on us and get us riddance from you ? Why are you bent upon disgracing the family ? God alone knows where you took away all that you eat. Go and sit in your room. When the guests have eaten, food will be brought to you. You are no goddess that you must be feted before the guests have eaten." The old grandmother did not even lift her head. There were no cries, not even words of complaint. Quietly she began to crawl back to her room, dazed at the reprimand.

The food was at last served to the guests. The menials also sat at a little distance and began to eat. The old grandmother was cursing herself in her room. She was not angry at Rupa's behaviour. She was feeling sorry for her own. "How can the members of the household eat till the guests have been served?" she realised on reflection, "it was wrong of me to have shown such impatience. Serves me right this insult before all those people. Now I will not go till someone comes to call me." And having made this resolve, she began to wait patiently. The smell of food was still disturbing her peace. Every minute appeared an hour. She started visualising the events outside. Now the food must have been laid. Now the guests must be washing their hands, getting ready to eat. They must have sat down now to the meal. There is singing going on now. And thinking of this she began to hum a song herself. After a while she got up again and wondered why everything was so quiet. Is the feast over? Why hasn't anyone come to call me? Perhaps Rupa is still annoyed with me and thinks that I am no guest that I must be invited. And the moment these thoughts came into her head, she decided to go out again. The menacingly delicious smell of the food was breaking down all her resolves. As she began to crawl out, she was taking quick decisions, what to eat, how much of it, in what sequence. But as ill luck would have it, her timing was grossly wrong. The guests were still eating. And what a sight they presented. Some were sucking their fingers to take the last dregs of enjoyment out of the

**Haven't you any sense of shame left ?
Fancy sitting here like a hungry dog !**

food they had just finished. Others were keeping a watchful eye on the neighbours to ensure that their own speed was not slower. Yet others were still debating whether they should take some more. Just then they noticed the old woman crawling up. The very sight of her was repulsive. Someone shouted, "Who is that old woman? Where has she come from? Let her not touch anyone." Pandit Budhoo Ram saw the old grandmother and flared up with anger. Just as a merciless money-lender, seeing one of his defaulting clients, catches him by the throat, he got hold of the old woman and dragged her back to her solitary confinement.

The feast was over. Everyone had eaten; the servants, the menials and the members of the

hold. Nobody asked the old grandmother. Both Budhoo Ram and Rupa had decided to punish the old woman for her shameful conduct. Nobody took pity on her old age, her utter helplessness and her decaying brain. Only Ladli was feeling sorry for her. On both occasions when her mother and her father had ill-treated the old woman, she wondered why they had not given her something to eat instead. After all there was plenty of food in the house. There was no danger of its running short. Her little brain could not understand what difference it would have made if the old grandmother had been fed before the guests had eaten. She wanted to go and sit by her side, but dared not lest her mother's wrath should find her as its next victim. She however did not eat her food and hid it in her doll's basket. She was desperately keen to go and sit by the side of the old grandmother and feed her on her own share. She was certain that the old woman would jump with glee.

It was almost eleven o'clock at night. Rupa was sleeping in the court yard. As soon as Ladli found that her mother was fast asleep, she picked up her basket and went to the old grandmother's quarter.

The old woman's last recollection of the evening was that somebody had got hold of her by the shoulder and had dragged her along, quite unmindful of the pebbles and the stones. Suddenly she had felt herself being dropped as if from a cliff. After that she had fainted. When she regained consciousness, she could hear no voices. She understood that everyone must have got off to sleep. She started cursing. Having tired herself out thus and losing all hopes of getting any food she lay down. Suddenly she heard Ladli's voice. "Kaki open the door. I have brought your food." The old woman crept to the door and opened it. Seating Ladli in her lap, she said, "Has your mother sent it?" "No", replied Ladli, proudly, "it is out of my share." The old woman did not pause to ask another question and began to eat the food hungrily almost as if she was afraid that the basket might be taken away before she could finish. Within a few minutes the tiny basket was empty. Ladli asked, "Have you had enough?" The old woman was not satiated. Just as a few drops of water to a thirsty man only accentuate his suffering, almost similarly the small packet of food whetted the old woman's appetite, and she was restless for more. "No, darling',' she said, "go and get some more from your mother." "She is asleep," said Ladli, "she will beat me if I wake her up." The old woman looked again in the basket and started eating the crumbs left in it. But even this was not enough. She was almost losing her senses with longing for more food. Suddenly she said, "Take me where the guests had sat and eaten." Ladli could not understand what she had in mind and took her where the left-overs of the evening's feast were lying piled up. The old woman did not even wait to think. She fell on the pile like a hungry dog.

Rupa turned her side and found that Ladli was not in the bed. Thinking that she may have fallen asleep, she got up to look for her. Hardly had she raised her head when she noticed the child standing in a corner and the old grandmother by her side eating the left-overs. Rupa could not believe her eyes. She stood up completely dazed. A heart-breaking sight like that would have dazed anyone. Sorc realisation came to her that but for her callousness Brahmin woman would not have stooped to such act. The remnants of goodness lying dormant in h heart received a severe jolt. The fear of God's wra chilled her soul. Raising her hands towards heav she said, "Please forgive me, Oh God, for this sin mine; and save me from your wrath." And sayi this she went hurriedly into the store and broug a trayful of food. "Kaki, have some food." she sa going to the old woman. "I have committed a grave today. Please forgive me." Just as a child forg the beating and the reprimand when given swe almost similarly the old grandmother looked gra fully at Rupa and started eating with gusto. T events of the evening were all forgotten. Rupa h real joy seeing her happy and contented.

(Translated by Madan Gupta.)

PUJA FAREWELL

(Continued From Page 134)

I rose mid a cascade of claps. I delivered a br introductory speech. It was a speech sparkling w wit and bubbling with humour. I explained in formally the nature of the occasion. And I parti larly pointed out the importance of dining first making speeches afterwards. A sudden flash told that we were photographed as per schedule. I down mid a thunder of applause.

Dinner got going. It was a wonderful banq We fought steadily and heroically through the vari courses in an atmosphere of silence spangled with silvery talk between the crockery and the cutl The clatter of the dinner things was "sweeter by than Hybla's honeyed roses". The end of the sup feed found us breathless and glowing with that n heavenly of all the feelings — the feeling of re tion. Then the Professor of Politics made a hal speech. He was followed by the Professor of L and Moral Philosophy who read out the address dr ed by me. It went down fine in spite of the many I had told in it. Then came the turn of Professo for being garlanded and making a speech. That the first time we remembered Professor X and fo that he was not among those present.

"Where is Professor X?" I shouted.

"Ah, where is he?" bellowed the Professor Economics.

"He is not here! Did he come at all?" bob the Professor of Logic and Moral Philosophy.

"Gentlemen!" cried the Politics man, a swea his brow.

"What is it?" we all shrilled together.

"I am afraid, gentlemen, a very serious error taken place. An exceedingly serious error, I say," came the reply from the Professor of Politi

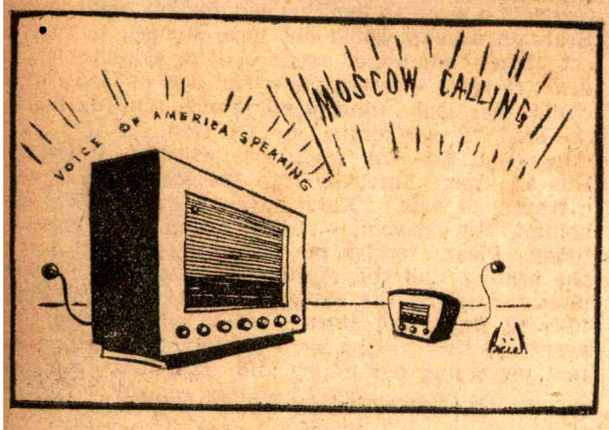
"Explain yourself," I demanded.

"It seems I forgot to invite Professor X to function."

"What?"

"I am certain I forgot to invite him".

PROFESSION MOULDS THE LANGUAGE



(Continued From Page 140)

im has never suffered a decline. A man of sterling ssets, which are not subjected to usual depreciations, e leaves behind him a rich fund of goodwill and oes in retirement with the accumulated dividends n the share-capital of universal respect to which all f us gratefully subscribe".

ANGUAGE OF FINANCE

People associated with the Finance Department se expressions which provoke laughter even in pas- ve hearts. "No objection" are the two words which re their not favourites. Propositions put up before iem will have from them either objections or no ojections, oftener the latter than the former. The xpressions become a habit with them. A Secretary a Government Department invited once his col- ague Secretary in the Finance Department to a rmal dinner and forthwith came the R. S. V. P.: No objection".

They know only one type of year and that is e financial year. The calendar year has no appeal r them. Even their wives and children speak in rms of financial year whenever it should be neces- ry for them to identify any time. Someone asked e son of a Finance man about the year of his birth. ithout a moment's hesitation the young boy re- ied: "November 15, 1940-41." He was born in a ancial year, after all!

Nothing interests the Finance men more than cold figures of the dull budget. The budget, as well-known, has three revelations—the Estimates, Revised Estimates and the Actuals. The story es that once two experienced budget men were otiating a marriage proposal between their son daughter. The father of the bridegroom was n on striking a good bargain in the shape of a stantial dowry and asked from the bride's father estimates. The estimates were readily given but was short of the expectations of the bridegroom's her. "I have your estimates", he wrote back, "but let me have your revised estimates and also the actuals". Both the partners of the intriguing game knew what the other side was after!

THE CAUTIOUS SOLICITOR

The solicitors are the most cautious in the professional fraternity and would never use a word r phrase that may even remotely border on an act of commission or omission. Their expressions have invariably around them a deliberately-created hedge of qualifying adjectives and adverbs. "Alleged" and "purported" are two of their most current words and hardly any communication leaves a solicitor's hands without being profusely ornamented by them. But, unfortunately, the solicitor not unoften forgets to ban the import of these favourite words along with similar others even in his private and personal correspondence.

A solicitor, it is said, had to write an amorous letter to his newly married wife who had gone to her father's house not long after the marriage. After all, the solicitor was a young human being and if law was his first love, the wife was definitely the second best. He felt the pangs of separation which found a truthful expression in his several-page-long letter. So read the beginning and the end of the letter:

> "Without prejudice—my alleged love for you knows no bounds. Still fresh in my memory are your kisses purported to be sweet and warm. Notwithstanding the fact that you are supposed to belong to me, I hereby agree and declare that I am unable to bear your separation any longer....Please take notice that you shall return to me within thirty days of the receipt hereof failing which further action will be taken by me to bring you back without any further reference being made to you or any other party/parties concerned.
>
> In witness whereof I, your alleged husband, have set and subscribed my hand and seal this day month and year first above-written".

THE PLANNER'S OBSESSION

The Five-Year Plans have given birth to the Public Sector and the Private Sector. Every plan is related to one or the other of these two sectors. Officials associated with the Plans would first ask to which sector a plan belongs. A top-ranking planner was addressing an audience on family planning. He screwed the interest of his listeners to an exciting pitch when one from amongst the crowd innocently asked: "Family Planning — in Public Sector or Private Sector, please?"

Indeed, there is no escape from the formidable influence of one's profession in the moulding of one's vocabulary!

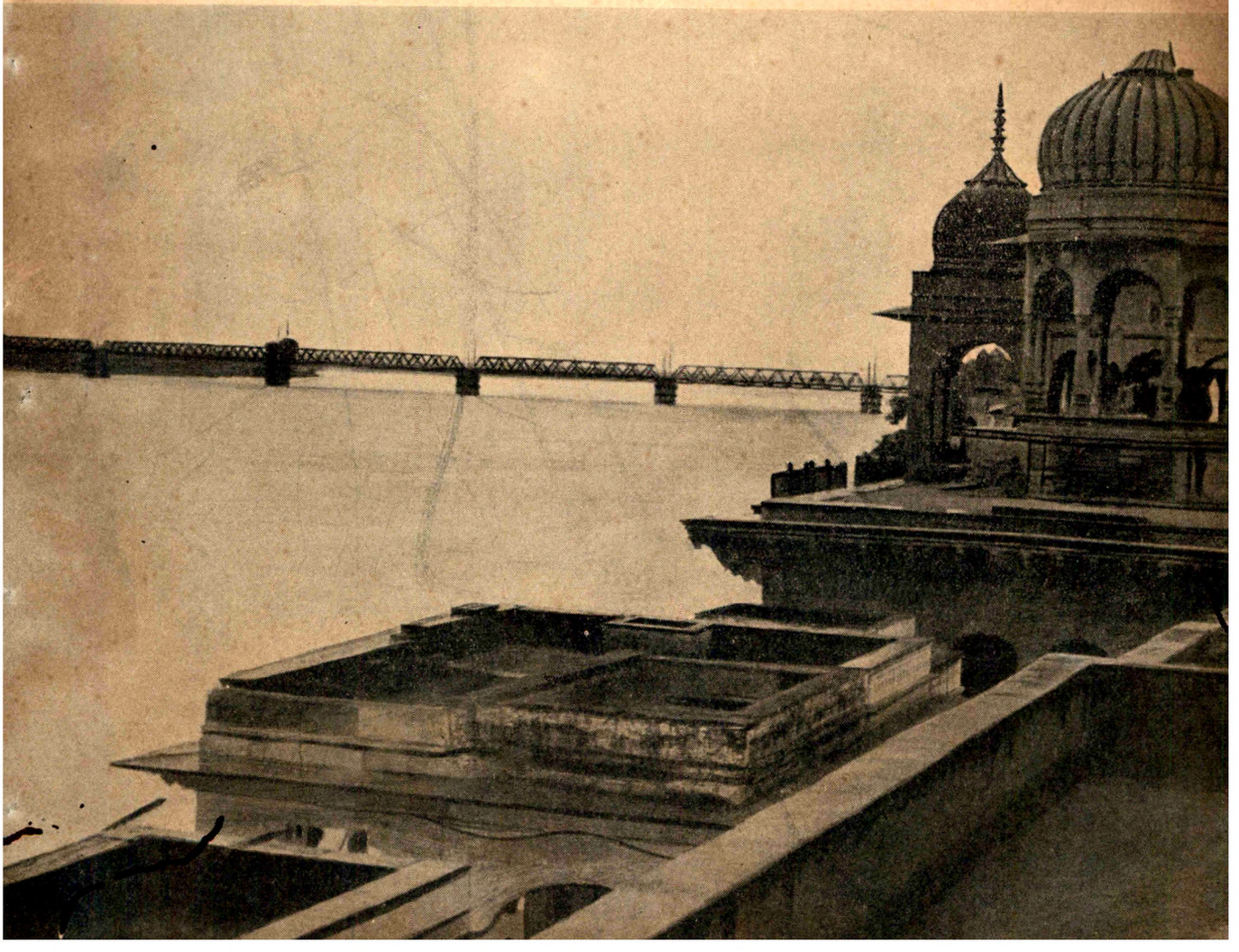
BEAUTIFUL INDIA

VARANASHI

hats on Ganga

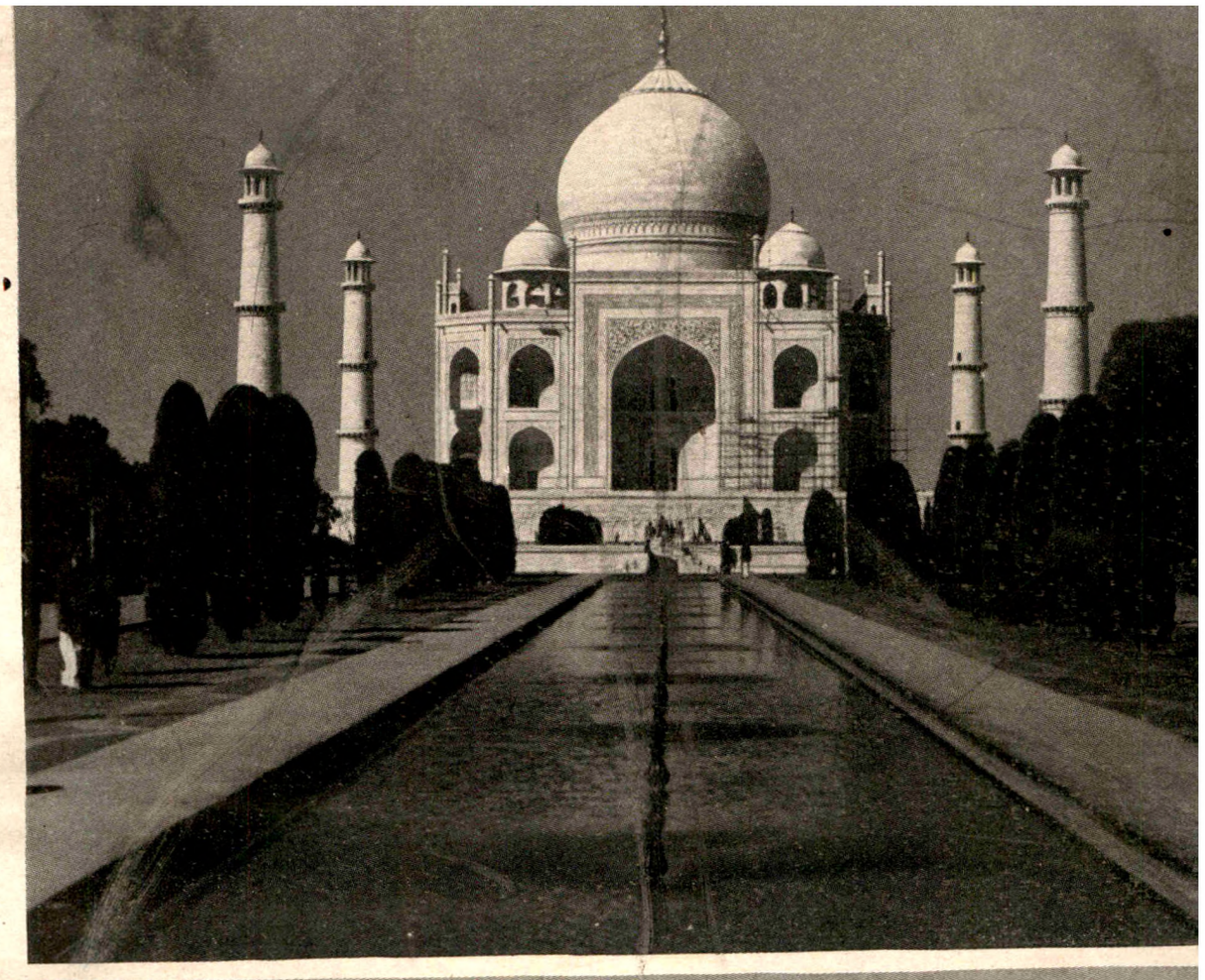
MATHURA

ats on Jumna



AGRA

The Taj



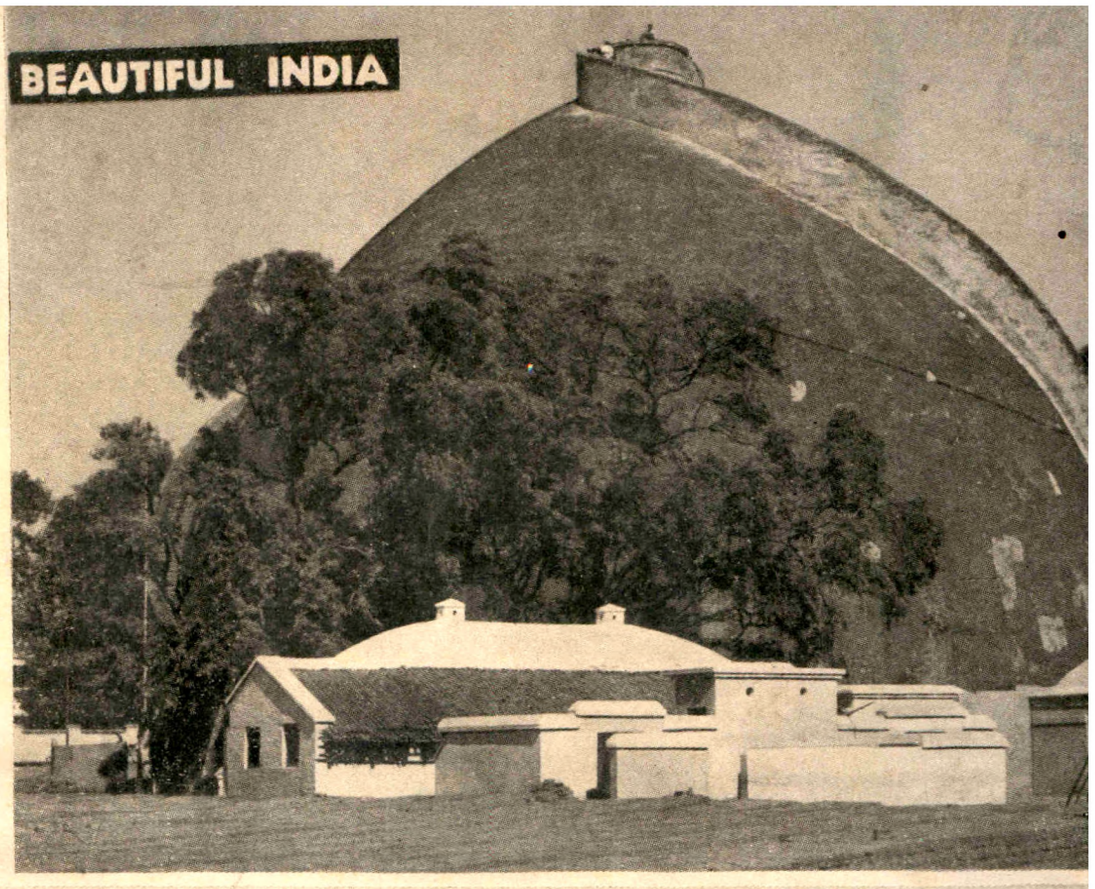
CALCUTTA

Victoria Memorial

BEAUTIFUL INDIA

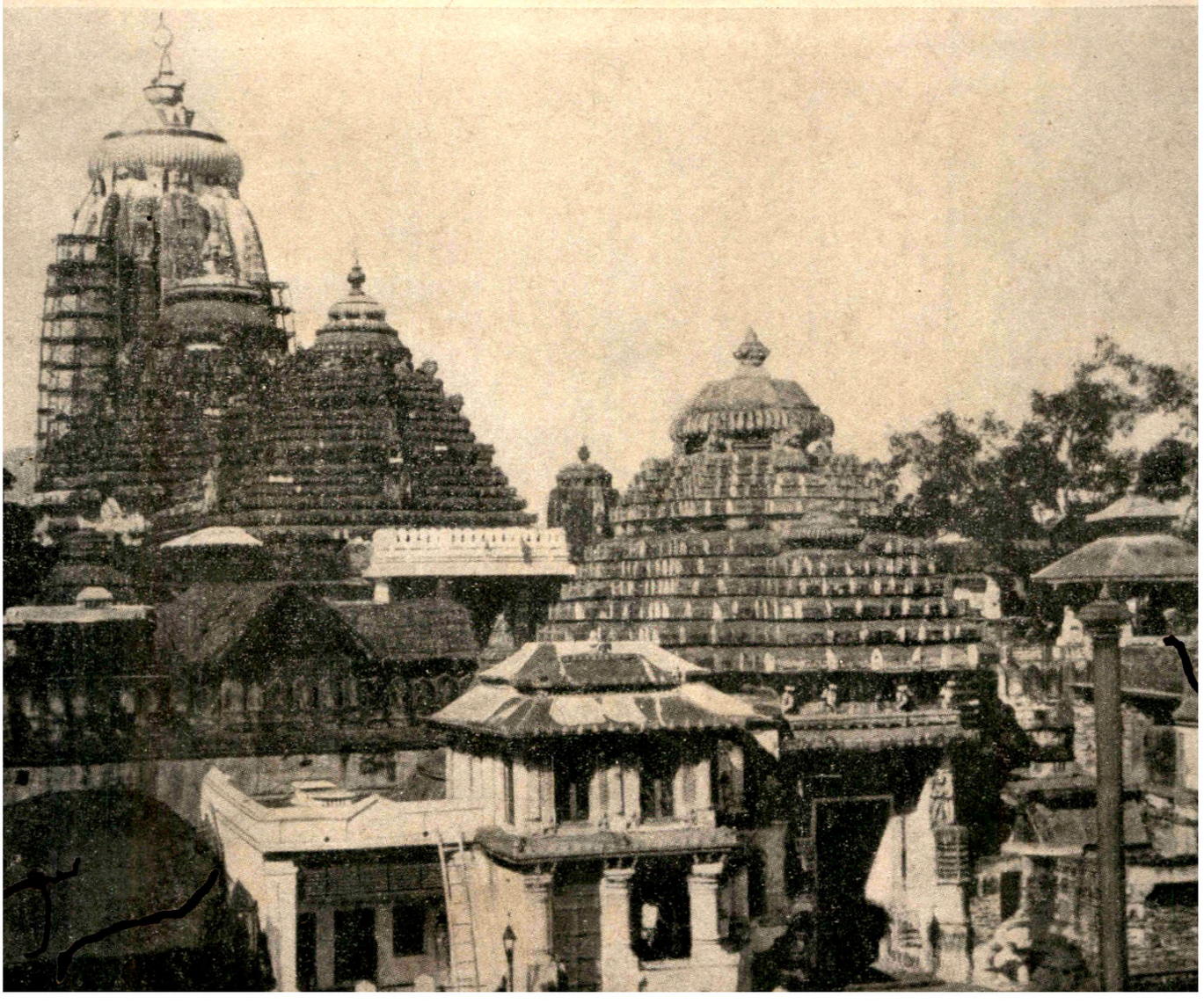
PATNA

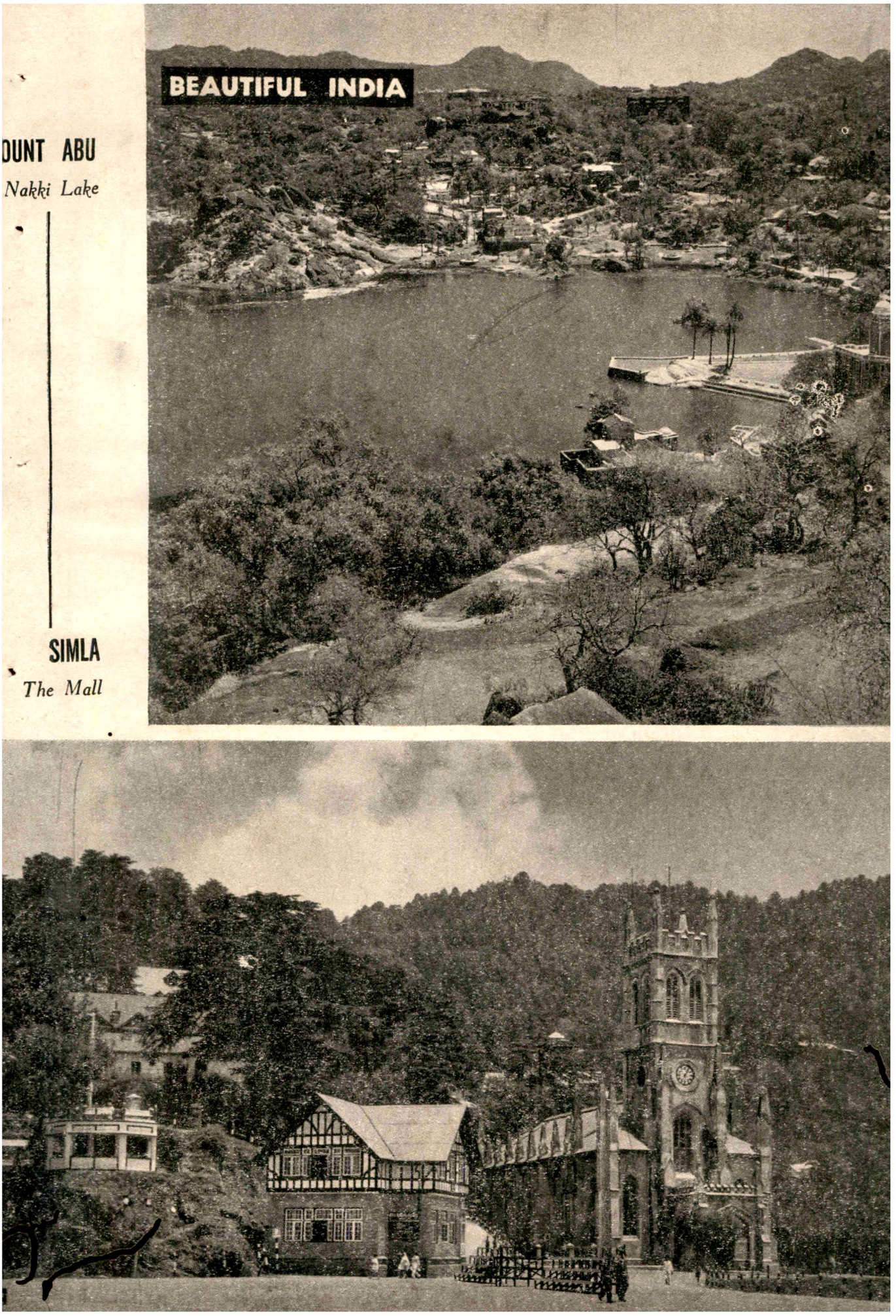
Whispering Gallery



PURI

Temple of Jagannath




BEAUTIFUL INDIA
OUNT ABU
Nakki Lake
SIMLA
The Mall

DARJEELING

Kanchanjangha

BADRINATH

Alakananda (R)

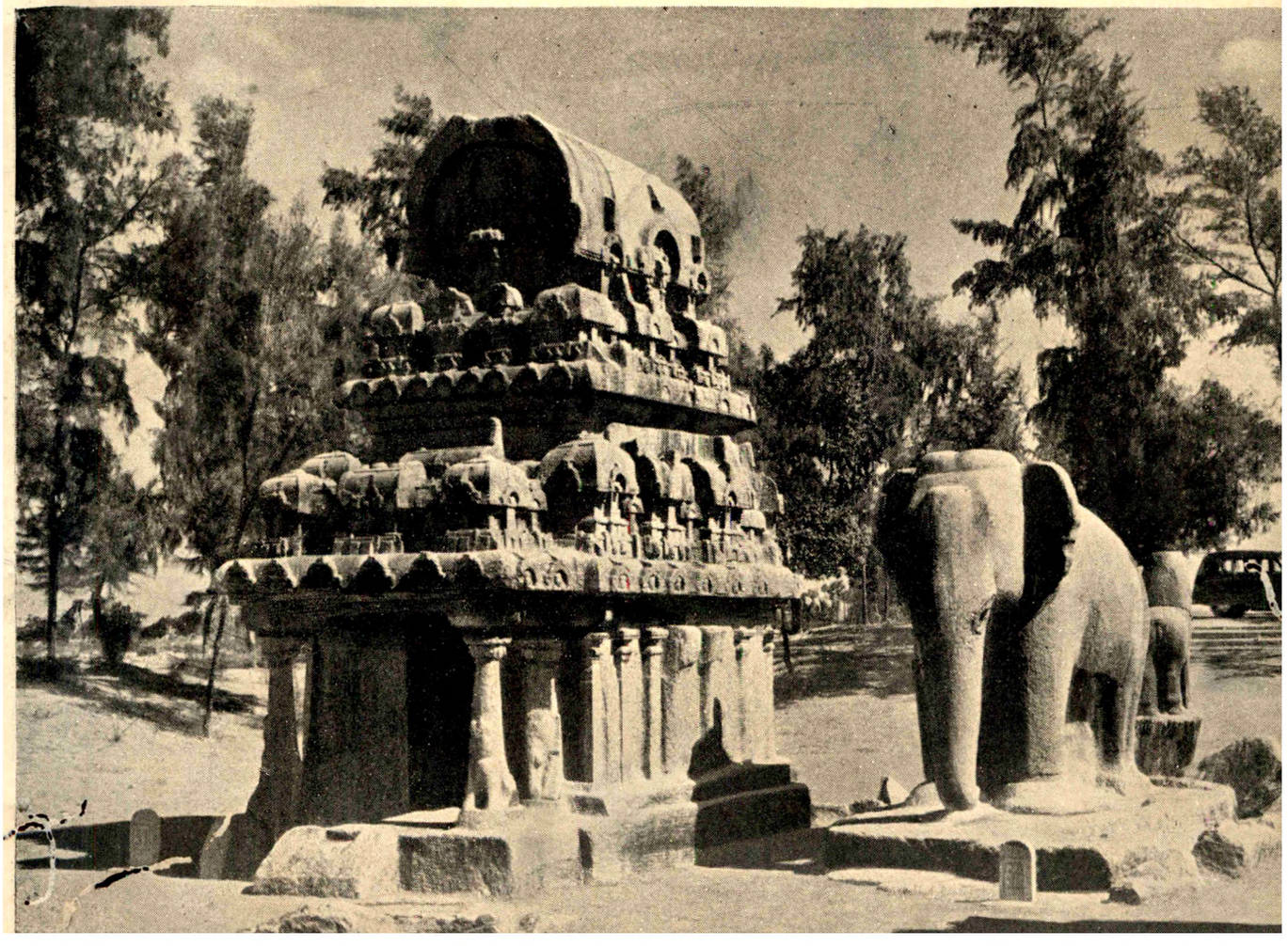
BEAUTIFUL INDIA

AMRITSAR

Golden Temple

AHABALIPURAM

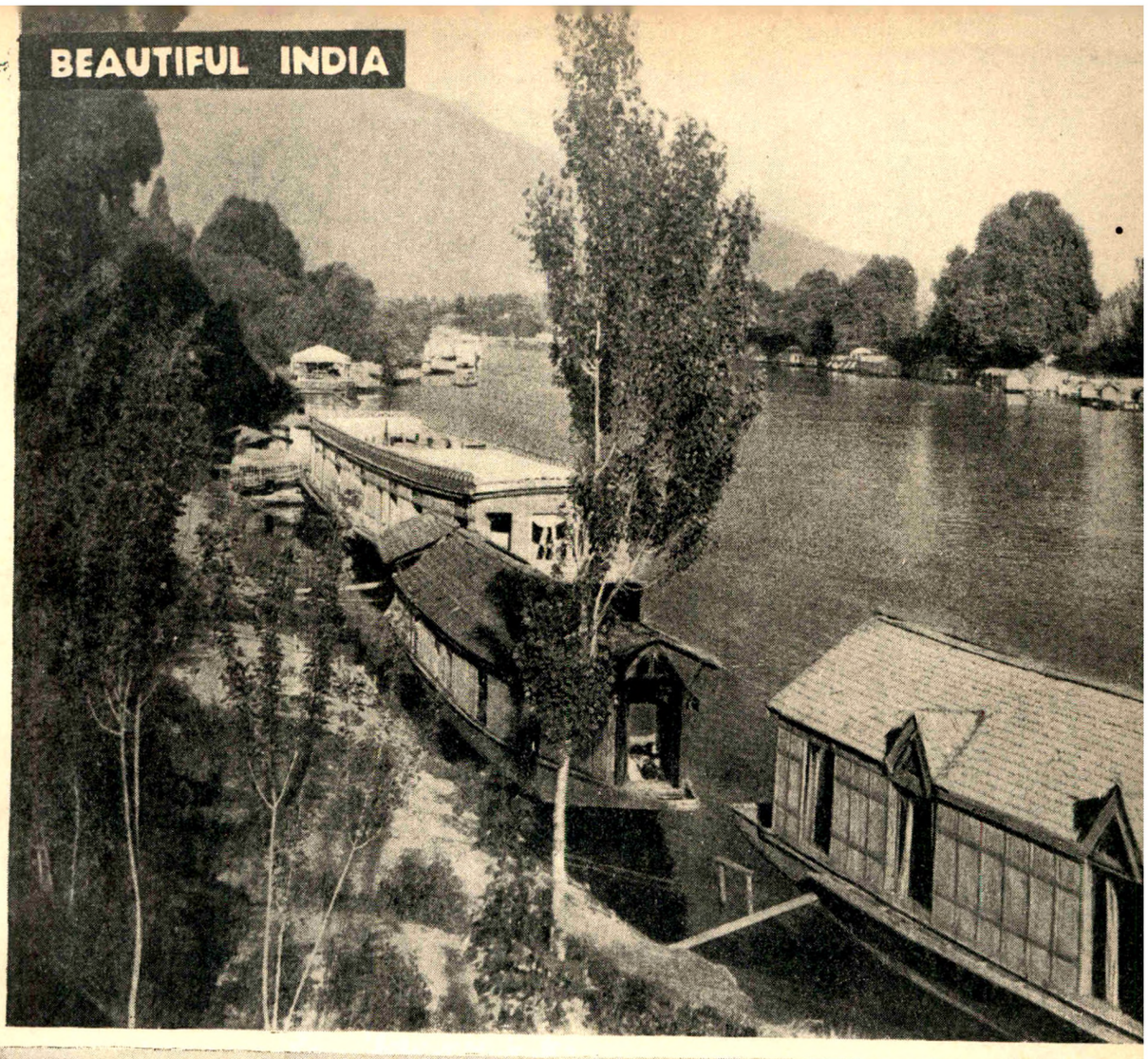
Rock Chariot



BEAUTIFUL INDIA

KASHMIR

'ouse Boats on Jhelam



NEFA

'ahmaputra Passighat

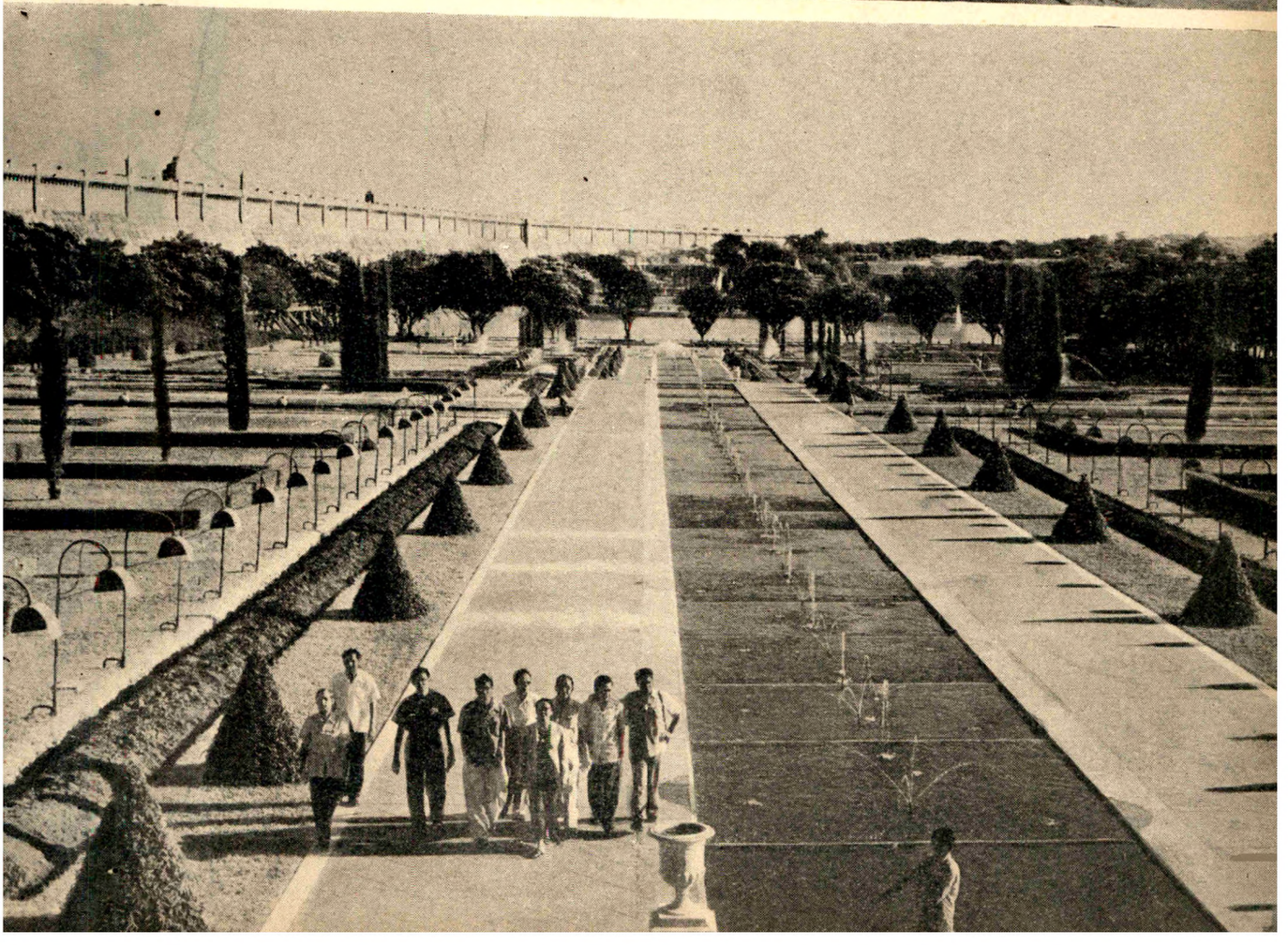
BEAUTIFUL INDIA

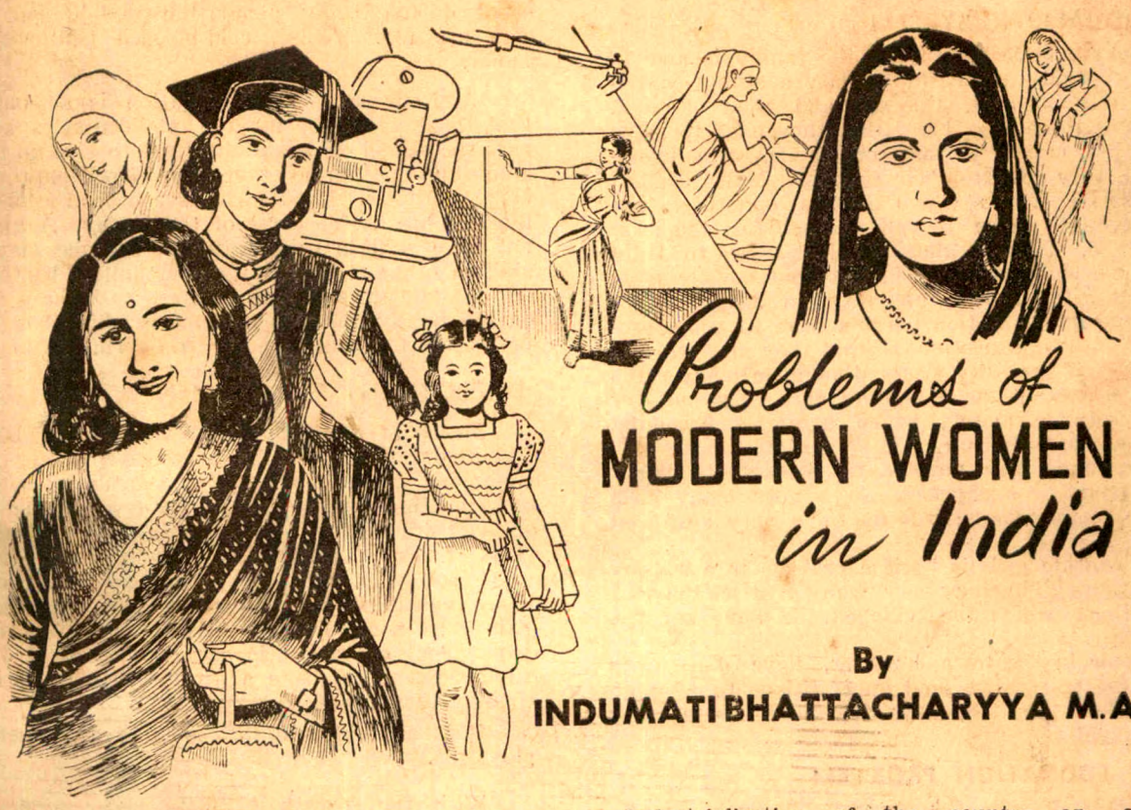
BOMBAY

Marine Drive

MYSORE

Brindaban Gardens





Problems of MODERN WOMEN in India

By
INDUMATI BHATTACHARYYA M.A., B.T.

IN recent years various changes have taken place in our country due to various causes, the most important of which is the economic one. Economic crisis in recent years has given rise to many difficult problems in the social sphere as in other spheres.

When we try to find out the causes giving rise to the social problems, we naturally turn to the political changes and the outlandish educational system as the main cause of the social problems, and very few think of the economic side of the problems. But the economic cause is the great driving force in the society. To study the present social problems, specially of women, therefore, the trend of modern economic changes in the society must not be lost sight of.

JOINT FAMILY BREAK-UP

The most important of the economic changes in the Hindu society for the last century and a half has been the crumbling down of the joint family system. The abolition of this age-old system has its root, no doubt, in the impact of the West with its individual ideal of family life which certainly gives greater freedom to the individual with a good income than in a joint family.

The breaking up of the joint family system, however, has given rise to various problems—chief among them is the problem of women. The pivot of the joint family system was the common source of income, and this source was generally the hereditary landed property. All the male members of the family worked in the land; and, if anyone was unable to work due to some reason or other, or died leaving his wife and children, the other members looked after them as the income from the common source permitted them to do so. But the rapid urbanisation, and industrialisation of the country are attracting educated, energetic and adventurous people to leave their country home and flock to the industrial and urban areas to seek gainful employments. Thus, a common source of income has given place to a difference in income. The members, who leave the joint family, have to live in their places of employment, and depending, as they do, upon fixed salaries they cannot look after the other members of their old family. All these have led to the ruin of the joint family system, which has all but disappeared now.

In a joint family the female members had to look after the household duties and rear children. They knew, and cared to know little about the outer world and were satisfied within the four walls of their homes.

A NOVEL SITUATION

But, with the breaking up of the old system, the female members have to face quite a novel situation undreamt of even half a century ago. Necessity has forced them to come out of their homes.

There are many, who do not like these changes and lament for the good old days. They fear that our country is heading towards the verge of ruin due to these changes. But, we should remember that the old systems had been tried for ages and weighed in the balance and found wanting; and hence they have been discarded, as not suited to modern conditions. As in Nature, so in society, a thing discarded is discarded for all tir · to come. New problems give rise to new situations and people try their best to adjust themselves to these situations. This is true in the history of evolution, and society too is the product of a continuous process of evolution.

The joint family system has been discarded, and

its advocates cannot reinstate it, whatever may their arguments be. In an agricultural civilisation it might be a necessity, but we are in an industrial age.

INDIVIDUALISTIC SYSTEM

Individualistic system in the family is now in vogue. A family means now-a-days a family consisting of the husband, the wife and their children. Parents of these days know that they have to make every child, may it be male or female, self-supporting. So, they educate their children. Males commit many social crimes which remain unnoticed, but our womenfolk have to suffer much for the least offence. So, it is the duty of the parents to train the female child, so that she may not deviate from the right path. And to prepare their daughters for facing the new situation parents have to make provisions for their education, so that they may support themselves if necessity arises, though in many cases parents educate their daughters only to secure for them a suitable match, which again is becoming more and more difficult.

Our young men, now-a-days, hesitate to marry due to economic stringency. So, a good many girls have to remain unmarried up to a very advanced age.

To educate girls is itself a problem in a conservative country having very many restrictions and superstitions which the village folk have not yet discarded.

People in the town, however, have done away with these restrictions and superstitions to a great extent. But, they too, have difficulties in educating their daughters.

GIRLS' EDUCATION PROBLEM

Scarcity of girls schools and colleges is a problem. Facilities of conveyance are also lacking in most of the mofussil towns, and hostels and boarding houses are very few and have limited accommodation. And, to tell the truth, parents have generally not ample means to meet the expenses for all these. In most cases, they find it difficult even to pay the school or college fees for their children, and any extra burden for their children's education becomes too much for them.

Ignorance of, or apathy to family planning leads to the birth of a large number of children, and the parents find it difficult to educate them all.

So, in spite of a strong desire on the part of the parents, a large number of girls remain uneducated or half-educated, though our Constitution has the directive of providing free and compulsory education for all children up to 14 years of age within ten years of the commencement of the Constitution.

Girls again, do not get the same help, facilities and time to further their studies in their student-life as boys do. The age-long practice of neglecting the female child is so deep-rooted in our nature, that we cannot do away with it even now. We deem it our duty to help the male child in his studies in every possible way, but our behaviour towards the girl is quite different. She does not get our co-operation in most cases, but we take away a large part of her time by burdening her with a good deal of domestic duties. We do not even now realise the importance of her preparing the lessons at home.

Educated and considerate parents can make a fixed routine when their school-going daughters may be required to do domestic duties, so that these requirements may not interfere with the preparation of their lessons.

EVIL OF DOWRY

Our girls have to face various handicaps while they are students. When they attain the marriage age, the parents cannot get them married due to the great social evil of the dowry system. And if they get married, happy matches are almost rare now-a-days. And no wonder; for the persons most interested do not bring about the match, but others who are worldly-wise, cold-blooded gentlemen and ladies.

And our system of education is so one-sided, that those who have not the intellectual capacity to pass the school examinations, have to give up further studies altogether, no other ways of self-improvement being available. These girls have to lead a miserable inactive life as the curse of the family. A girl may not have skill in book learning, but she may have skill in other respects. If opportunities be there to develop any saleable skill, she ceases to be a burden on the family. This is a problem which has got to be solved, for this type of girls form the majority.

EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN

Means of employment for women are also very few in our country. Girls who have good general education, get employment in schools or colleges; these again are very limited. A few become physicians or are employed as clerks in offices. That's all. Girls of respectable families seldom take to nursing as a profession, and a very few take to the cinema line. Teaching is the only respectable profession for girls even now. Consequently, the problem of unemployment of women is acute these days. Uneducated women constitute a far larger number in our country than educated women.

It is a problem of problems to give them employment.

With the growth of self-consciousness, many people have discarded the profession belonging to particular castes. Everybody now-a-days thinks it to be beneath his dignity to adhere to the profession practised by his forefathers. Thus, the goldsmith in most cases hates to deal in gold, and his wife consequently does not go to her neighbours' wives to sell ornaments made by her husband. Nor has she to devote her time gainfully in helping her husband in his business. Similar is the case with the milk-maid, the weaver's wife, the barber's wife, the potter's wife, the oil-man's wife, and many others of different other trades.

Thus, the women, who formerly helped their menfolk in different small cottage industries, have lost their old jobs and are now comparatively idle. The economic condition of such families has certainly deteriorated. Some, however, still follow the professions of their forefathers, and thus we find so many fisher-women, washer-women etc. even these days; but menfolk are taking their place more and more.

SENSE OF FALSE PRESTIGE

And, according to the official estimate, about one million people of only West Bengal depend on the small cottage industries for their living. Their output has an important bearing on the rural economy of the country. Days gone by, the womenfolk of the family helped their menfolk in these industries and sold the products in the locality. But the sense of false prestige has marred this means of employment for women. Even the wife of the cultivator does not now-a-days help her husband in the land, but he employs day labourer to work in the field.

The artisans and craftsmen prefer selling their products to middlemen or taking to market them-

selves. They do not generally allow their womenfolk to go and sell them. This means, for the menfolk, loss of time which can be utilised in increasing their products, and for the womenfolk, loss of the opportunity to utilise the time, not needed at home, in marketing, thus increasing the family income. But a false idea of prestige and respectability has possessed every stratum of our society, specially in Bengal.

STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL

Educated women can bring the thaw in this icy layer of false prestige which has almost frozen the activity of our womenfolk in urban as well as rural areas. Their scope in this respect is, no doubt, limited; and as pioneers, they are most likely to face lots of obstacles. But, in the midst of the present economic rot in which the middle class families find themselves, educated women too, have to think of the ways to augment the family income, otherwise we sink to the level of the labouring classes. We must remember that the law of survival applies to the menfolk as well as to the womenfolk. The struggle for existence does not mean men's struggle alone. For ages menfolk have tried to keep us away from this struggle. But have we been the gainers, or have they? The menfolk have increased their worries, and we have increased weakness, both physical and mental. There is no wonder, therefore, that, when the awakening has come at last with the advent of independence, we find ourselves handicapped in all spheres of activities. Menfolk have, for ages, been accustomed to view us from a particular angle of vision; and this, I think, is the most difficult hurdle to remove from our way. This will be removed when men grow accustomed to see women associated with them in different activities of social life. When a disease takes a long time to flare up in the system, it also takes a long time to be cured. The disabilities of women also will require a long-term curative measure. If we realise this truth, we must admit that co-education has been a right step, as also the employment of women as clerks and social workers.

In village development blocks, if women are given more scope to co-operate with the male workers, it will be a lesson to the country folk to help in breaking the barrier between the sexes. The camping of girls in different parts of the country by turn like the boy scouts should also be encouraged. The suggestion may be stinking to the old school of thought, but the law of survival makes us look ahead, and not back to the text-book morality of olden days. In this nuclear age, you have got to be modern in your outlook.

In our country as elsewhere, women constitute half the nation. So it is the duty of the Government to give equal chance to women according to their ability in every sphere of work. In advanced countries women like men are employed as peons, taxi-drivers, conductors in trams and buses, leaders of scientific and geological expeditions, pilots, engineers, and what not. The Constitution, no doubt, guarantees equal rights, but encouragement is lacking.

BETTER WORKERS THAN MEN

Sociologists of all countries have confirmed that women are better workers than men, both with regard to endurance and to the quality of the work performed. More and more women in foreign countries are entering the professions these days and more and more occupying managerial positions. Nearly everywhere there are more women teachers than men teachers. The fact, that women are cleverer and healthier than men, has been established according to statistics and scientific investigations and is backed with all its authority by UNESCO—the United Nations Organisation for Education and Science.

Men have so long taught the opposite and denied every fair chance to women and kept them under shackles of ignominy and shame. Throughout the ages the role of women in shaping the world has been belittled by men.

History tells us of women diplomats, who led their country to unprecedented power and prosperity. In these days, too, women diplomats are not lacking. And, if given opportunity, we shall certainly have a good number of Vijayaluxmis, no doubt.

We have also women Governors and Ministers who are discharging their duties efficiently, and there are other women also in many responsible posts. In cultural and social services, women have shown their ability. These are few in number, no doubt; but with the spread of education their numbers will increase in near future.

EXCELLENT BEGINNING

Post-independence index clearly demonstrates how foreign rule dwarfed India as a nation. Our Government has made an excellent beginning; but we, educated women, must remember that only the consciousness of our own abilities and constant watchfulness and efforts on our part to enforce our rights, can compel even a national government to do justice to us. I say, the Government have made a good beginning, but they have yet to do much more. We may take the question of women in public life. Women have been given the right to participate in law-making. Many are of the opinion that, if a woman participates in public life, her feminine qualities would be destroyed, and that her interest in domestic duties would be hampered. But this is not true. Participation of women in public life would introduce a purifying element,—as their moral influence would prevent men from many malpractices.

The interests of women in matters, such as employment of women, child labour, public health etc., can be safeguarded in the hands of women. Moreover, intelligent women can become more intelligent and keen if they take part in public affairs. In the legislature the contribution of the women members to the discussion of the Hindu Code Bill was admittedly very substantial.

Some are of the opinion, that woman's participation in public affairs leads to family discord. It may be true in some cases, but not in all.

Women have been given the right to vote. It is often said that the vote of a woman is a mere duplication of the husband's vote. A discussion would, no doubt, take place between the husband and the wife, and it would lead to a vote which would be not an exclusive affair but a joint concern.

But if we think a little over this matter, we shall realise how harmful equal voting is. The arguments in favour of assignment of superior weight to the vote of the educated appear to be correct, though political capacity is not always the fruit of academic qualification.

COMPULSORY EDUCATION

So long as compulsory education is not provided for, universal suffrage is a mockery. Most of the women of our country have not the knowledge of the three R's. They cannot even hold a paper correctly and they cannot read the names of the candidates, and though instructed again and again, forget even the symbols at the time of casting their votes. They cannot even draw lines and put a mark against the name of the candidate. In the last election such women declared openly that they could not do these things, and they requested the polling officers to do these for them. Most of our womenfolk do not know why elections take place, and they do not know what

(Continued On Page 154)

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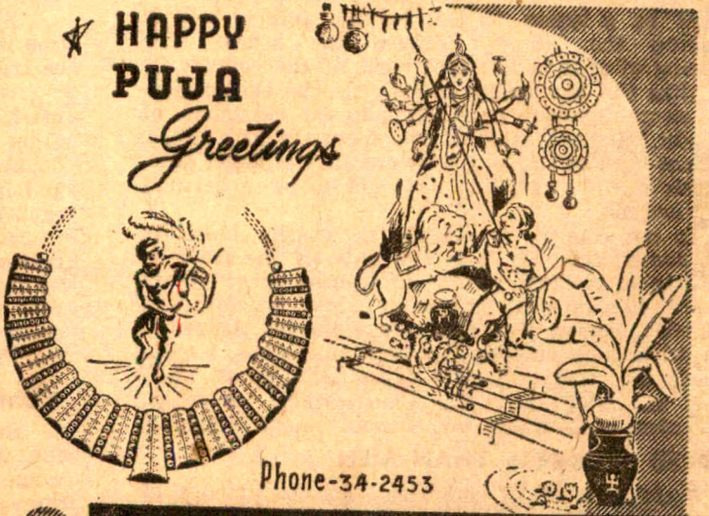

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Educated Women's Role —

By USHA BISWAS, M.A., B.T.

ONLY a few decades back, the number of educated women in India was very small. In those times, only a handful of women used to go in for higher education, and equip themselves for a public career. Such women were, therefore, exceptions, rather than the rule. At that time the home was considered to be the only sphere of women's activities, and, as such, their thoughts and activities centred mainly round it. They had little or no social life, so to say, as the rearing of offspring and the performance of household duties used to absorb most of their time and energy. They seemed to be quite contented with their simple, homely, and unpretentious life, and were seldom obsessed by any ambition or aspiration. Very few of them had occasion to participate actively in the civic life of their country or ever bothered about what had been happening in the outside world. In those days, women were ordinarily looked upon as the ministering angels of the home, whose main duties consisted in ministering to the comforts of the members of their families.

But the times have since been fast changing. English education, and the impact of the last two world wars on the economy of the country, as also the last political upheaval are some of the chief contributory factors that have got much to do with the present change in its social set-up, and in our general outlook on life. The present-day economic crisis, by which the middle class people have been most hard hit, has rendered it absolutely necessary for many Indian women to earn their own livelihood or to act as the bread-winners of their families. Besides, at the present moment, a purely domestic life can hardly satisfy the modern educated women of India, who, imbued as they are with the spirit of Western civilization, are getting rather intolerant of the tutelage of men, and are anxious to embark upon a career of their own. They want to keep abreast of the times, and are generally awakening to the fact that another and a much bigger field of work is awaiting them outside their home. They feel that their society as well as their motherland has also got a claim on their time.

TWO-FOLD DUTIES

In the new Constitution of free India, too, the men and women of the country have been accorded equal rights and status—legal, social, and political—the sex being no bar to any right, privilege, or appointment. But that seems to be no reason why women's duties at home, as mothers and wives, should be neglected. What is expected of the educated Indian women of the day is that they should effect a co-ordination between the rival claims of their home and society. They should, therefore, try to do ample justice to their two-fold duties. Now that our country has been able to shake off the shackles of the foreign yoke after about a couple of centuries, both men and women of free India should be up and doing to build it up on better and ideal lines. The contributions of Indian women to the last independence movement of the country are not, at all, insignificant. In those years of storm and stress, they fought side by side with men, with a view to achieving the political independence of their motherland. The untold sufferings, indignities, and privations that they had to endure at the time, undoubtedly, accelerated the pace of their progress or emancipation. The whole economic structure of the country was rudely shaken by the aftermath of the partition of India. All these had a very serious repercussion on the entire social fabric of our country, as a result of which the educated and semi-educated woman of India, belonging to the lower and upper middle classes have, of late, been compelled to take recourse to job-hunting along with men, so as to save their families from death or starvation. To secure employments, very often they have to compete with men. This also necessitates the emergence of our woman-folk from the seclusion of their home. To-day they are no longer considered to be mere instruments of procreation or the 'ministering angels' of their home only. In the present struggle for existence, they have to play the part of the help-mate of their

husbands and have to be the co-sharers of their burdens. So, at the present time, sheer economic necessity also makes it impossible for a big number of women of our country to fall back upon a purely domestic life.

To-day the women of India have got a very important role to play in the social and educational reconstruction of our country. "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world". There is no gainsaying the truth of this adage. It is the mothers, who lay the foundation of their children's character, and mould it during the formative period of their life. So the former should be fully alive to the great responsibilitiy, imposed upon them. They should always bear in mind that a child of today is a citizen of tomorrow, and that it is up to them to turn out good and worthy citizens of the future India. It is therefore their bounden duty to bring about the ideal home environments and the right atmosphere conducive to the proper development of their children's body and mind. Hence the need of spreading suitable education among the womenfolk of our country.

ADULT & CHILD EDUCATION

So adult education should go hand in hand with child education. The percentage of literacy is still very low among the female population in the rural areas of the country. Various social education schemes, formulated both by the State and Central Governments of our country, are already afoot. But these schemes can hardly materialize unless and until the active help and co-operation of the public at large can be enlisted. The educated women of India have got an uphill task to fulfil in this field, by way of liquidation of the illiteracy of the womenfolk of our country. Today quite a big number of educated Indian ladies of high rank have taken up social service. Many of them really deserve to be congratulated on what they have been able to achieve so far, against heavy odds. The untiring zeal, enthusiasm, and energy of some of them are worthy of commendation, and should be emulated by others. But social service should never be looked upon as a sort of hobby by the social workers. Unless they take to the work in the proper missionary spirit, they will not be able to command the respect and confidence of those they intend to serve. At the present time, considerable wastage is also taking place, due to the lack of planning, co-ordination, and proper organization. Our resources being only limited, wastage should be reduced to a minimum. It is no use frittering away one's time and energies on impracticable schemes. The social workers should try to think out and evolve the right mode of approach to the problems that they are faced with. Well-thought out plans must be drawn up, and a definite programme of work should also be chalked out. Now-a-days sporadic efforts are being made to set up Mahila Samitis here and there. But that only touches a fringe of the problem, the vast magnitude of which is really astounding. A network of such organizations should be started on well-planned lines throughout the rural areas of the country, where ignorance, illiteracy, and superstition are still rampant. It will be far easier for the women social workers to work in and through these Mahila Samitis than to work all by themselves. Co-ordinated efforts should be put forth by these Samitis with a view to eradicating some of the evils that are eating into the very vitals of our society.

INDUSTRIAL HOMES

Under the auspices of these women's organizations a sufficient number of industrial homes and work centres may well be opened, so as to train village women in small cottage industries or some useful handicrafts. This will enable them to be self-supporting, to some extent, or to contribute their mite to the family budget. In these hard days, poor and indigent people really find it difficult to keep their body and soul together, with the small pittance, sometimes earned by one or two male members of their family. A big majority of the village women of India are not in a position to go in for higher education, which is sure to put too great a strain on their slender purse. Very often their domestic circumstances, too, preclude the possibility of their taking up outside employments. Even the illiterate or semi-illiterate women of the lower middle class are loth to take up menial jobs, which are very naturally considered to be derogatory to their family prestige. Of course, at the present moment, appalling poverty and dire need have driven some women of respectable families, too, to join some factories, and to earn their livelihood by manual labour as factory hands, as otherwise starvation would have stared them in the face. But the very idea is repugnant to the bulk of the middle class people. So the possibilities of opening up new avenues of employment for the poor and needy women of middle class families, who have only a smattering of education, should be explored in no time. Now-a-days the meagre income of a single male member of a family very often needs to be supplemented by the earnings of its womenfolk too.

FUNDS FOR INSTITUTIONS

It is, however, gratifying to note that attempts have already been made by a few women's organizations to set up such industrial homes and work centres for poor and destitute women in Calcutta and in its neighbourhood. Some of these institutions are turning out good work too. In this connection the names of some notable institutions of this type may be mentioned, such as Nari Seva Sangha, All-Bengal Women's Union Home, Nari Siksha Samity, Mahila Silpa Bhawan, Brahmo Samaj Mahila Silpa Bhawan, the work centres run by All-India Women's Conference, Kamarhati Women's Co-operative Industrial Home and the like. Now-a-days such institutions are springing up here and there in the rural areas of West Bengal also. But those are still few and far between. In the rural areas of the State the demand for such institutions is getting more insistent every day. It is a pity that some of these infant institutions are not functioning properly or are dying out for want of money as well as of proper management. The efforts of some of the social workers are thus being nipped in the bud. Sufficient funds should be forthcoming both from the private and public exchequer to keep the institutions going. Suitable subsidies from the State or Central Social Welfare Board will prove very helpful. Ample marketing facilities, too, should be afforded for the disposal of the finished products turned out by these institutions. Efforts should always be made to impart a rudimentary knowledge of the three R's to adult women, along with vocational or industrial education, so that the country-wide illiteracy among the masses may thus be partially removed. Occasional conferences of Mahila Samitis may well be called on a State basis, with a view to coordinating the activities of different organizations. Such conferences will act as a forum for the exchange of ideas, as also for the discussion of some common problems of the workers.

MORE CIVIC SENSE

The civic sense of villagers should be roused by all means and women should be trained in the art of home-making and house-wifery. The ignorance, superstition and the grinding penury of the illiterate masses are mainly responsible for the incidence of

such epidemic diseases as cholera, typhoid, small pox, and the like, which take a heavy toll of human lives every year. The ignorant villagers have little or no idea of hygiene and sanitation. They are utterly devoid of the civic sense too. Due to the lack of the civic sense, they do incalculable harm to themselves as well as to the society in which they live, move and have their being. It should be borne in upon them that the good or evil of their society is indissolubly linked up with their own. If necessary, the smaller interests of an individual or individuals should be sacrificed to the larger interests of society. "The greatest good of the greatest number" — as the maxim goes. That even some of the so-called educated men and women of our country have got very little civic sense will be amply borne out by some of their nasty habits, such as spitting anywhere and everywhere, the piling up of the refuse and garbage of one's house in front of that of a neighbour, or on the public thoroughfare etc. The ugly sight of the stains of spitting on the walls and staircases of private and public buildings, as also, the stinking garbage-littered lanes and streets of congested cities cannot but be an outrage on one's sense of decency and decorum. But still these are some of the very common practices resorted to by the so-called educated people even. If one inmate of a house contracts an infectious or a contagious disease, precautionary measures are seldom adopted, so as to check the spread of the disease in question among his neighbours or among the other inmates of the house. People hardly seem to realize the fact that the adoption of such precautionary measures will ultimately redound to their own good. So an elementary knowledge of the main principles of hygiene and sanitation seems to be essential for every housewife. The housewives of both rural and urban areas of the country need to be taught how to keep their houses and surroundings quite neat and clean, how to take proper care of the health of their children and other inmates of their house, how to provide a maximum of nutritious diet for them with a minimum of expenditure. They should also know how to make up their budget, and how to balance it.

SOCIAL EDUCATION CENTRES

Mahila Samitis can render immense good to society by running an adequate number of social education centres for the benefit of the adult women of towns and villages. The members of these Samitis should therefore try to prevail upon and induce their ignorant sisters to help and co-operate with them. Every endeavour should be made to arouse the civic sense of the men and women of our country. Besides, as the responsibility of running homes on efficient and hygienic lines rests primarily with women, they need to be trained in the art of home-making and housewifery. The enormous importance of this side of the work should not be lost sight of by social workers. The social education centres for adult women should not fail to lay special emphasis on this work.

Efforts should be made by Mahila Samitis to provide some cultural education for the illiterate or semi-illiterate adult women of the urban and rural areas of the country. With this end in view, cultural functions should be arranged from time to time. Purely theoretical instruction can hardly appeal to the ignorant masses, to whom it must needs be made both concrete and agreeable. To make the appeal more effective audio-visual aid should be resorted to. Dramas constitute an excellent medium of social education. In pre-British times the illiterate masses used to be appealed to through the medium of 'Jatras', 'Katha-Katas', 'Kabir Gan', 'Panchali' and the like. At the present time too, organized efforts are being made to revive and popularize these in the rural areas of the State of West Bengal. But this being pre-eminently an age of science, where possible the necessary information had better be imparted by means of the radio and the film shows.

Today the number of girls' schools is going up by leaps and bounds in the urban areas of our country, where the insistent demand for such institutions seems to be ever on the increase. But female education is still very backward in villages, there being hardly an adequate number of girls' schools in these areas. The authorities of girls' schools are hard put to it to secure suitable women teachers in rural areas. As the number of educated women is still very small in these areas, women teachers can seldom be locally recruited. As a rule, educated women are reluctant to live and work in villages, where they have to forego the general amenities of urban life, and where, over and above that, they are incommoded in more than one way. Today the educated women of India should be inspired with a spirit of social service, and should be induced to undertake the noble task of educating their illiterate and less fortunate sisters in villages where their services are most needed. They should try to inculcate the spirit of social service among their pupils too. The latter may be called upon to do some sort of social service by way of extra-curricular activities. They may be asked to start a poor or a charity fund or to run a social service league on a small scale. They may also be encouraged to run small adult education centres in their spare time. Attempts should be made to epitomize an ideal society and a model village in the school. A 'cleaner village' drive may also be launched with the help of pupils, who may thus be induced to contribute their share to the building up of a cleaner and a better village. The school should be the centre of all the important activities of the village, so as to enable its teachers to take an active part in them. The women teachers of rural schools must be well acquainted with the social environment of the localities they are serving. Every endeavour should be made to establish a close contact with the home of each pupil. The teachers must have a first-hand knowledge of the conditions obtaining in each home and should make a point of visiting it regularly with a view to this. Occasionally 'Mothers' Days' may also be organized, so that they may avail themselves of this opportunity of meeting the mothers of their pupils and being acquainted with them. They will thus get to know each other, and profit by the mutual exchange of views and by the discussion of some of their common problems. Uneducated and ignorant mothers will be immensely benefited by learning much from trained and experienced teachers, with regard to the proper bringing of their children. Where necessary, the latter can teach the mothers of their pupils how to call into being an ideal home environment, which will help to promote the moral, physical and psychological well-being of their children. A tremendous social responsibility therefore devolves upon the women teachers of village girls' schools, who can thus effectively participate in one of the most important nation-building activities of their country.

INFANT MORTALITY

The children of a country are its asset. The future well-being of a nation depends upon them to a great extent. Every mother should aim at rearing healthy babies. It is one

(Continued On Page 1.

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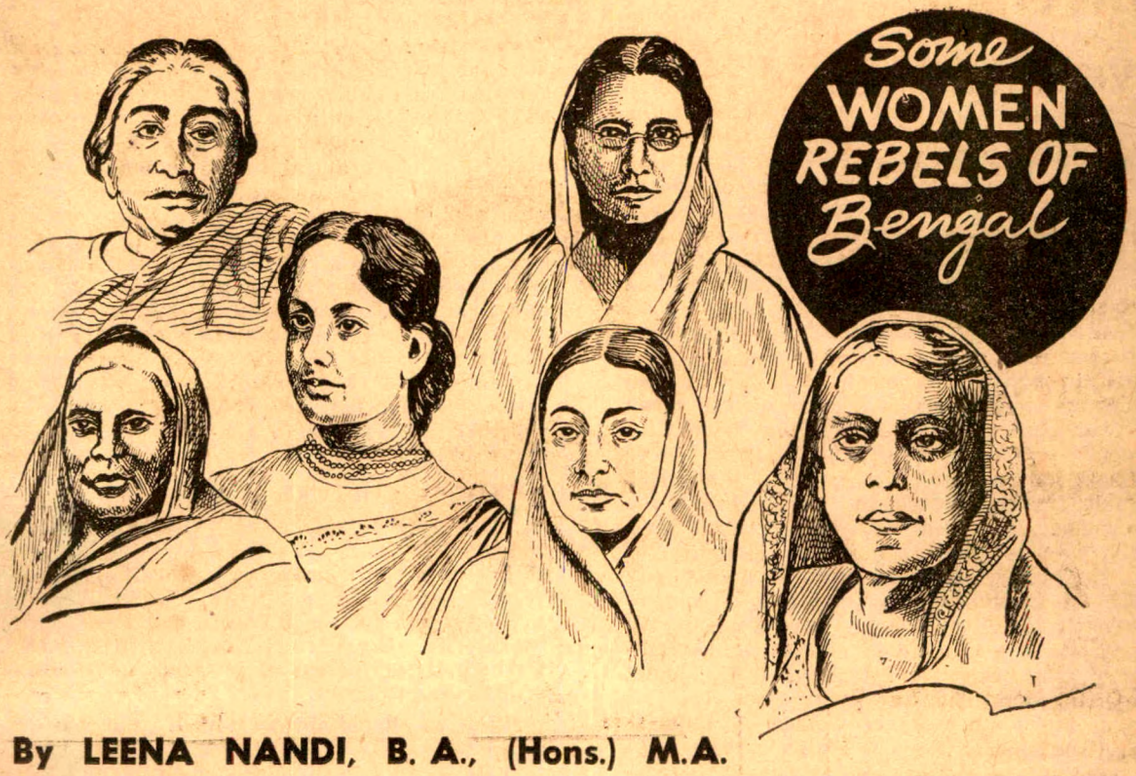


By LEENA NANDI, B. A., (Hons.) M.A.

IT is of great interest to know how our sisters fought during the last one hundred years for the emancipation of this holy land of ours from foreign domination. Indian women had such great names amongst them as Rani Lakshmibai of Jhansi and Mataji Maha Rani Tapaswini who made history during the great national insurrection, popularly known as the Sepoy Mutiny. Bengal was not an idle spectator when the whole of India was in ferment. It is nearly a century ago when the Bengalee women first appeared in the political arena and preached the cause of nationalism in public. We have a reference to the 'Hindu Mela' in mind where our sisters in those early days of national awakening took the platform and preached the cult of nationalism and pleaded for using the indigenous products to help grow national industries. The call for boycotting the foreign goods though less pronounced was all the same there.

The Bombay session of the All India Congress (1889) saw for the first time two Bengalee women participating in its deliberations. They are Swarna Kumari Devi, the great litterateur and Kadambini Ganguli, the first Indian lady medical graduate. Kamini Roy, the well-known poetess took great interest in the agitation of the coalfield workers of Bihar. Her contributions to the contemporary labour movement cannot be overestimated when we consider the adverse political situation we were in those days and the constant fear of personal indignities we had to suffer for political reasons.

GREAT NATIONAL UPSURGE

Sarala Devi and Hiranmoyee Devi are two notables in the field of Bengali Literature and of national movement as well. They are the worthy daughters of Swarna Kumari Devi. Sarala Devi's services to the people of the Punjab have been described as 'unique' by the contemporary historians. She was an institution in herself.

The partition of Bengal in 1905 brought in its wake a great national upsurge. Kumudini Mitra, her mother Lilabati Mitra, Nirmala Sarkar, Subala Acharya and Hemangini Das undertook to vitalise the movement by their constructive efforts. Small-scale cottage industries were boosted and indigenous products were sold at different exhibitions. Thus funds were raised to feed the movement. Literature inspiring national sentiments was produced by such eminent writers as Swarna Kumari Devi, Kamini Roy, Girindra Mohini Dasi, Mankuma. Basu and Hiranmoyee Devi. The contributions of these writers to the cause of Indian national freedom were gratefully acknowledged by the Maharani of Baroda in her presidential address at the women's conference held at the Bethune College in 1906. Let us quote the Maharani: "I know how the ladies of Bengal have helped and supported the Swadeshi Movement which is now spreading fast over Northern India and the

unjab, over Gujrat and the Deccan, over Madras, ysore and Travancore everywhere over this conti- ent".

PELL OF TERRORISM

Next came the spell of terrorism. Sister Nivedita as one of the big five of the revolutionary National ouncil. Bengal was her second home. Her influence n the contemporary National Movement was mmense. Women of Bengal under her leadership arply reacted to the arrest of Bhupendra Nath, the unger brother of Swami Vivekananda. They felici- ted Bhubaneswari Debi, the mother of Bhupendra ath and sent a clarion call to the women of Bengal r giving all-out support to the cause of nationalism. band of young workers inspired by the blood and on diplomacy of the West decided to take up arms d they were branded as terrorists. They captured e imagination of young Bengal and Leela Nag, enuka Sen, Pritilata Wadedar, Santi Das and others edged themselves to the cause of freedom of their otherland through violent means. They were no lievers in non-violence and it became evident when ritilata Wadedar was found involved in the Chitta- ng armoury raid case. None the less, they were eat patriots judged by all conceivable standards. he valuable national services rendered by the engalee women have been extolled by Lady Mac- nald, the wife of the then Prime Minister of ngland. They visited India in 1909. To quote Lady acdonald: "Secondly, one feels there is a tremen- us movement going on amongst the women. We e fond of labelling the Indian aspirations as sedi- on, when if they were amongst ourselves we should ll them patriotism. This movement seems to be reading as much amongst the women as amongst e men". (The Modern Review, August, 1910).

Sarojini Naidu, a great name in Indian politics tended the Bombay session in 1915. That was her rst participation in active politics. Her subsequent reer and her great sacrifices are too well known be retold. Her robust optimism and volcanic elocu- on earned her the rightful place in Indian politics e eminently deserved. During the non-co-operation ovement Basanti Debi, the wife of Deshabandhu, r sisters Urmila and Suniti joined the band of arless workers and courted arrest. That was on e 9th February, 1922. The civil disobedience move- ent grew in intensity and stalwarts like Hema- ova Majumder, Nellie Sen Gupta, wife of Desha- riya, Santosh Kumari Gupta came to the fore. heir names are written in letters of gold in the ntemporary history of national movement.

ED LETTER DAY

The rebels fought and won. The odds were avy. Untold sufferings were let loose on them and eir dear ones. Their husbands were insulted and aten, their children were denied even the minimum eature comfort, their relations were exercised and ey were subjected to many indignities. The occa- onal employment of third degree methods was thless and any civilised Government worth the me should have refrained from such barbaric acts. mall and medium scale Jalianwallabaghs were not frequent. The hounds of imperialism were let ose. Yet they fought and many of them did not e to see what they were exactly fighting for. Their pes were irrepressible and they dreamt of a utopia here all their aspirations stood eternally fulfilled. uring their lifetime they, like Browning's Gram- arian, aimed at the 'million' but their 'unit' was ot missed in the long run. Independence came thed in the blood of many of my esteemed sisters ho fought and fell in the thick of the battle.

(Continued on next col.)

PROBLEMS OF MODERN WOMEN

(Continued From Page 147)

difference would be there if they vote for one or the other candidate:

Taking all these into consideration, we find that female franchise cannot be a boon to the State, so long as education is not made compulsory. This remains an uphill task for the Government to do even in this eleventh year of our independence.

In the Secondary schools of America, students have to undergo a training in grooming i.e., training in personal appearance, dress, behaviour etc. Provision should be made for our girls to undergo this training. This training aims at the development of occupational skill as well as the development of social and moral behaviour and attitudes. That many of our girls now-a-days are imitating film actresses in their appearance, dress and behaviour, cannot be denied. It is not desirable in our poor country with a tradition of plain living and high thinking. And these things do not suit our way of living and custom. Moreover, these lead to the lack of morality and a sense of propriety.

PHYSICAL CULTURE

Our women, now-a-days, have to go alone in many undesirable places even at night. But they do not have the training or physical strength to protect themselves from anti-social elements. This is a vital problem for us to solve. Our endeavour should be directed towards doing away with this deficiency through the provision of physical culture in girls' schools and colleges.

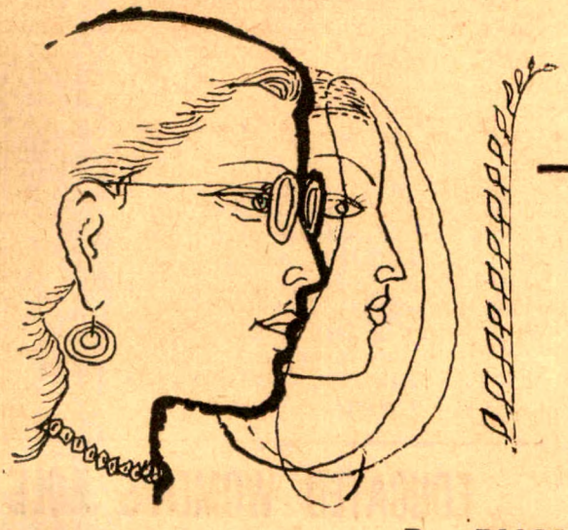
But we should always bear in mind that our home is the hub of the society. So, we must have home-making education in which nutrition, home-nursing, child care, clothing, family relations etc. should be learnt with proper care as they do in the schools of foreign countries.

Last, but not the least, we should have an ideal in life which must be consistent with the accepted ideal of the nation. We should direct all our incentives and efforts to achieve it as best as we can. Whatever the national ideal may be, and whatever the means adopted, it must ultimately lead to happiness, peace and well-being not only to ourselves but to the society at large.

In conclusion, I would sound a note of warning to the members of the opposite sex. There are thoughtless people who would keep the womenfolk away from the thought-current of the modern world by providing a different type of education for our women. We should remember that we are of the modern world and have to face modern problems, consequently, no nation can make progress if a half of its members pull one way and the other half the other way. Both, therefore, should be mentally equipped to understand the modern problems of the nation and mentally co-operate for their solution. If the progressive outlook which independence has brought, continues for a few decades more, Indian women may hope to constitute a befitting complement to a modern nation yielding palm to none.

(Continued from previous col.)

August 15, 1947 the red letter day was heralded by a flood of tears rolling down the cheeks of millions of women who wept for the seemingly lost cause and encouraged their dear ones to a determined struggle for attaining the goal. Their example before us shines like the morning sun and inspires us to a path of righteousness and final sacrifice. We should not forget them and their sacrifices so that we may live up to the noble traditions set up by those valiant daughters of undivided Bengal.



Female Emancipation in our Country—

By BIJOYA BHATTACHARJEE, M.A.

EVEN a superficial study of human history shows that in ancient times at a particular stage of social evolution the women were denied freedom. In Oriental civilizations like the civilization of Egypt or that of Babylonia or Assyria the women had no status at all. Even in Athens where in the ancient age direct democracy and humanist culture flourished a wife "always remained more or less a prisoner" (*Early European History* by Webster). Without permission of the elders she could not go out. She had to live the life of confinement in a particular quarter of the house which was specially meant for the women. In Rome the wife had no legal rights. The husband could "sell her into slavery or divorce her at will" (Webster). It was the Roman philosopher Cato who said, "If the world were only free from women, men would not be without the converse of the gods." In India although the position of women in the early Vedic period was indeed high still in the later Vedic period the deterioration of her status went so far that she was classed with dice and wine, as one of the three chief evils. (*Maitrayani Samhita, III 6. 3.*). Dr. R, C. Mazumdar in his *Ancient Indian History and Civilization* remarks, "Strangest of all, women who once even composed Vedic hymns were not allowed to study the Vedas and perform sacrificial rites." Without multiplying instances it can safely be asserted that the degeneration of the status of women at a particular stage of social evolution is a general feature of the history of mankind in general. This degeneration continued for a long time. Even Rousseau, the harbinger of democracy in the West, thought that women have no role to play outside the home and therefore although Emile was given a very wide education Sophie was given instruction only in wifehood and motherhood.

SOCIAL REFORMS

The liberation of women from this social degeneration is a feature of modern history. In Europe—rather in Western Europe—the growth of the ideals of humanism and individualism and the rise of the spirit of human dignity and equality ultimately gave birth to a movement for female emancipation i which many persons, philosophers and poets, ration alists and romanticists, played important roles. Ther is no doubt that the economic hanges consequen upon the Industrial Revolution facilitated this move ment. As India was brought under the British con trol, India, particularly Bengal, at the initial stag felt the impact of all movements that were going o in England and Europe including the movement fo female emancipation. Bengal's contact with Wester history, literature and social philosophies gave ri to a galaxy of luminaries in the country wh tried t introduce progressive social reforms in the stagnan society of ours. In this respect the names of person like Raja Rammohun Roy, Keshab Chandra Sen an Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar are written in letters o gold. They tried to bring about an all-round ameli oration in the condition of the women of our countr and so they raised their voice against evils like Sat polygamy, Kulinism and child marriage and advo cated female education, widow remarriage and othe necessary reforms. As a result, a number of educa ted women in our country gradually came out of th purdah and began to take interest in social and poli tical affairs. It is, however, worth mentioning her that the new economy set up in India by the British the political parties and movements and nationa literature contributed much towards bringing abou the emancipation of our women from the fetters o the past. It is however true that some advocates o female emancipation in our country like Swam Vivekananda and Dayananda Saraswati of the Ary Samaj were inspired by the Vedic ideal and not direct ly and primarily by the Western influence. But th opponents of female emancipation like Raja Radh Kanta Dev also drew their inspiration from India past. In fact, the female emancipation movemen was inspired by the humanist culture of entire man kind and not simply by Eastern or Western influence

RAPID STRIDES

The movement for female emancipation in th country had made rapid strides after the achievemen of national independence. The Constitution ha given us equal rights with men including the righ of franchise to win which our sisters in the Europea countries had to wage long struggles. Legislation ha

given us a share in the father's property, has made polygamy punishable and divorce permissible under certain—though not easy—conditions Today in our country we find numerous girls in schools, colleges and universities; they are in various offices, legislatures, cabinets and even in the UNO. The movement has made considerable progress.

It would be a fatal mistake to feel complacency at the progress made by the women of our country. The movement is to be extended, deepened and should be given a new orientation.

First, the vast majority of women still remains uneducated, steeped in superstition and wedded to the old orthodox way of life. A simple glance at the village women will convince us that emancipation movement has affected only the fringe of our womenfolk.

Secondly, there is no reason to believe that opposition to female emancipation is dead. In the Report of the Secondary Education Commission—briefly known as Mudaliar Commission—it is said that in our country on the question of women's education "one view is that the only proper place for a woman is the home and that the education of girls will, therefore have to be considerably different from that of boys. Such persons may admit with reluctance that in these hard times, some women have to earn their living, but in their heart of hearts, they deplore this fact and consider that training for any profession should be regarded as of minor importance in comparison to the training for home-keeping." This is quoted simply because this opinion is still very strong in our country and is shared by highly educated persons. If the view that "the only proper place for a woman is the home" (here 'home' in fact stands mainly for kitchen) is admitted, female emancipation movement is defeated. To-day opposition to female emancipation has taken new forms. The purdah system is of course no longer advocated, but many are loud in criticising the dress put on by some modern and educated women. For man dress and style are matters of individual taste but the same concession is not given to the women.

SUPERFICIAL PROGRESS

Thirdly, much of the progress attained by the women of our country is superficial. Legislation and Constitution alone cannot make anyone free. We have got the right of franchise but how many of us think of it seriously? Our legislations about women seem to be more progressive than the outlook and attitude of even the educated women of our country. To make the spirit of the legislation real and effective it is necessary to bring about progressive change in the outlook of our women. But unfortunately there is no movement among the women to bring this about.

Fourthly, in many cases the education of women is not reflected in their way of life. I have seen graduate mothers beating their children exactly like uneducated and illiterate mothers. I have seen highly educated women (in the sense of holding the degree) who scarcely read even newspapers. If they read anything at all, they go through cinema journals only. My experience is that the educated boys keep much more information about the world than the girls with the same education. No doubt there are exceptions but, alas, only too few.

EVIL OF DOWRY

Fifthly, even to-day the parents prefer sons to daughters. For her food, dress, health, education and above all, for her dowry the parents are to spend huge amount of money for a daughter. And at last the daughter will go to her father-in-law's house and the parents can expect nothing from her. But the son will feed and look after the parents in their old age and also bring a pretty daughter-in-law perhaps with a heavy dowry. If the daughters are given a share in father's property why should they not take the responsibility of helping their parents also in their old age and distress? This will require a change in our social customs and conventions which is likely to be opposed by interested parties. The daughter will continue to remain unwelcome so long as the parents are to give a huge dowry to her. The remedy lies in revolutionising our marriage institution on the pattern of the Western system. The dowry stigma will be solved only when boys and girls are allowed to select their own partners in life. This requires free mixing which is still a taboo in our society. Free mixing will be possible only when we take a sober and rational attitude towards the sex problem instead of making it a mysterious and tantalising object. To make this possible what is necessary is education. As a matter of fact, scientific education in sexology is a part of the female emancipation movement. But this side of the movement has made very little progress in our society.

EDUCATED WOMEN'S ROLE

(Continued From Page 151)

the first and foremost duties that she owes to the State as a good citizen. It is healthy mothers only that can produce healthy offspring. So the health of mothers should be a matter of supreme concern with those who are at the helm of affairs in each State. Every expectant mother needs a good deal of prenatal care. After the birth of a baby, too, the health of the mother should be properly looked after. The ignorance and superstition of illiterate women are responsible to a great extent, for the high percentage of infant mortality in our country. So the need of setting up an adequate number of maternity and child welfare centres throughout the country cannot be stressed too highly. A sufficient number of trained women workers, nurses and lady health visitors should go round the houses of a village for the purpose of examining the health of the expectant mothers regularly and giving them necessary instructions as to how to take proper care of their own health before and after the birth of a baby. Ignorant mothers hardly know how to look after their babies, what common disease they are generally susceptible to, what the symptoms of those are, and what preventive and remedial measures are to be adopted for the same. Even today there is a dearth of qualified lady doctors, trained nurses, and midwives in the rural areas of the country. In this field too, the educated women of India have got ample scope for work.

In this short article it is hardly possible to discuss exhaustively as to how the educated women of India can help men in building up a better and healthier country. An attempt has only been made to focus the attention of the educated public on some of the most pressing social problems of India, to the solution of which the educated women of the day can contribute their share. Perhaps it is needless to reiterate that in social service it is the sincerity of purpose that counts more than anything else. So a social worker has got to be one of those, whose lot she wants to ameliorate. All our schemes of social uplift are foredoomed to failure, if the proper missionary spirit on the part of the workers is lacking. Our dream of building up a new and better India can hardly be realized, until and unless the condition of its innumerable villages, neglected so far, is improved on proper lines.

INDIA AFTER FREEDOM

By LOTIKA GHOSE B.Litt (Oxon) Dip-in-Ed (Oxon)

A decade and a year have passed since India attained freedom from foreign rule, but discontent, want, agitations continue. And yet a neutral observer will not say that this is due to the want of good will of our senior statesmen who are at the helm of affairs. Where then lies the failure? The failure lies in confusions, in the desire to maintain the status quo and yet speak in terms of radical change,—in the refusal to change the machinery and the ways of administration not meant to quickly bring about changes,—in the desire to talk in one way and act in another, to legislate for reforms but not to meet their consequences, to plan without reference to what is required for their implementation. In what follows an attempt has been made to examine where lie the confusions and their consequences.

THE POLITICAL ARENA

Our political malaise is really a malaise of maladjustments and confusions, of subconscious greeds, and futile excitements. Our political confusions are reflected in our Constitution, in our administration, our planning. Our subconscious greeds lead to divisions and feuds that can only end in disruption, if not anarchy. Our political emotions appear as a submerged rumbling discontent or are exhausted in futile excitement and abuse. Those deeper urges which can be awakened by a sincere one-pointed idealism based on well-ordered thought and higher emotion are entirely absent from the political sphere. Whilst our Constitution oscillates between a centralised constitutional monarchy, in which the elected President replaces the hereditary monarch, and a federal form of Republican Government we have started talking of socialism and a socialistic pattern of society which diverges entirely from the democratic set-up of the Indian Constitution. Whilst in the British Parliamentary system which India has adopted, the Opposition has a constructive part to play and is an essential element in shaping national policies, the Opposition in the Indian legislatures due to their exclusion from the inner councils of the governing majority are reduced to an irresponsible and frustrated body of men trailing behind them a gaseous discontent which is saved from ignition due to exhaustion in stray acts of political indiscipline (law-breaking), endless processions and unthinking slogan-shouting. Again, it is becoming difficult to shield from the common eye the fact that the majority of men and women in the ruling party are as frustrated and futile as the men and women of the opposing minority. A single man or a small group rules both in the Centre and the States. These repressions are bound to lead to unreconciled contradictions and maladjustments in the body politic which may lead to a political frenzy and even civil war, as soon as the pressure at the top either gives way or is removed, and foreign nations will not be wanting to fish in these troubled waters. It is essential, therefore, that these political confusions be cleared and India take a firm stand on the Gandhian or any other ideology which is in tune with India's spirit as well as modern times and then radically amend its Constitution, its parliamentary forms and usages, its administrative machinery; its civil and criminal code, and channelise and direct the national energies, urges, emotions and thoughts so that there will be a sense not of frustration but fulfilment.

THE ECONOMIC FIELD

Our political confusions are reflected with more acute and dangerous repercussions in the economic field. Our flirtation with both capitalism and socialism creates uncertainty and difficulty in planning for existing industries in the private sector. With the sword of Damocles hanging over their heads industrialists cannot be blamed if they are unwilling to curtail present gains for the sake of future developments. Slow and steady expansion by industrialists will be replaced by quick unsound expansion into industrial magnatehood, through manipulations of the stock exchange. The direct and indirect taxations on industrialists also are likely to kill initiative of honest industrialists. On the other hand, the social benefits promised through the adoption of Socialism as an ideal by the ruling party demands the socialisation of industry and sharing the resources of the country by the people as a whole. Again there is no clear thinking in the matter of the importance to be laid on agriculture and cottage industries on the one hand and the rapidity with which the country is to be industrialised. Our race to catch up with the rich and highly industrialised nations of the West without reference to our resources, our inexperience, our backwardness in scientific and technical education and our lethargy have created an imbalance due to which the suffering of the common man for whom these benefits are supposed to be planned has become intolerable. Though right-thinking men and women do not doubt the good intentions of leaders like Pandit Nehru and a good number of the senior statesmen, their lack of clear thinking and realistic planning has created a situation of spiralling prices without compensatory rise in income levels or provision of employment which has put an impossible tax on their faith on, and patience with the present leadership. The complex industrial pattern of the West was not built in a day nor with the resources of a single country, for most of these countries not only exploited countries conquered by them but went through a phase of exploitation of the masses of their own country which is unthinkable today. If Russia attained a phenomenal growth in technical, industrial and scientific development in a few decades what other countries took more than two centuries to attain it has done so through a ruthlessness and absolutism which India is not prepared to imitate. One also wonders whether all the monetary indebtedness which the Indian people are being subjected to will pay in the end, in the face of the fast changes which applied science is bringing about, so that machineries and armaments take not a twelve-month to become back-dated. The perfection of the machine will more and more take the bread out of the mouth of workers, so that the problem of employment will require ever new solution. In the face of all this one

wonders would it not have been better for India in these first years of freedom to have spent all its energy on resuscitating its land, intensifying its agricultural production, digging canals, building roads, through the manual labour of its teeming millions, concentrating on small scale and cottage industries, enlarging but keeping the pattern of its hutments, keeping the simplicity of life of its people, their simple faith and moral virtues, their creative pleasure in their own folk dance, song and drama, bringing prosperity through co-operative ownership and endeavour in production and marketing—in fact building the India of Mahatma's dream. Science and technical knowledge should be harnessed not to break the simple pattern of India's life but to perfect it, making each small self-sufficient unit prosperous and beautiful, harnessing the machine to work for men and not making men work for the machine. The emphasis should be laid on work and food which brings health and comfort and not on wealth which brings luxury and artificiality. In our economic policy we have laid the emphasis on wrong things.

THE SOCIAL PATTERN

If there has been confused thinking in the political and economic field there has been little or no thinking about the social pattern we desire to set up. What reforms have been made into laws are to a large extent negative, in the sense that they will help in breaking the existing social pattern. The caste system and joint family which formed the stable basis of Hindu life are fast breaking down. The village communities and townships which were their physical habitat are also changing their form and shape. The social disciplines imposed by both have gone. The individual family, the marriage tie is all that remains to give some sort of security to the individual and form some sort of foundation for the social pattern. Marriage has lost its sacrosanct character subject to being snapped at any moment when sexual fidelity (a most unstable factor in man's present stage of vital development) becomes errant. Luckily for the masses of India, the old setting has changed but little, and even in the case of the progressive few, old social pressures remain and it may be hoped that some sort of stable social pattern will be evolved in which the State or community will take care of the individual at every stage, giving the child the care and education which is at present given to it by its parents, the adult employment and care when ill or disabled, the old the support which their children give them now. It is necessary that as a community we should be conscious of the changing social pattern which we are creating and for the State to realise the ultimate significance of its law-making. Though conservative influences will work for some time to come to maintain the old status quo, with the fast-disappearing moral and religious foundations of life, which our secular education is bound to bring about, with the emancipation of woman, her economic freedom, disrupted marriages will be the order of the day. In the new world of which India must be a part, there can be no place for feudalistic social patterns like the joint family system, nor the monopolistic pattern of the present-day family unit with *its imposed chastity for both husband and wife.* As our industries, our farms, our trade and commerce take more and more the co-operative and communal pattern, our social institutions will have to fall into line with them. Women like men will serve not only their family but the community and learn to think on community lines, the creche, the nursery, the primary, the secondary schools taking care of children. In such a society marriages are bound to be free partnerships based on common interests and congenial temperaments, in which sex will not play a primary part. Our progressive women should understand that they cannot have the cake and eat it too. Either marriages must be social institutions where the personal factors must be minimised in which it will have either socially or religiously a sacrosanct character, the two terms in the word Dharma being interchangeable, or entirely lose its unbreakable nature, being a free association (not monopoly) in which marriages are easily dissoluble, the State taking the responsibilities which the individuals formerly took with regard to children and dependents. Having taken the decision, successfully enforced on the nation, to give the individual the right to break the marriage tie, to give woman property rights, equality in work and education, they should not stop but create the new pattern of society, in which broken marriages and broken homes will not cause dislocation and destitution for children and aged parents and dependents, who found security in the unbreakable homes of their parents or grown-up children, in which newer and saner moral values will rule adjusted to modern psychology and the new social pattern. Working women, even when they are poor, should have some institution like the creche, scientifically organised, where they can without anxiety leave their children, residential schools or non-residential schools where the children can remain the whole day to study and play and have nourishing diet. Above all, the State should be responsible for providing work for every adult or teenager leaving school and not going up for higher education. Our progressive women and the statesmen who support them should take a full view of the total reactions and the new needs and be courageous enough to go forward in a total and not piecemeal way. Without a clear view of the future society they want to build up negative social reforms do more harm than good.

The same confusions added to a total want of sense of reality actuate our educational set-up and reforms. All our thinking seems incapable of taking anything but an academic turn. We think of our children in terms of the children of highly materially and scientifically advanced countries in which all parents are educated. No doubt gifted children and children showing a high intelligence quotient may be carefully trained in residential institutions of a higher type, but we must realise that our average must be of a far lower grade than the average of Western countries where the whole environment helps the child to attain the higher standard. The school and books are not the only educating factors in a child's life. As such Mahatma Gandhi's basic education with its stress on simplicity, character training, hard physical work which still exists in the Bolorampur and other Gandhian centres would certainly lay the proper foundation for the education of our children, the children of the ninety per cent of the masses for which Government should cater. Some correctives to this system might be introduced by introduction of the fine arts, but these should not be artificially grafted but be a natural growth. The most important factor is the men and women in charge of these institutions. One has only to visit Baigachi and Bolorampur to see the difference. The former is an artificial plant, the other has taken firm root in the soil. The most important factor in the training of the basic school teacher is the careful creation of the outlook, the temperament, the psychology of the teacher. Unfortunately, the outputs of our present-day secondary schools are totally unfit to be trained as teachers of basic schools. Only the output of institutions such as the higher basic school at Bolorampur and similar institutions are really fitted for such posts. Personally, I think that the contemplated changes in our secondary school

are desirable in so far as they come from a realisation that all children are not fit for a purely academic education. But in a poor country like India, detaining children for several years in secondary schools instead of letting them go on to take more practical training in industrial, agricultural and other types of schools which give some academic education in addition, according to the need of the particular type of school and a more all round education, is unrealistic and uneconomical. Somehow our educationists cannot think except in terms of the educational needs and set-up of the middle-classes. The immediate need is to diversify the types of schools so that offtakes at various levels after the primary stage can be channelised into them, leaving only those really fitted for academic education to finish up at the higher secondary stage.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

As far as University education is concerned certain fallacies must be removed from our minds. In the first place in every country University education is a privilege restricted to those who are intellectually fit for it and who have properly used their opportunities at the secondary stage. In a poor country like India which has not yet been able to introduce universal free primary education for want of funds it is not obligatory on Government to spend large sums of money for providing college education for the large number of high school students who scrape through their examinations somehow. If the present process of cheapening University education goes on we might as well bid good-bye to all high standards of scholarly attainments. The gates of our Universities should be jealously guarded so that high standards can be maintained. The dearth of qualified teachers in the colleges is due to an artificial inflation of student population in our colleges leading to a multiplication of colleges or undesirable increase in the size of existing colleges. The money that should be spent for housing and improving libraries, giving further training and wider outlook to University teachers by sending them if necessary to foreign countries, making laboratories more efficient to impart a higher standard of scientific education, is now being spent on brick and mortar for housing an ever larger proportion of college students and recruiting and maintaining teachers who are below standard to teach them. If we lower the standard of University education and research the whole standard of education will go down. The products of our Universities should not crowd the offices as clerks, but should man the learned professions, the higher ranks of the Civil Services, of the teaching profession, be the executive of Commerce and Industry, be our legislators, lawyers, doctors etc. By lowering the standard of our Universities, the whole thinking and guiding machinery of the country will be lowered. The process of lowering is already apparent in lack of efficiency and lack of initiative and responsibility.

THE BACKGROUND

The word Dharma has been both loosely understood and translated. The stability of Hindu society was due to its being based on Dharma, that unifying force in life which is an antidote to disruption. With the impact of Western civilisation and science this stable basis of Indian life has been disturbed. It is not a question of old institutions being replaced by new, of customs and manners changing, but the disintegrating of basic values. There was much that was *tamasic,* inert, in Indian life, much that was dark and unlit, but there was not that instability, the restlessness, the living from moment to moment without a unifying motive except what is outwardly supplied by one's occupation, the agnosticism, the scepticism, the egoism which characterise the life of the West. We are used to the term materialistic applied for the West and idealistic or spiritual used for India. But these terms have been used with so little relation to reality that they have become useless. The westerner coming to India is shocked at the low standards of Indian living conditions. But he does not realise or acknowledge that these standards are due to centuries of internal and external exploitation which has impoverished the Indian masses. It is hoped that these standards will be raised and replaced by higher and more healthy standards, but what is alarming is the encroachment of the superficiality, the cheapness, the vulgarity of Western life, reflected in Western films, much of modern western literature, above all in Western values of life. We may add to this an over-mastering egoism which is pervading every sphere of our life, which according to Indian values is the *rakshasha vritti,* always unsatisfied, crying for more and more, power, wealth, the bodies of women. It has sometimes been pointed out that both the Vedic hymns and Chandi contain prayers for the material things in life. Hinduism unlike Buddhism has not looked away from life. It is not a monastic religion. Apart from the fact that the Vedic hymns and Chandi have an esoteric significance far removed from the outward meaning, the Hindu view of life has not rejected life and action but have desired to transform both through sacrifice and surrender. It has not denied that riches, prosperity and enjoyment are desirable things but they become undesirable when selfishly and egoistically enjoyed or when they debar progress towards perfection. It is not claimed that Indians as human beings are any better than their Western counterparts, for the unregenerate nature of man clings to us all, but the calmness, the resignation, the patience, the ability to suffer are almost universal in the Hindu temperament unspoilt by Western influence. Indians have not taken as their ideal or followed men who have attained a material goal but saints and sages and teachers of spiritual truths. It was "the half-naked Fakir of India" with his creed of *Ahimsa* and weapon of Satyagraha who could rouse the dormant masses of India where high intellects had failed. The promised land was "Ram-rajya" where prosperity and goodness would reign, not an empty and futile democracy and socialism which had no meaning for them and which has only meant hungry stomachs, unemployment and rising prices. We may earn foreign approbation by our advocacy of Pancha-Shila, but a godless constitution, a godless education, political techniques and social reforms borrowed from the West and imposed from above, will sap those values, that strength of character and spiritual maturity which India has attained and retained through centuries. Should a complete evaluation be taken, freedom for us has had a negative rather than a positive value. Freedom from foreign rule and foreign exploitation has been gained, but it has not given prosperity to the masses, established the rule of goodness which was promised or removed the slavery of foreign modes of thinking, leaving us free to pursue our own dharma and live in our own way.

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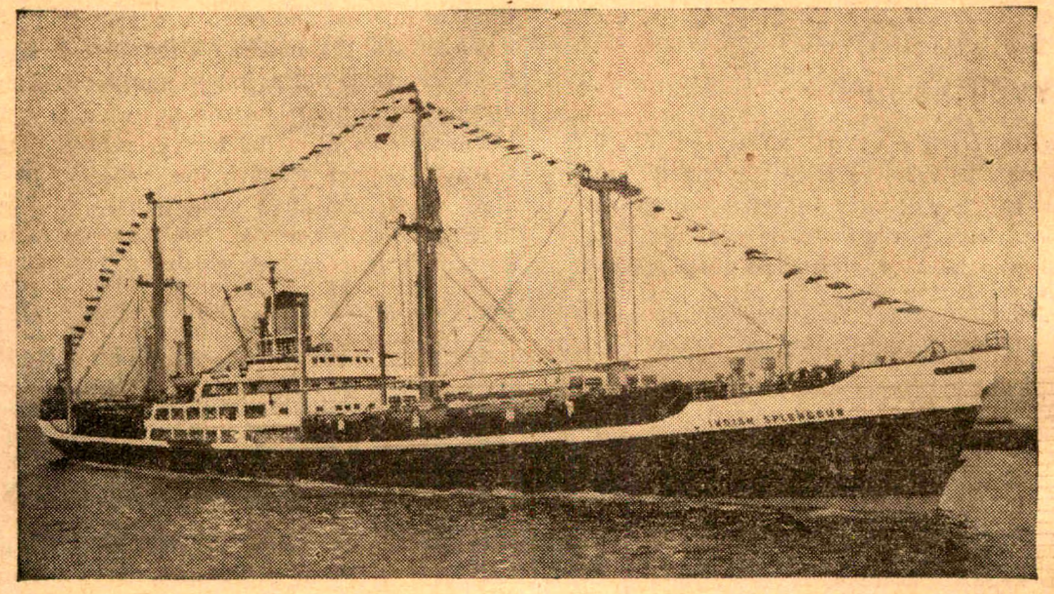

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WHY PHILOSOPHY?

By DR. ROMA CHAUDHURI,

M.A., D.Phil. (Oxon), F.A.S. Principal, Lady Brabourne College, Calcutta.

THE fundamental desire of life, Psychology tells us, is a Desire for Pleasure, — for self-preservation, self-expansion, self-glorification. In this respect, we are told, Man and Animal are one and the same; and that is why, all the resources of "rational animals," all the fruits of their rationality, are being increasingly employed for satisfying the cravings of the animal side of their nature and increasing their Creature Comfort. In this way, all the numerous modern Arts and Crafts, all the breath-taking scientific discoveries have one end in view: Physical Well-being, Material Prosperity.

But has not the time come as yet to ask: "Quo Vadis" — whither goest thou, O blind and blundering Man? If science were the panacea for all evils and forerunners of El Dorado on earth, then, surely, this Twentieth Century of "Atom Bombs," "Sputniks" and what not would have made for twenty thousand degrees of more pleasure and more security than prevalent in those turbulent days, heralding the holy advent of the Prince of Peace. But days have come and days have gone, the Key to the Garden of Eden is still being searched, generation after generation, with futile energy and unquenchable thirst.

IT STEPS IN AS IT MUST

Here steps in Philosophy—the eternally ignored yet eternally loved "branch" of human study. But is it really a "branch", or rather the "trunk" from which hang all other "branches" of study, like Science and Art and Religion? For, the "root" is the same — the same fundamental desire for Pleasure — for self-preservation, self-expansion, self-glorification. Still, what Philosophy can achieve, others cannot, for the simple reason that it is Philosophy alone, amongst all the rest, that is able to understand the real meaning of the fundamental, inner Drive that is urging mankind to a never-ceasing quest for Pleasure and Perfection, as mentioned above. In fact, what does "Pleasure" mean? It means that which "pleases" the individual, and really speaking, the individual is not pleased until and unless his total personality is pleased — his real self is preserved, inner Life expanded, ultimate dignity glorified. This kind of Pleasure, this kind of self-preservation, self-expansion, self-glorification, alone is the Eternal Goal of Man—mere physical pleasure, mere preservation of animal existence, expansion of material needs and glorification of earthly gains have ever failed, as we all know to our bitter cost, to bring lasting pleasure and perfection, peace and progress to mankind, throughout the ages.

THE SUBLIME CONCEPT

That is why, Philosophy has propounded the sublime theory of Spiritual Pleasure, Spiritual Preservation, Expansion and Glorification. In Indian Philosophy, accordingly, we have the supreme concept of "Ananda," of Bliss, as a conglomeration of all the above essential factors of human striving and human achievement, viz: "Sadhana and Moksha." What does "Ananda or Bliss" imply? It implies "Jnana" or Full Knowledge on the cognitive side, and "Sakti" or Full Power on the conative side, together with the inner core of "Prema" or Full Love on the side of feeling. This Knowledge is not discursive thinking, but a Universal Vision of Truth; this "Power" is not selfish hankering, but a magnanimous self-dedication to the cause of all; this "Love" is not narrow liking, but a profound affinity with and affection for all. Thus, far above the empirical and psychological processes of thinking, feeling and willing, through which we are constantly running after "Sukha" or Worldly Pleasure, there shines forth "Ananda" or Spiritual Bliss, as the result of this fullest expansion of all the sides of our nature—Cognitive, Conative, Affective. And such an "Ananda" alone can give us real happiness, peace and perfection.

NO BARREN STUDY

In this lies the answer to that fundamental question: "Why Philosophy"? For, Philosophy, as commonly misunderstood, is not a purely speculative study, having no connection with the actual, practical everyday life of ours — something that sends forth its distant rays from the far, far off horizon, beyond the span of the Heaven and the Earth, something that enlightens the doubt-darkened minds of a handful of saints and sages, scholars and dreamers of idle dreams; something that is useful for a very few, and that, too, purely from the theoretical point of view, not practical; from the point of view of mere knowing not from that of actual achieving. Thus, ordinarily, Philosophy has been very wrongly stigmatised as an absolutely barren study; "A route of many roads leading from nowhere to nothing" But the fact is that, as propounded most clearly in Indian Philosophy amongst all the rest, Philosophy enables us to attain the highest end of human life, viz: Moksha

or Mukti — Salvation, Emancipation, Release. From what? From pains and sufferings that eternally poison the lives of living beings on earth, so long as they remain confined within their narrow, selfish, transitory animal existence. From this standpoint, incontrovertible indeed are the pessimistic Buddhist maxims: "Everything is sorrow, sorrow", "Everything is mortal, mortal". But from the universal standpoint of Philosophy, nothing can ever be painful or sorrowful ever on earth. "Expand your vision, broaden your hearts", says the philosopher, "and you will see 'Ananda' manifest everywhere, feel the pulse of the entire beautiful Universe as throbbing joyfully in Unison with the joyous heart-beats of that All-Joyous and All-Beautiful Being, who has been variously described in the Upanisads as 'Ananda,' 'Rasa', 'Madhu', 'Amrita'—Bliss, Juice, Honey, Nectar and the like and from whom alone does the whole universe proceed." That is why, according to our Upanisads, all beings spring out of "Ananda" or Bliss during "Sristi" or Creation, remain in the same "Ananda" or Bliss during "Sthiti" or Preservation, and return to the very same "Ananda" or Bliss during "Pralaya" or Destruction. Thus, "Ananda" or Bliss is the Beginning and the End, the Be-all and the End-all, the Root and the Fruit of the whole universe eternally.

NOT FOR IDLE LOTUS-EATERS

And, as Philosophy alone enables us to realise this "Ananda" or Pure and or Perfect, and Profound Bliss in our own lives, in the life of mankind, in the life of the whole universe, it is essential for all, not only for a few so-called idle lotus-eaters, roaming in the clouds. Thus, Indian Philosophy does not in any way ignore the fundamental, psychological cravings of Man; what it does is to point out that such cravings cannot be really for "Sukha" or physical Pleasure, but only for "Ananda" or Spiritual Bliss. This is the higher, spiritual Hedonism of Indian Philosophy according to which nothing can ever be of any worth to any one at any time, unless it brings about real fulfilment and satisfaction. Hence, as "A thing of Beauty is a Joy for ever", this fulfilment and satisfaction or joy can result only if the human life and mundane world be made things of Beauty Poised and Proportionate, Pure and Perfect. But, what else but Philosophy can achieve this supreme essential end?

WEAKNESS OF SCIENCE

Consider another thing. The Modern World is a World of Science, — but one which, alas! has at the same time, proved the supreme strength as well as the inherent weakness of Man as the Maker of a New Age. The strength lies in his infinite intellectual Potentialities, the weakness lies in his short-sighted Ethical deficiencies. Hence, it is an age of ever-rising new hopes and ever-following new disappointments. For, if there be no happy union between "Knowledge" and "Virtue", if correct Knowing does not end in correct Doing, how can real Progress, real Perfection, real Happiness result?

Most unfortunately for us Science, the Symbol and the Sustenance of the present World, has failed to achieve this end: and from all clear signs, it will not be able to do so in the near future as well. Hence, what hope have we but Philosophy? Philosophy aims at two things most needed now: "Vision" and "Mission" — Vision of Truth, of the real nature of things, from the theoretical side: and Mission of Universal Welfare, of Service and Sacrifice, Seva and Tyaga, from the practical side. That is why, in Indian Philosophy, the Philosopher is most beautifully and appropriately designated as a "Risi" or "Drasta," a "Seer", one who is able to see the Truth.

THE REAL SEER

And, who is a real Seer? Our scriptures in one voice have told us *"Atmavat Sarva-bhutesu Ya Pasyati Sa Pasyati"*.

"He alone is a Seer who sees everything as his own self".

To a Seer, there is no distinction between Man and Man; he feels himself to be identical with all; he realises the fundamental ethical maxim so beautifully expressed in our Upanisads.

"He who sees the Atman, the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self, does not hate any one" —

And, so forcefully echoed in the present Era in the thunderous voice of Swami Vivekananda, the Symbol of Awakened India — "Not one can be happy until all are happy. If you hurt any one, you hurt yourself, for, You and Your brother are one!"

DUTY OF BEING HAPPY

Thus, this very brief survey will go to show that the happiness of the Individual, the happiness of Society, the happiness of Mankind, and the happiness of the Universe — all essentially depend on this Philosophical Outlook which need be cultivated not only by scholars and saints, but more specially by scientists and politicians of today. It has been rightly said, "There is no duty we so much under-rate as the duty of being happy".

In this age of constant strifes and tension, when World War looms over the horizon at every nook and corner, when the Man in the Street seems to have lost any hope for a happy and peaceful existence, when fear and frustration are rampant everywhere to an extent as and ever known before, let us all in right earnest, strive to do this great Duty of being "happy", in the proper sense of the term, — by being happy in the happiness of all, by self-dedication which alone can lead to self-fulfilment.

"You could be happy if you would,
Life's really what you make it!"

Towards Family Planning in India

By B. M. SINGHI

Vice-President, Family Planning Association Of India

IT will surprise many that the first Government birth control clinics in the world were Indian. Dr. Marie Stopes has said, "Founded in the year 1930 the only State-initiated and State-supported clinics in the world are those run by the Government of Mysore in India". (i) The resolution of the Mysore Government by which these clinics were established stated that "such advice (on birth control) will be given by lady medical officers only to married women who require it on considerations of health or for *economic reasons*". It is well known that Mrs. Margaret Sanger, who has been aptly called the Mother of Planned Parenthood had to wage a long war in the United States before the right of women to seek advice and aid for birth control for economic reasons was recognised by the Government in that country. Considering this, the afore-mentioned decision of the Government of Mysore was indeed a great pioneering move.

It seems that the signs of rapid growth of population in the country from 1921 onward had attracted the attention of social workers in the field during that period and the opening of the clinics referred to only showed Government's realisation of the situation which was fast developing. On a voluntary basis, the first clinic was started in Poona in 1921 by Prof. R. D. Karve, son of the illustrious Dondo Karve (India's Pestalozzi). In 1922, the First International Birth Control Conference was held in London and was attended by Prof. Ahluwalia Gopalji and Prof. P. D. Shastri from India.

HOW TAGORE TAKES IT

On 30th September 1925, Rabindranath Tagore wrote in his letter to Mrs. Margaret Sanger that, "In a hunger-stricken country like India it is a cruel crime thoughtlessly to bring more children to existence than could properly be taken care of, causing endless suffering to them and imposing a degrading condition upon the whole family".

He wrote further in the same letter opining that "the Birth Control movement is a great movement not only because it will save women from enforced and undesirable maternity, but because it will help the cause of peace by lessening the number of surplus population of a country, scrambling for food and space outside its own rightful limits. (ii)

What Tagore, with a keen insight into the life of the people, had visualised about India, had also been thought by other thinkers in other lands. The truth of Malthusian prediction made in 1798 had now come to be realised and great social thinkers all over the world had begun to consider the question of population with the seriousness it had never received before.

The great economist John Maynard Keynes, who affected the climate of social thinking everywhere throughout the past generation, wrote in 1920, "The time has already come when each country needs a considered national policy about what size of population, whether large or smaller than at present, or the same, is more expedient. And having settled this policy, we must take steps to carry it into operation." (iii) Malthus was re-told. In fact, a Neo-Malthusian League was founded in London and two of its Vice-Presidents were Indians—P. Murugesa Mudaliar and Muthia Naidu.

GANDHIJI ADVISES SELF-CONTROL

So, in the decade 1921-31 the danger of rapid growth in population had assumed great importance in India as elsewhere in the world and of all the

(i) "Contraception: Its Theory, History and Practice" by Dr. Marie Stopes, page 413.

(ii) "My Fight for Birth Control" by Margaret Sanger, pp. 289.

(iii) "The Economic Consequences of the Peace" by J. M. Keynes (London, 1920) Page 8.

deliberations, on either political or social platform, the need to restrict the increase in population was stressed. However, notwithstanding the realisation of the seriousness of problem, little was done or could be done in practical way in this direction. Like all other movements for social reform in the country, the campaign for population control through contraception was met with by severe opposition from the social and religious forces who were too dogmatic to accept the realities of the situation which demanded a radical change in our outlook. About 1925, Mahatma Gandhi, who was in this period the greatest dominant personality on the whole Indian scene, whether social, political or economic, attacked modern contraceptives by proclaiming that the only method of birth control—apparently the Mahatma was not opposed to it *per se* — should be self-control. (i)

However, notwithstanding the opposition from the Mahatma, a Neo-Malthusian League was started in South India in 1928 by Sir Vepa Ramesam. In 1929, Dr. A. P. Pillay opened his "Wives' Clinic" in Sholapur and the same year the Poona Birth Control League came into being. In 1931, Dr. Pillay came to Bombay and started a model centre where doctors could be trained in contraceptive techniques. In 1935, Mrs. Margaret Sanger came to India at the invitation of the All India Women's Conference and it was arranged for her to meet Mahatma Gandhi at Wardha. In the words of Mrs. Sanger herself, "enough for me to say that neither of us convinced the other that we were wrong. Gandhi's conclusions, however, were interesting. He said, that India was then (in 1935) over-populated. "It was this condition of overpopulation that enslaved her. that four children should be the limit born to a couple". The moral and religious dogmatism strengthened by the support of Mahatma Gandhi continued to sway the minds of the people, but not for long. The pressure of population, which continued with the rapidity never known before in the history of this country, could not be ignored indefinitely and even those who worked in very close association with Gandhiji in the political sphere, began to realise the lesson this pressure brought home.

NEHRU & NETAJI'S VIEWS

Our Prime Minister Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, whom Gandhiji declared to be his political heir, wrote in his autobiography which was published in 1936, "If India is poor, that is the fault of her social customs, her *banias* and moneylenders and above all her enormous population.....in spite of a great deal of help received from famines, epidemics, and a high death-rate generally, the population is still overwhelming. Birth Control is proposed and I, for one, am entirely in favour of the spread of knowledge and methods of birth-control."*

Round about the same time, Shri Subhas Chandra Bose said in his presidential address to the Indian National Congress : "With regard to the long-period programme of a free India, the first problem to tackle is that of our increasing population."

Inspired by such far-sighted leadership, the Congress under the presidentship of Shri Subhas Chandra Bose sponsored a National Planning Committee of which Shri Jawaharlal Nehru was appointed to be the Chairman. This Committee discussed all aspects of a comprehensive plan for reconstruction of the country. In regard to the question of population, it said, "In the interests of social economy, family happiness and national planning, family planning and a limitation of children are essential and the State should adopt a policy to encourage these. It is desirable to lay stress as well as to spread knowledge on cheap and safe methods of birth control."

PLANNING COMMITTEE'S VIEWS

The Congress was then carrying on the struggle for emancipating the country from the foreign rule. Even while doing so, it had to place before the countrymen the picture of India as envisaged by them and also the schemes and programmes it would implement for rebuilding the nation on attainment of independence. The Report of the National Planning Committee served this purpose and it was considered, even at that time, a document of great constructive value. The Report was the fruit of labour put in by a number of economists, scientists, social thinkers and political leaders. This naturally gave weight to its conclusions. It had the blessings of leaders like Subhas Chandra Bose and Jawaharlal Nehru. This recommendation made by the National Planning Committee was in direct opposition to the views expressed and preached by Gandhiji. We do not, however, know about Gandhiji's reaction to the Committee's recommendations on this particular point.

BIRTH OF F.P.A.I.

The 1941 Census sounded further warning and the beginning of efforts were noticed in the country in the direction of organised movement for family planning. The All India Women's Conference demanded that public birth control clinics be opened all over the country. The National Council of Women and the Bombay Presidency Women's Council too, pleaded for birth control for the masses. And then came the two All-India Population Conferences which organised in their sessions a birth control section. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru successfully moved a resolution in the Council of State for the establishment of birth control clinics in 1940. The need for limitation of family and the adoption of birth control measures began to be emphasised at all discussions regarding the socio-economic development of the country. It was universally accepted that in view of the progress and advancement of the medical science it was not possible to get much "help" (as Shri Nehru had termed it) from famines, epidemics and infant mortality, etc. We saw in this period a phenomenon of decreasing death-rates and increasing birth-rates. In 1943 in Bombay, a small group of women under the leadership of Srimati Dhanwanthi Rama Rau organised a movement for having family planning clinics opened in the Municipal Corporation of Bombay. This group arranged for a speech made by Sarojini Naidu in 1944 to the City Fathers of Bombay, which helped the movement a good deal. This group formed themselves into the Family Planning Committee of Bombay, whose efforts were crowned with success when in April 1947 the Bombay Corporation opened two clinics in its maternity homes. This Bombay Committee was converted in July 1949 into the

(i) "There can be no two opinions about the necessity of birth control. But the only method handed down from ages past is self-control or *Brahmacharya*. It is an infallible sovereign remedy doing good to those who practise it. The union is meant not for pleasure, but for bringing forth progeny. And the union is criminal when the desire for progeny is absent.' ('Young India' 12-3-1925).

* "An Autobiography"—Jawaharlal Nehru (London, 1936) Page 444.

Family Planning Association of India which has been carrying on a countrywide campaign in this direction under the able and dynamic leadership of Lady Rama Rau.

POST-INDEPENDENCE PLANNING

On the attainment of independence in 1947, we had to face as an independent country the problems which ere this were not faced by us directly. In spite of putting the blame at the door of a foreign Government, we had to seek solution of the problem and take strides in different spheres of the national life in accordance with the needs of the changing situation. The question of population also came in for a much closer examination at the highest level of deliberations. When the First Five-Year Plan was formulated in 1952, it was stated therein : "The recent increase in the population of India and the pressure exercised on the limited resources of the the country have brought to the fore-front the urgency of the problem of family planning and population control.....It is necessary in the present context only to stress the fact that unless measures are initiated at this stage to bring down the birth-rate and thereby reduce the rate of population growth, a continuously increasing amount of effort on the part of the community will be used up only in maintaining existing standards of consumption..... Increasing pressure of population on natural resources (which must inevitably be limited) retards economic progress and limits seriously the rate of extension of social services, so essential to civilised existence". It further stated that "the reduction in the growth of population must be regarded as a major desideratum". Thus, planners had realised and expressed seriousness of the problem, but the measures suggested to achieve this end did not reflect the same seriousness. And the implementation of those measures showed further lack of seriousness. The First Five-Year Plan recommended a programme of family planning comprising of : (1) analysis of factors which contributed to rapid growth in the population, (2) investigation about the suitable techniques and methods of family planning, (3) ways and means of disseminating knowledge about family planning on a wide scale and (4) introduction of family planning as integral part of service in the Government hospitals and public health agencies. The Planning Commission recommended allocation of a sum of Rs. 65 lacs to be spent during the period of the plan on family planning. The Commission appointed two Committees relating to (a) policy and approach and (b) research and programme.

RHYTHM METHOD FAILS

Although recommendations made by the Planning Commission were based on progressive and scientific ideas about the problem and suffered from no inhibitions and prejudices, the implementation of the programme was not pursued with the same conviction and scientific approach. The then Health Minister of the Government of India, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur had her own inhibitions and reservations. The Government requested the World Health Organisation in 1951 to provide a planned parenthood expert for the purpose of organising a "pilot study of the rhythm or safe period method of birth control on the assumption that if this method were to prove successful on a large population basis, it would represent a simple method for dealing with Family Planning in India". Dr. Abraham Stone, who has been connected with the International Planned Parenthood Federation came to India in 1951 as such an expert and helped the Government of India to set up five centres in New Delhi, Mysore State and West Bengal. It was laid down by the Government that the question be considered in a very limited manner as the Health Minister was strongly opposed to the use of mechanical and chemical contraceptives. As Julian Huxley has said, the chief result of these projects has been "a negative one—a demonstration of the complete inadequacy of this method as main instrument of population-control." At the end of the First Five-Year Plan, it was discovered that very poor results were obtained and full amount of Rs. 65 lacs, meagre as it was, could not be utilised.

MOUNTING POPULATION PRESSURE

The pressure of population went on increasing in geometrical progression and when the Second Five-Year Plan was being drafted, it was realised that the problem of population was much more serious than it was thought hitherto and required much more significant and comprehensive efforts. Shri R. A. Gopalaswamy, Commissioner for the Census of 1951 in his report analysed the trends of population from 1891-1951 and showed how during the last 30 years population had increased from roughly 25 crores to 36 crores—increased by about 12 per cent per decade in place of 1.7 per cent per decade during the 30 years preceding 1921. He also analysed the present position and the future prospects of productivity and on a thorough study he very emphatically said, "We should realise that it is improvident on our part to permit ourselves to increase in numbers indefinitely without taking thought of how our children and our children's children are to live ; and we should resolve to put an end to this increase as soon as possible.....The task before the nation is first of all to bring out such a change in the climate of public opinion that every married couple will accept it as their duty (to themselves, to their family and to that larger family—the nation) that they should avoid improvident maternity. (i) The occurrence of improvident maternity should evoke social disapproval as any other form of anti-social self-indulgence. Consistently with this approach, it is immaterial, if, in a particular case, the pecuniary circumstances of the family or the state of health of the mother are such that further maternity may be allowed to occur and the offspring supported without much difficulty. Whether or not the individual can afford it, the nation cannot—and hence it is improvident maternity all the same." This gave food for thought to our planners and the Second Five-Year Plan stated, "The family planning programme was primarily directed to the building up of an active public opinion in favour of family planning and the promotion of family planning advice and service on the basis of existing knowledge. At the same time demographic as well as medical and biological studies were taken up. Assistance in the shape of subsidies or grants was given to States, local authorities, voluntary organisations and scientific institutions for about 115 family planning clinics and for 19 research schemes relating to biological and demographic problems. It is proposed to develop this programme further during the Second Plan."

F. P. PROGRAMME AND 2ND PLAN

The Family Planning Programme has now gone far enough to call for its further development on systematic lines, for continuous study of population problems and for a suitable Central Board for family planning and population problems. Such an organisation should be more or less autonomous in its

(i) Improvident maternity has been defined as a child-birth occurring to a mother who has already given birth to three or more children of whom at least one is alive.

working. The main constituents in the Central Board's programme will be :—

1. Extension of family planning advice and service.
2. Establishment and maintenance of a sufficient number of centres for the training of personnel.
3. Development of a broad-based programme of education in family living should include within its scope, sex education, marriage counselling and child guidance.
4. Research into biological and medical aspects of reproduction and of population problems.
5. Demographic research, including investigations of motivations in regard to family limitation as well as studies of methods of communication.
6. Inspection and supervision of the work done by different agencies, governmental and non-governmental, to which grants are made by the Central Board.
7. Evaluation and reporting of progress and
8. Establishment of a well-equipped central organisation.

It is proposed to establish clinics, one for 50,000 population, in all big cities and major towns. As regards small towns and rural areas, clinics will be opened gradually, in association with primary health units. These clinics are intended to create a general awareness of the problem and to provide advice and service. The establishment of a central training and clinical institute and a rural training unit near Bangalore are under consideration. A contraceptive testing and evaluation centre is being developed at Bombay. It is necessary that training in family planning should be imparted to all medical and nursing students. All hospitals and an increasing number of dispensaries should develop in due course a family planning service. It is also proposed to promote actively medical, biological and demographic resarch. A provision of nearly Rs. 5 crores has been made for family planning programmes. It is expected that about 300 urban and 2,000 rural clinics will be set up in the course of the Second Plan."

PROGRESS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Accordingly, a high-powered Central Board has already been set up with the Union Minister of Health as Chairman. It has been entrusted with the administration of family planning programme on a national scale. A Special Officer designated as Director of Family Planning has been appointed. Also Family Planning Boards have been formed and Family Planning Officers appointed in most of the States.

Financial assistance is being provided to State Governments, local bodies and voluntary organisations to open clinics. Such assistance covers expenditure by the clinics on salaries of the doctors, Health Visitors and social workers and also free distribution of contraceptives. The financial assistance is given on the following basis :—

	State Govt. & Local Bodies	Voluntary Organisations.
Non-recurring	100%	100%
Recurring		
1st year	80%	80%
2nd year	70%	80%
3rd year	50%	80%
4th year	30%	80%
5th year	20%	80%

Family planning programme is essentially a four pointed action programme. The tentative figures of expenditure on the four important activities are as under :—

Service	.. ..	Rs. 373.25 lacs
Education	.. ..	Rs. 50.00 lacs
Training	.. ..	Rs. 15.75 lacs
Research	.. ..	Rs. 50.00 lacs

For the training of doctors and social workers a Family Planning Training and Research Centre has been established at Bombay. A rural training centre has been developed in Ramnagaram. A Demographic Training and Research Centre has been established in Bombay and grants have been given for demographic research at the Indian Statistical Institute, Calcutta and also in the School of Economics. Delhi University. A proposal to start a demographic research centre at Trivandrum is also under consideration.

The medical and biological research is being undertaken by Indian Council of Medical Research. This research includes development of a simple foam tablet and investigations on oral contraceptives. A contraceptives testing unit has been established at the Indian Cancer Research Centre.

At the same time when all health measures envisaged by the Second Five-Year Plan come into full operation, there is every reason to expect a pronounced decline in the death-rate. Even now, the death-rate, though high by western standard, has been declining. From 31 per 1000 in 1951, it has come down to 25.5 in 1956.

The expectation of life rose from 26 a few years ago to 32 in 1951 and there is hope that it will rise to 52 or more by 1986. These figures show that instead of expecting the normal increase of five million per year, we may expect (with the life expectancy rising, the death rate falling) an addition of nearly 8 million a year to our already swollen number, unless we take steps to control them by scientific measures.

POPULATION & FOOD PROBLEM

The repercussions of the terrible increase in population are felt everywhere in the country and a general awareness is growing about the problem of population and a welcome interest is simultaneously growing in family planning as a measure to arrest the growth of population. The opposition to generally accepted scientific methods of birth control has almost died and it is no longer a taboo to speak about the subject. There are meetings, discussions, conferences, exhibitions, etc. in all parts of the country where question of population, sex, birth-control, etc. are discussed freely and frankly. There is a general acceptance of the family planning programme in the country. Even among political parties there is no difference about the need for population limitation. The acuteness of food problem, which we are facing today and which has made our foreign exchange situation terrible, also indicates towards the population problem, which in the words of Bertrand Russel is the "problem of our age". Unless we can restrict and stabilise our population, we cannot solve the problem of food. Even if all our plans, big or small for accelerating the production of foodgrains in the country succeed to the fullest extent, our population if allowed to increase at the present basis, will make it impossible for us even to maintain the present standard. In November last, the Foodgrains Enquiry Committee set up by the Government of India under the Chairmanship of Shri Ashok Mehta, emphatically stated, "For an effective solution of the food problem, not only determined and all out efforts to step up production have to be made but the high rate of increase in population has to be checked. We, therefore, urge that a nation-wide campaign for family planning enlisting the efforts and energies of social workers, particu-

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VEGETABLE RESOURCES OF THE TRIPURA STATE

By Dr. K. BISWAS M.A. Director, Medicinal Plants, West Bengal

THE Tripura State is receiving much attention from the Government of India and the public in these days owing to its peculiar geographical position as an inseparable part of West Bengal. It has much political importance too on account of its contiguity with East Pakistan. The geological structure, the plant life, the animal life, and the people of this area, though comparatively small, are varied and are of considerable interest from geological, botanical, zoological and anthropological points of view. It is adjoined to Assam on the east. Much of its culture is under the influence of Assam and Manipur State imbued with *Vaisnabism*. On the eastern side it is mainly the culture of the Bengalees and the Bengali culture spreads all over the State although the habits and customs of southern hill-tribes are more akin to the tribes inhabiting the Chittagong hill tracts. These people belong, more or less, to a primitive race and have a nomadic life eking out their existence generally on shifting cultivation known as "Jhoom". They rear goats, keep cattle and are good poultry farmers. The boundary of the Tripura State has not changed much even after the atttainment of freedom by India, but after the partition of the then Bengal with all its associated evils, many problems have cropped up which are proving a constant headache to the respective Governments.

TOPOGRAPHY & GENERAL FEATURES

This State is at present a Centrally administered State between East Pakistan and Assam. It lies between 22°56' and 24°32' N. and 91°10' and 92°22' E., with an area of 4,086 square miles. It is bounded on the north by the district of Sylhet; on the west by Tippera district and Noakhali; on the south by Noakhali; Chittagong and the Chittagong Hill Tracts; and on the east by the Lushai Hills and the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

The topography and the general features of the vegetation of the State are similar to those of the Chittagong Hill-Tracts, particularly in the south. Six principal ranges of hills, increasing in elevation towards the east, run north and south, with an average interval of 12 miles. The hills are mostly covered with dense bamboo forests with low rather moist areas interspersed with cane-brakes and thatch grass. The north-western and southern boundaries of the State do not differ materially with regard to its soil, agriculture, and population from the adjoining portions of Sylhet, Tippera, Noakhali, and Chittagong districts. Along the western border, for some miles to the north and south of the capital Agartala, the land consists of hillocks alternating with marshy valleys. These hillocks are generally selected for sites for homesteads, and the valleys have gradually been converted into rice fields.

HILLS, RIVERS & FAUNA

The principal hill ranges, beginning from the east, are the Jampai (highest points, Betling Sib, 3,200 feet and Jampai, 1,860 feet), Sakhantlang (highest point, Sakhan, 2,678 feet), Langtarai (highest point, Phengpui, 1,581 feet, and Atharamura (1,431 feet). These hills form a watershed from which the drainage pours down north by the Khowai, Dolai, Manu, Juri, and Langai, west into the Meghna by the Gumti, and south-west into the Bay of Bengal by the Fenny and Muhari. All of these rivers are navigable by 4-ton boats during the rains, and by 2-ton boats in the dry season. The Muhari, with its tributary the Selonia, and the Fenny are tidal rivers. Near the source of the Gumti is a waterfall, known as the Dumbura fall; the scenery in its neighbourhood is exceedingly picturesque.

The geological structure of the State is rather simple. The rock formation is Upper Tertiary; the plains are covered by recent alluvial deposits. The hills are clothed, in the south, with a forest very similar in appearance and composition to that of Chittagong. It is a peculiar mixture of rain forest and deciduous types and in general Malayan in character. The dominant families are :— *Laurineae, Dipterocarpeae, Lythraceae, Ternstroemiaceae, Euphorbiaceae, Leguminosae, Graminae* — mainly bamboos. The north is drier and densely covered by bamboo jungle. The thick forests which clothe the hills provide shelter for deer, wild elephants, wild boars, rhinoceros, leopards, tigers, snakes (cobras, pythons). The wild boars and pythons are common and are eaten by the Lushais.

CLIMATE, RAINFALL & CROPS

The climate is healthy and the temperature moderate. The annual rainfall averages 76 inches, of which 5 inches fall in April, 11 in May, 15 in June, 12 in July, 11 in August, and 10 in September. The earthquake of 1897 destroyed many buildings and shrines in Agartala, and raised the beds of several rivers, notably of the Manu.

The nomadic cultivation is known as "Jhoom". This shifting cultivation is practised all over the hilly region. The forest on a hill-side is clean felled. The vegetation is then burnt completely. The ashes of the vegetable debris is allowed to soak into the soil after a heavy shower of rain with the advent of the monsoon. The ground then becomes ready for cultivation. Seeds of various crops, such as, sesamum, mustard, chillies, cotton, linseed etc. are then either broadcast or sown in holes made for the purpose. Very little authentic data and statistics regarding agricul-

ture are available. The staple food is, of course, rice. In fact, rice is grown widely both in the plains and in the hill-slopes often in terraces. Other crops grown in the plains are maize, jute, tobacco, sugar-cane, papaya, banana, mustard, chillies, onions, and various other kinds of common vegetables and fruits. Recently, much improvement has been made by the Agriculture Department of the Government and a model farm has also been started. Cattle breeding and poultry farming are of high standard.

INDUSTRIES & EXPORTS

The only manufacture is cotton and silk cloth of the coarsest quality made by the Manipuri and Tippera women. The principal exports are cotton, jute, tobacco, timber, sesamum, bamboos, canes, thatching-grass, and firewood; and export duty is levied on all these articles. The imports are salt, kerosene oil, tobacco, stationery and toilet piece-goods. The chief trade centres are Agartala, Khowai, Kailasahar, Udaipur, Baisalgarh and Mohanpur; business is chiefly in the hands of fairly rich traders of Hindu Sahas.

In 1941, Shri K. C. Neogi, ex-Minister for Commerce and Industries, Government of India, who was then Adviser to the Tripura State wanted to have an idea of the vegetable wealth of the State with a view to improving the resources and utilising the same for the benefit of the people of the State of Tripura. The Tripura State was then under His Highness the Maharaja of Tripura. The late Atulananda Das, I.F.S., approached the writer for the purpose of undertaking a preliminary botanical survey of this State for which all possible help and facilities were offered by the State.

BOTANICAL SURVEY TOUR

During the summer of 1941, the late Atulananda Das and the writer made an extensive tour of this State and covered about 150 miles within a fortnight. The writer was particularly interested in the general features of the vegetation of the Jampai Range.

A large collection of plants was made at this time which were all examined and properly determined and incorporated in the then Herbarium of the Royal (now Indian) Botanic Garden, Sibpore, now the Central National Herbarium under the Government of India. A separate publication based on this collection under the title—"Common Plants of the Tripura State" is under preparation.

FLOWERS & MEDICAL PLANTS

The flora of the Tripura State bears a close similarity to that of the Chittagong Hill-Tracts. *Shorea robusta* (Sal) of poor quality, *Lagerstroemia flos-Reginae* (Jarul), *Terminalia* sp. are the most common trees. *Dipterocarpus* with its tall branchless trunk rises above the other trees and is very prominent and dominant here and there. The oil, known as "wood-oil", from the trunk of Gorjan tree is used for burning and is medicinal. It is used for gonorrhoea, leprosy and other diseases.

An examination of the plants collected reveals that about 60% of the species found in the Tripura State are of medicinal importance. The people in this State, particularly the herbalists, use these medicinal plants—various herbs, shrubs, and trees—for treatment of various ailments, rather effectively as in the interior very little modern medical help is available.

BAMBOOS: THEIR VARIOUS USES

Bamboos of the State constitute the most predominant genus found everywhere, and are profusely used for building huts and various other daily uses. The green shoots are eaten as vegetable. Out of about two dozens of species of grasses collected during our botanical studies, about half a dozen of the common species of bamboos were found in flower. The most interesting species of these bamboos is *moluccana bambusoides*. This is the species of bamboo which produces the largest seed of the world in the family of *graminae*. The fruits are like the size and shape of a full-grown apple 2-3 in. by 1-2 in. This bamboo, like others, is gregarious in habit, and when it flowers, it flowers *en masse* and then dies like other bamboos. The fruits and seeds are produced in large numbers from which new plants grow. Fruiting of *moluccana* bamboo is always welcome by the hill-tribes living in these hills, because the larger the quantity of the fruit produced, the lesser the raids from the rats in the rice fields, and naturally the villagers get bumper crop of rice. All the rats during the fruiting of this bamboo flock to the jungle of *moluccana bambusoides* and eat the fruits of this bamboo which are much liked by the rodents.

ECONOMIC POSSIBILITIES

The common palms of Bengal, like Betelnut (*Areca catechu*), Palm (*Borassus flabellifer*), Cocoanut (*Cocos nucifera*), Dates (*Phoenix sylvestris*) and the Sago-Palm (*Caryota urens*) are abundant in this State. The palm *gur* is quite popular, and the country-liquor fermented from palm juice (date and palmyra) is a very popular intoxicating drink and invigorating. The economic possibility of this State in this field is thus by no means less than the other States in India. Sufficient potentiality of the vegetable resources exists in the State and it should be properly tapped. Rich vegetation of the bamboos alone, if preserved properly and grown scientifically in coups, will serve as a rich perennial source for the manufacture of paper. A paper industry with modern scientific machineries if installed in this State, will undoubtedly prove to be a valuable industry yielding substantial revenue to the State and the country as a whole. *Sabai grass* (*ulaliopsis binata*) along with *thysanolaena maxima*, *arundo-donex*, if propely cultivated, and these can easily be cultivated, will supplement further—the raw materials for the manufacture of paper.

AFFORESTATION

The jhooming operation practised in early days in these hills does a great damage to the hills. The succession of vegetation destroyed by frequent fire exposes the hill surface to the leaching action of rain

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MAGIC OF AN INVISIBLE DANCE

By DR. SIVATOSH MOOKERJEE M.Sc., Ph.D. (Edin.)

THE real treat in a magic is in its concealed devices. A magic, when unearthed, ceases to be a magic any more but turns out to be a thing of delusive manoeuvre. After discovery, it appears almost as an act of freakish fancy.

At certain times however a magic could also be a real thing. A very different sort of magic is perpetually on show by the fantastically small ultimate particles of life. Their performance turns out to be a real amazement to men of science who are beginning to appreciate their picturesque artistry. There is nothing bluff or occult in their content, only that they work incognito. These ultimate particles are known as genes which have a material basis and their rhythmical glides are largely of chemical nature. They have been on the stage of this world for thousands of millions of years, without giving away the secret of their art. The genes are simply incredible things. They are omnipresent in all phenomena of life, from bacteria to men. Their artful operation determines the manifestation of life. Their quivering is reflected in the preservation of life process. In fact, they cause animation to all that have life. The silver point in them is that they dance invisibly, but produce a veritable effect. The gene-action is considered by many as a fantasy of chemicals.

Biologists are impressed with the harmony and concord of the pulsations of the genes in our body and are eager to count each beat of the chemical rhythm of such prime mover of life at the different phases, starting from birth of a cell through its differentiation, growth and ultimately in its reproduction.

PARTICLES OF LIFE DANCE

In the festival of life, the number of genes that dance in company is simply uncountable. To give a rough idea of the number of genes in human beings, the estimate of genes from the fruit-flies can be considered. 1250 genes are believed to be present in the fruit-fly Drosophila. Human male sperm cells contain 24 Chromosomes these thread like structures being the seat of the genes in every cell. The number of genes in a mating male cell will be something like $1250 \times 24 = 30{,}000$ genes. The approximate number of genes in a human individual after fertilization of the male and female will be 2 raised to 24 power. Now this figure is for a single human individual. There are so many millions of human beings that inhabit the world; and so many thousand millions of genes in them. And again not only human beings, but there are innumerable other living beings, all with their quota of genes. An astronomical number of genes are thus at work behind the phenomenon of life. They operates as an excellent mechanism, each one of them being ultramicroscopic in size. The size of a gene is considered to be between 4 to 5 millimicrons in diameter, a millimicron being one-millionth of a millimeter. Every such gene is discrete. Every recognisable difference is due to their individual make-up. They are hereditary determiners. Whether a pea seed should have its seed coat smooth or wrinkled

—the bride, the bridegroom & the gene dance

or its colour yellow or green, are due to definite types of genes. Man's height, stature, complexion, mental trait are all due to the differences in genes. Similarly, the individual properties of a banana plant and a rose plant, are due to the uniqueness of their genes. All animals have genes but the genes of the different animals are not identical. For each gene, there is something of a sovereign measure.

INVENTION OF DANCING MECHANISM

The techniques of gene dance have gradually been invented. In most of the animals and plants, genes are housed in the cells within their nuclei. The nucelus is about 1/100 to 2/3 of the

volume. Inside each nucleus, there are threads of life, chromosomes. The numbers of such thread of life are constant for each individual species. Man has 48 chromosomes. The intestinal worm has 2 chromosomes; and there are 8 in onion, 24 in tomato, 40 in mouse, 60 in cow, 80 in domesticated duck, 200 in cray-fish and 512 in a fern. Genes are housed on the chromosomes in a linear manner. Each chromosome has different genes for the different characters arranged on its body.

We all know that a new cell springs forth from a pre-existing cell. This means a cell is to divide to form two daughter cells. A division of cell means also the division of its nucleus. The division of nucleus in its turn means the division of its chromosomes. The division of chromosomes means the ultimate division of their genes which inhabit the chromosomes. The inherent power of genes to divide is effected by a process of self-duplication. When the genes divide, they are called upon to dance. The straight process, by which the genes are divided and separated, is a simple form of dance—the mitosis. This is comparable to a simple old Waltz of neat, distinct supple sweep. But one is to encounter another type of dance where division is invariably complicated and involved. When the question of fertilization arises to an individual, the sex cells are produced and the chromosome numbers in them are reduced to a half by the process of reduction division. This reduction division is a very special and unconventional manner of gene dance. In a 'would-be' reproductive cell the homologous chromosomes, identical representatives of the father and mother, come together and pair before reduction division. They pair and exchange segments from each other. For the determination of each character, genes from father and mother of the homologous chromosomes are necessary and they must pair. Parents marry but their genes pair in the body of their offsprings. Fitness of a person is in his fitness of genes. A fair-looking person may have defective genes. Bad genes will have terrifying effects on inheritance. Genes for each character dance in pairs. During such exchange of segments, the genes cross-over from one chromosome to another. The shifting of genes from one to another is symbolically a rock and roll affair.

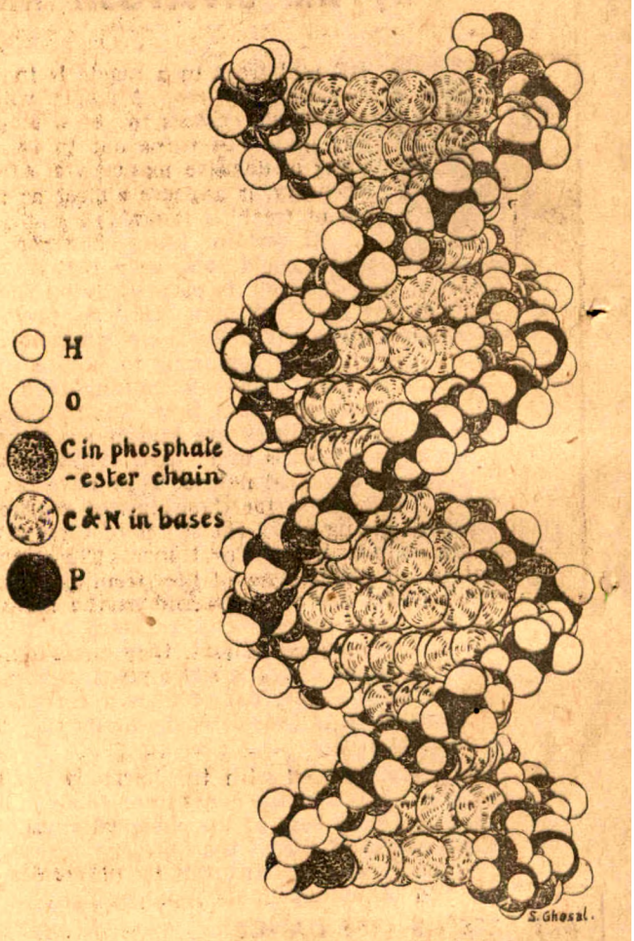
Some genes dance singly. These genes reside outside the nuclear boundary. These are extraordinary genes—the 'naked genes' or the plasmagenes. They originate from the nucleus, and come to live in the cytoplasm. They tap-dance individually for a short while and then perish. These types of genes have been discovered in some unicellular animal. Higher organisms may also have them. These genes have a limited autonomy. Some 'naked genes' also occur as separate living particles. They are viruses. They are self-duplicating. All of them are parasitic, i.e. they live on the body of another organism where they can have their performances. They cause diseases. The small pox is a well-known example of a virus-borne disease.

In different organisms, the genes dance at the time of division. They are reflex when the cell is not dividing, but function otherwise. Nature has imposed such a technical excellence on them after a long period of trial and error, that they have now become an enlivened object of fascination. They perform an impressive variety of other work and carry the burden of daily life. Their dance is a special function.

SOME GENES ALWAYS TRAVEL TOGETHER

Genes come down to progenies through their parents by the contribution of their chromosomes. In other words, our parents live in our chromosomes. Genes are mechanical tools by which the continuity of the flow of life is maintained. Without gene, there one generation to another. In gene-travel, occasionally it is seen that some genes always travel together. They are the perennial partners in the sojourn of descent. They are not independently assorted like other genes.

A human gene interferes with the clotting mechanism of the blood when bleeding. This gene is always found to be linked with the particular sex chromosome. Such gene is known as sex-linked gene. Sex chromosome, in addition to its sex-determining



The chain of molecules in a gene.

genes, also has some genes which determine the body character, like the condition of blood. The body-character-genes are sex-linked. We have other examples. The colour-blindness in man. The females are found to be the carriers and the males sufferers. The reason is explanable. This colour blindness is due to a recessive gene. Wherever one X-chromosome is present, the disease is visible as in a man. But when two X-chromosomes are present, one normal and the other carrying the gene for the disease, the disease is not produced; it remains concealed under the influence of normal gene. The other profitable example can be cited from the fruit-flies. Three genes are linked together and always travel together. Whenever you find a white bar in the eye in a fruit-fly, you can safely infer that the fly must have the other two characters like curved wings, and bow legs. The genes for white bar, curved leg and bow legs are linked and they are generally inseparable. If one of the characters is absent, it means automatically genes determining other characters are also lacking. Their partnership is solid. They are not easily independently assorted.

The genes, as a rule, are remarkably orderly

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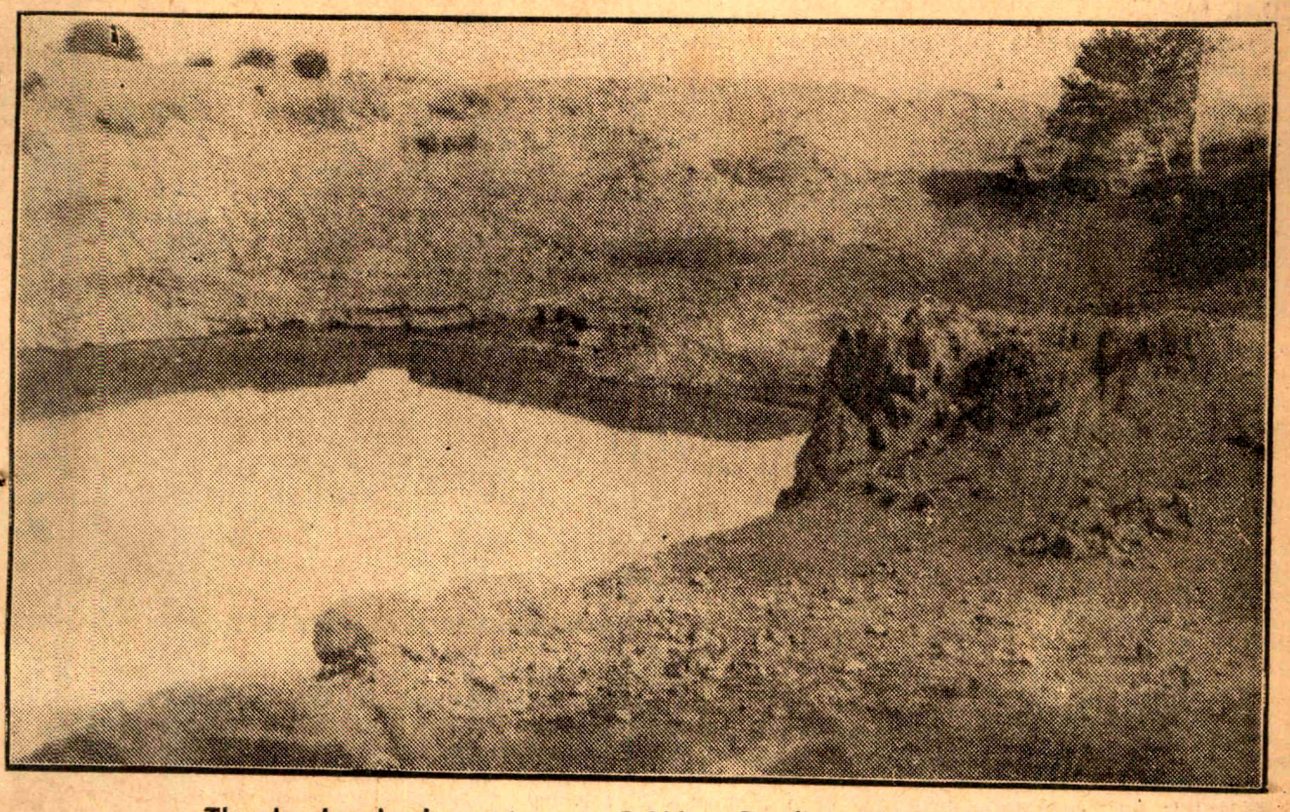


The abandoned galena mine near Beldih in Purulia which yielded 91½ tons lead, 4716.15 ozs. silver and 46.04 grs. gold in 1904 - 05.

West Bengal's Mineral Resources

By H. SEN M.Sc.
Senior Geologist, Govt. of West Bengal

THE popular belief that West Bengal is poor in mineral wealth is not entirely correct. The State's mineral wealth, except coal in the Raniganj coalfield, is mostly undeveloped, and to a large extent unexplored. This should not be surprising if we remember that the development of mineral industry in Bengal had been attended in the past with numerous legal squabbles even regarding the meaning of the term "mineral".

Usually the underground mineral right rested with various landlords holding different views about the worth of mineral deposits, while the surface right on land was enjoyed by a different set of people. This has undoubtedly retarded the growth of mineral industry and squeezed it to flow through undesirable channels, ultimately it being lost into the wilderness of uneconomic adventure. Owing to the perseverence of a few powerful combines and individuals there has not been a total obliteration of mining activities in the western parts of Bengal, and at present there are probably over 250 mineral concessions enjoyed by the private sector which contributed over 17½ % of the total value of minerals produced in India during the year 1956; this percentage is expected to have been increased up to 20½ % in 1957. It may not be out of place to mention here that West Bengal does not possess any State-owned mining enterprise to-day.

NO WASTE, PLEASE

The earliest known use of minerals in the history of civilisation is preparation of stone implements of the Palaeolithic Age; since then the human civilisation has progressed much, and man has at last learnt the use of atomic minerals as source of power and destruction. In spite of this progress from flint to fissionable material we are not in a position to exploit the known mineral deposits indiscriminately: The country as a whole is deficient in certain minerals like wolfram, lead-zinc and silver minerals, sulphur, etc. and it is regionally poor in various other groups of minerals like coal in southern parts of India. Even the large deposits are all wasting assets; the minerals consumed today cannot be replenished tomorrow as they are made by forces of nature working through millions of years. It is imperative, therefore, to consume the minerals for the best interest of man and nothing should be wasted or regarded as waste.

The prospect of making altogether new discoveries is not very encouraging in this tiny State, nevertheless, it must be admitted that there are large tracts yet to be explored by modern methods of pros-

pecting. It may be a little difficult to believe that there are areas in the Raniganj coalfield where the chances of finding appreciable reserves of coal are rather bright.

COAL MEASURES

Coal will continue to play an important part in the industrialisation of the country even when we harness all the available resources of hydel power. The Raniganj coalfield is one of the only two fields in India where there are two coal-measures with workable coal. It is interesting to note that workable reserves of coking coal in the Raniganj coalfield are practically confined to the bottom portion of the upper measures (Raniganj) and the top portion of the lower measure (Barakar) although there is a thickness of about 1200 ft. of barren-measures in between the two.

The upper coal-measure is hidden on the south and the south-east by varying thicknesses of Panchet rocks, but this has not deterred a few persevering parties from sinking shafts near Panchets and reaching the coal-measure down below. Similar conditions exist under the barren-measures, and deep coal-mining in this field may be profitably pursued in such areas. Extensions of the field are found on the south bank of the Damodar River where a few collieries already exist. The eastern part is mostly covered by laterite while a large tract on the north-east is concealed under alluvium. The western parts of the field extend beyond the Barakar River and lie in the neighbouring Dhanbad district of Bihar.

Large and small faults causing upward or downward displacement of some parts of coal seams and their enclosing rocks are normal features of almost all the Lower Gondwana coalfields in India, and Raniganj is no exception. Occurrence of a number of such faults in close proximity renders the sector difficult for underground mining and unless the seams are thick opencast mining is also impracticable. There are, however, a few places within the Raniganj coalfield where opencast mining may be economically feasible in faulted zones.

Certain intrusive rocks have destroyed some coal in many of the seams wherever they came in contact with coal. Besides that, a few large areas of coal seams have been burning since a long time. The fires started in the past through accidents in old collieries now lying abandoned. Data regarding the quantity of coal lost every year through such fires are not easily obtainable but the position is, nevertheless, distressing.

RANIGANJ COAL-FIELD

The Raniganj coalfield is spread over 600 sq. miles and its total coal reserve including all grades of coal contained in over 4 ft. thick seams down to a depth of 2,000 ft. stood at 8,250 million tons in 1950; about 2.8 % of it was good quality coking coal. The 3rd Five Year Plan is expected to envisage an additional coal output of 10.5 million tons from the Raniganj coalfield, about 2 million tons of which will have to be raised by deep mining.

The succession of strata in the Raniganj coalfield is as follows (excluding alluvium and laterite) :

6. Supra-Panchet or Durgapur Beds ;
5. Panchet Series ;
4. Raniganj Series (Upper Measures) 3,400 ft.
3. Barren Measures (Ironstone Shale or Kulti Stage) ;
2. Barakar Series (Lower Measures), 2,10 ft.
1. Talchir Series.

Deep mining for coal will enable the miners to reach the Raniganj and Barakar coals lying underneath the Panchets and the Ironstone Shales respectively.

UPPER & LOWER MEASURES

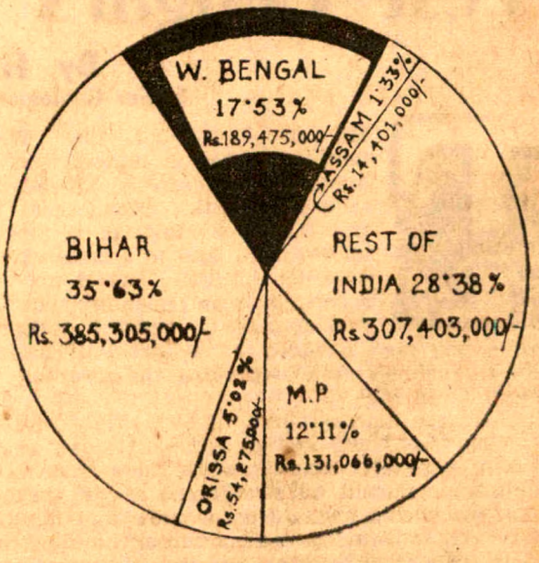
The difference in character of coal from the Lower and the Upper Measures may be summarised as follows :

	Raniganj	Barakar
Moisture :	3 to 10% except Dishergarh seam with low moisture	1 to 3.56%
V.M.	29 to 38%	21 to 30%
F.C.	50 to 57%	52 to 64% average 55%
Coking character	Generally non-coking except Dishergarh & Sanctoria seams.	Laikdih, Ramnagar & Begunia seams coking and tend to form hard coke. Excellent steam coal; Laikdih and Ramnagar seams low in ash and the former is low in phosphorus
General	Good gas coal and free burning steam raiser	

The main defect of West Bengal's coal, rather of Indian coal, is high ash content with mostly non-coking character.

IMPROVEMENT OF QUALITY

Coal quality may be improved by washing which eliminates a part of the dull and dense layers (durain) in coal, and other impure stuff. It produces three separate fractions, the clean coal, the middling with high ash and the tailings that are rejected. Economic success of coal washing depends mostly on utilisation of the middling fraction. Conditions, however, vary from seam to seam. Washability of the coals from the Raniganj coalfield should be tested for finding suitable types of washary for this field.



Value of West Bengal and other neighbouring States' mineral production in 1956 expressed in percentages of total Indian production (according to I. B. M.)

An assessment of the quantity of inferior coals in Raniganj, and other Damodar Valley coalfields was made by the Geological Survey of India ; Ondal was suggested as the site for a synthetic petroleum

manufacturing plant utilising the inferior coal there. The project is likely to be included in the 3rd Five Year Plan. Inferior coal has been known to occur in a small area (Tangsuli Basin) about 6 miles north-west of Suri in Birbhum district where the author found exposures of two thin seams in a nala near Mahuldanga village. Four bore-holes are reported to have been sunk there in 1907-08.

THE HIMALAYAN COALFIELD

A more or less continuous belt of coal-measures (Lr. Gondwana) is seen near the foot-hills of the Darjeeling Himalayas between the Teesta and the Chel River valleys; its western extensions have been noticed in the river sections of the Mahanadi and a few others. The flat country on the east of the Chel River is covered under alluvium and terrace deposits, and the hills are of metamorphic rocks, but reports of coal occurrences are occasionally received, particularly from the Jaldhaka River section.

The field was seriously examined for the first time by P. N. Bose in 1890-91 and 55 years passed away before starting regular coal mining there by M. K. Ray. Bose estimated a reserve of 20 million tons of coal in the belt between the Lish (Lishu) and the Ramthi rivers. There is one thick (30 to 45 ft.) seam locally known as the Mallet seam (after F. R. Mallet who explored the area in 1874) besides a few thinner but workable seams. The coalfield is heavily faulted and the seams are broken up into discontinuous strips, all inclined and containing friable and dust coal. Major portion of the volatile matter in coal has been squeezed out during the Himalayan fold movement and thrusting, and a semi-anthracitic character has been imparted.

Basic intrusives abound in the coal seams, converting a part of the coal into natural coke. About 1,200 tons of natural coke was raised in the field in 1957, raising of dust coal being 33,491 tons. No reliable analysis of the coal or coke is available at present, but the coke is said to possess a better thermal value and may be looked upon as a potential source of thermal power. Attempts at briquetting the dust coal have not succeeded yet (mainly due to economic factors), and it is used in its run-of-mine state by the brick manufacturers of North Bengal, North Bihar and U.P.

PEAT OF PLANT DEBRIS

Peat consisting of plant debris at an immature stage of coal formation occurs underneath Calcutta and its suburbs. Similar occurrences in Howrah and 24 Parganas districts have been recently investigated by the Directorate of Mines & Minerals, W. Bengal. There is also an unconfirmed report of its occurrence at a foundation excavation on the Rupnarayan River. Thickness of these peat beds varies from 3 to 12 ft. and the overburden from 3 to 35 ft. It has been utilised by local villagers as domestic fuel after thoroughly drying. Suitable economic conditions for exploiting the peat have not been proved yet.

TRACES OF GOLD

Alluvial gold occurs at various localities in Bankura and Purulia districts, and a nugget weighing 20 ozs. was once reported from Dhadka in 1915. Gold was recovered from the lead produced by a Calcutta firm in 1904-05 from their Beldih galenamine (Fig. 1.). Villagers often wash the mining spoil left by the ancient galena-miners near Dhadka for gold. It has also been reported from the copper-ores in the Daling slates and schists in Darjeeling district.

SILVER, LEAD, ZINC & COPPER

Galena (sulphide of lead) usually contains silver, and it is often associated with sphalerite or zinc-blende (zinc-sulphide). Workable deposits of these two minerals containing three metals (often gold also) are rare in India. The country annually imports about Rs. 7 crores worth zinc and Rs. 2 crores worth lead to meet her industrial requirements. 13,867 ozs. of silver was imported in 1956 when the home productions were 2,497 tons lead, 6,880 tons zinc-concentrate and 104,604 ozs silver, mainly from the Zawar Mines in Rajasthan and silver from the Kolar gold.

The 267 tons galena raised by Mackinnon Mackenzie Co. in 1904-05 from their Beldih mine (about 6 miles ESE of Barabhum Ry. Station, Purulia dist.) yielded 92 tons 16 cwt. lead which gave on refining 91½ tons lead, 4716.15 ozs. silver and 46.04 gr. gold. Galena occurs there in association with cerussite, anglesite, malachite, azurite and a little chalcopyrite in quartz-veins along a shear-zone traced by the author over a distance of 8 miles.

Galena and blende in the quartz-veins near Dhadka, Panra, Nanna, Harada and other villages in Purulia district are mostly oxidised and replaced by limonite up to ground-water level. Such limonite occasionally assumes the shape of galena cubes indicating the presence of the latter at depth. Available data roughly indicate the presence of numerous thin veins containing galena and blende traceable up to a length of 2,000 ft. Silver content of the lead is said to be high. The galena-bearing belt extends towards the east into Midnapur district where galena has been reported from Gohalbaria.

Further north, there are two narrow belts in Bankura and Purulia districts containing some ancient copper mines. Two villages known as "Tamakhun" (copper-mine) lying on the two belts bear testimony to the zeal of the ancient copper miners.

Old copper mines exist in the Darjeeling district where F. R. Mallet reported at least a dozen localities bearing copper-ore. Dr. J. A. Dunn examined the occurrence near Komai on the left bank of the Mo Chu. One of the samples assayed 3.5 % copper and 1 dwt. 8 gr. gold to the ton. According to M. Stefanski, there are two copper-belts in the region, both extending into Sikkim where the Indian Bureau of Mines conducted some investigations in recent years.

ARSENOPYRITE OR MISPICKEL

The second copper-belt (Stefanski) of Darjeeling district is known to contain mispickel (sulpharsenide of iron) near Sampthar in Kalimpong subdivision. A sample of the ore analysed by Santosh Kumar Roy (Research Fellow, C.U.) was found to contain only 7.5 per cent arsenic. It has also been reported from Paunbu khola (Darjeeling district) and from a few localities in Purulia district. Information regarding these occurrences are generally scanty and the localities deserve expert investigation.

PYRITES

Impregnations of pyrites have been found in graphite-schist near Maramu village, in Quartz-mylonite near Sulanglahar, and in sandstone near Kalaboni village, all in Purulia district. It is associated with barytes and bismuthinite near Malthol and with galena near Dhadka. The slates, quartzites and dolomites of Buxa Duars sometimes contain disseminations of pyrites.

IRON AND MANGANESE ORES

Deposits of iron ore have been reported from various places in West Bengal but they are too numerous to be individually mentioned. Four categories may be recognised in them, viz., lateritic ores, sedimentary ores, ores in Banded-hematite-

quartzite, and magnetite-hematite ores. The deposits lie in Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Birbhum, Burdwan, Bankura, Purulia and Midnapur districts. It may be interesting to know that the first successful attempt in India at producing pig iron using coke instead of charcoal was made by the Bengal Iron Co. at Kulti and they used the ironstone shales from the Raniganj coalfield. This was in 1875. The ironstone shales continued to be used as ore until the discovery of the great iron-ore-field of Orissa and Bihar.

No serious attempt has ever been made to estimate the reserves of iron in the Raniganj coalfield. David Smith discovered in 1856 a total thickness of 5ft. 10in. of ironstone in 5 individual layers. These he estimated to contain at the rate of 6 million tons of ore per square mile. Blandford did not agree with this view in 1860, as the ironstone layers were thin and varied in thickness and quality from place to place. The average iron content of the ironstones is 42 per cent only.

Ores associated with Banded-hematite-quartzite are generally rich in iron but the deposits are small in comparison with the great field of Orissa and Bihar. The only way of utilising such small deposits is settling up of small-scale industries having low-shaft furnaces for the production of pig. They may succeed if a higher retention price is allowed for their produce. But the deposits will have to be thoroughly prospected before any action along this line could be taken.

Iron ore containing 60 to 70 per cent iron occurs in Bankura district. The high iron content may be due to presence of magnetite in the ore-body; percentages of other constituents like phosphorus, titanium, etc. are not known. Such magnetite-hematite ores are somewhat refractory in nature, hence their possibility as blast-furnace burden is not definite yet.

Lateritoid deposits of low grade manganese ore occur in Midnapur and Purulia districts. They are generally small in size and contain high percentages of iron. Source of such ores may be some manganiferous shales similar to those found in Orissa. Details regarding the deposits are not available yet.

WOLFRAM

Wolfram has been known to occur round about Chendapathar in Bankura district since a long time ago. The G.S.I. have discovered another deposit with associated scheelite near Porapahar about 14 miles away from Chendapathar. Exigencies of the World War II helped to raise about 46.44 tons of wolfram from the first named locality where it occurs mostly as float. The Porapahar deposit consists of two small quartz veins invading a band of sericite-quartzite; quantity of wolfram in the veins is not known.

LIMESTONE AND DOLOMITE

The limestone deposits in West Bengal are mostly small and sporadic. Those near Jhalda in Purulia district occur in a country of granite and schists of Dharwar age. The limestones are low in magnesia and may be suitable for Portland cement manufacture. But their reserves have not been thoroughly explored yet. Similar occurrences have been reported from other places in Purulia, particularly from the Baghmundi Plateau. The Gondwana limestone at the base of the Panchakote (Panchet) Hill has been worked in the past for supplying flux to the Kulti works. Bands of dolomitic limestone and dolomite occur near Guniada and Harirampur in Bankura district.

According to M. Stefanski, about 4 million tons of limestone may be available from the Darjeeling district. The author found a few limestone bands associated with coal in the Dalings near their contact with Condwana sandstone exposed in the river sections of the Mangzing khola and the Lethi Nadi in the Chel Range of the Kalimpong Forest Division. Large reserves of dolomite have been reported from Buxa Duars by Dr. A. Lahiri and others; quality of dolomite in certain sections appears to be good.

GYPSUM

Gypsum has been reported from some inaccessible parts of the Darjeeling Himalayas, and from Chainpat and Dari Ajodiha in Midnapur district. Crystals of selenite (gypsum) occur at the latter place in a clay bed between 10 and 8ft. below the surface; the recovery appears to be poor being less than 0.05 per cent of the clay excavated.

TYPES OF CLAY

Different types of clay occur in West Bengal; the lithomarge type near Mahmud Bazar and Suri in Birbhum district is exploited by a number of parties. Similar clay occurs in Purulia, Bankura and Midnapur districts. Sedimentary clays from the Raniganj coalfield are used in the manufacture of salt-glazed stoneware by Burn & Co., and the Durgapur clay is utilised in the manufacture of "Raniganj tiles", machine-made wire-cut bricks, blue facing bricks, terracotta facings, etc. According to Bates the Durgapur clay has the following chemical composition: Silica 61.70, Alumina 22.89, Ferric-oxide 6.61, Lime 0.54, Magnesia 0.62. Alkalies 1.20, Loss 6.52.

Similar clays occur in Purulia and Bankura districts.

Dr. S. Mehta has estimated the total reserves of fire-clay in the Raniganj coalfield as 4 million tons within a depth of 20 ft. Low price of fireclay generally makes it uneconomic to work below that depth unless the clay seam is particularly thick. Bird & Co. appears, however, to have worked to greater depths with success.

Small deposits of China-clay abound in the western districts of West Bengal. They are too numerous to be individually named. Most of the occurrences lack in communication facilities and have not been properly investigated. The same is true in case of those in the Darjeeling district.

FELSPAR, QUARTZ & MICA

Large pegmatites containing potash-felspar and quartz together with small amounts of accessory minerals like mica, beryl, tourmaline, etc. occur in Jaipur, Raghunathpur, Gourangdi and Puncha Thanas in Purulia, and some parts of Bankura district. Cherty quartzites and transparent rock-crystals have been reported by the G. S. I. from Bankura but no details are availal Mica-books found in West Bengal's pegmatites are small and generally yield less than 2 square inch size splittings; larger sizes have been reported from Gourangdi P.S. in Purulia. The specimens seen by the author were free from stains or inclusions.

SILICA & MOULDING SANDS

True silica-sands are rare in West Bengal, but some of the felspathic sandstones in Raniganj coalfield yield inferior quality material on crushing and washing. The sandstones of the Tangsuli Basin near Suri may also yield glass-making sand. Friable quartzites have been reported from near Churulia (Burdwan) and from Bankura district. Sample of unwashed material from the former deposit has been reported to contain over 70 per cent silica and 0.23% iron oxide.

Almost unlimited supply of yellow moulding sand may be had from the Panchet sandstone of the Raniganj coalfield. Low price of the material and

keen competition among the rival suppliers have so far prevented any systematic mining of these sandstones. The Mongpong sand near the foot of the Himalayas consists of an unconsolidated terrace deposit of Post-Tertiary age. It can be traced for several miles along the Assam-Access Road. Quality appears to improve after ordinary washing and screening. About 52 per cent of the material has the size range of −0.5mm to +0.25mm; this fraction may be suitable for foundry purposes.

KYANITE & GRAPHITE

A long, approximately east-west shear zone passes through south of Balarampur in Purulia district. Light-blue kyanite has been found within 4ft. below the surface at about half a dozen localities along this shear zone. Some of these lie within 4 miles of Biramdih Railway Station. Similarly, a long belt of mylonite extends eastward through Maramu, a village about 6 miles north of Begunkodar Railway Station in Purulia district. Apparently, discontinuous lenses and pockets of graphite are associated with this mylonite containing quartz, muscovite, felspar and pyrites. The graphite deposits near Anara were examined by Dr. S. Deb and M. K. Ray; the graphite has been reported to contain over 60 per cent graphitic carbon.

SOAPSTONE

Deposits of soapstone, both weathered and fresh, occur in the Darjeeling Himalayas. A few specimens of high grade material (similar to Jaipur quality) reported to have been collected from a hill about 10 miles north of Darjeeling town were shown to the author. The deposits lie along hill slopes where lack of communication and transport facilities together with the fear of possibilities of landslide and forest destruction have so far prevented their exploitation. Price of soapstone powder ranges between Rs. 72.00 and Rs. 65.00 per ton f.o.r. Dausa (Rajasthan).

FURTHER PROBE NECESSARY

It is obvious from the above that most of the mineral deposits in West Bengal require further investigation by carefully planned prospecting. Occurrences of barytes, bentonitic clays, beryl, Fuller's earth, magnesite, vermiculite, and various other minerals have been reported but not properly investigated yet. The scope of salt manufacture from saline waters of the rivers and the sea, and utilisation of mineral water from Bakreswar and other hot springs need closer examination. There is even further scope of mineral exploration particularly in Purulia district and parts of Burdwan and Birbhum districts.

Looking from a purely pecuniary point of view, it may be safely stated that such investigations or mineral explorations need not be considered as wild goose chasing as some people are inclined to believe. The geologists of one of the biggest industries in India had actually proved the existence of about 1000 million tons of various minerals in course of about 30 years. If the value of such proved assets is assessed at the rate of Rs. 0.25 per ton, they have helped the industry in acquiring mineral properties worth Rs. 25 crores during those 30 years. This works out to the rate of Rs. 56.00 per minute; very few pursuits in India can help to provide so much wealth for the future.

* The above views and statements are strictly personal and should not be considered as Government pronouncements.

MAGIC OF AN INVISIBLE DANCE

(Continued From Page 170)

entities, they are almost infallible in their stepping. The dance is time-conditioned and well-precisioned. They work in concord. In spite of the best of control, at times, amongst the presence of thousands of genes, the chances are always there of one or more genes missing a normal beat and making a false stepping. The consequences of false stepping of a single gene in the midst of thousands of genes, make the effects felt and become implicit later on. Such change of a gene is scientifically called mutation, an irreversible change. Occasionally, mutation arises owing to accidental change. Mutated genes can never become original again. They become a new fixture for the organism, though there is always a probability that it may further mutate in new direction. The effects of mutation are generally harmful to the organism. Some mutations are so drastic that their effects lead to the death of the animal (effects of lethal genes). But some mutations, however, do survive. If any mutation is favoured by natural selection it will contribute important elements to further evolution. Mutated genes will show their trends in the next generation, i.e. in sons and daughters. There are some very well known examples of mutations. To name a few, the nakedness of skin is produced by mutation in animals like pigeon, cat, mice. The hairiness is the normal condition of the skin. The gene of normal skin can mutate and become changed into naked skin type. Some other important manifestations of mutation are tailless and kinked tails in mice.

Such false stepping may also include not only one gene but a large number of genes. In fact, arrangement of genes in some segments of chromosomes may be inverted or deleted. The linear arrangements of genes are newly oriented leading to a major structural alteration. This will have a significant effect in the production of characters in the animal.

The use of uncontrolled radio-active substance can easily bring disorganization to the normal interplay of genes, by making structural alterations. The chromosomes may be broken and rejoined to a new segment. The entire sequence of genes is thus changed. This may also involve that of a single gene. The behaviour of genes in subsequent dancing will be significantly different.

BRIDE, BRIDEGROOM AND GENIC DANCE

There are brides, bridegrooms and the genes. Marriage fulfils the dream dreamt by the couple in making their genes come together and dance. Innumerable marriages are the potential source of ceaseless dance of genes. The understanding of the codescript of the gene-dance has become a challenge to the scientists; the harmony of the 'chemical-notations' of gene pairs must be fully grasped.

The gene-dance is in fact a chemical dance. The identity of the stage on which genes dance is becoming chemically known. The chromosomes are nucleoprotein fibres, having a covering of protein and a core of DNA (Desoxyribo-nucleic acid). The genes consist primarily of DNA material. The amount of DNA is supposed to be constant in all the cells of the body. But in sperms and ova the quantity is reduced to a half during meiosis. An analysis of DNA content of different cells in a fish shows that the red

(Continued On Page 220)

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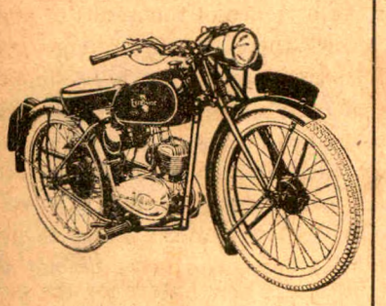

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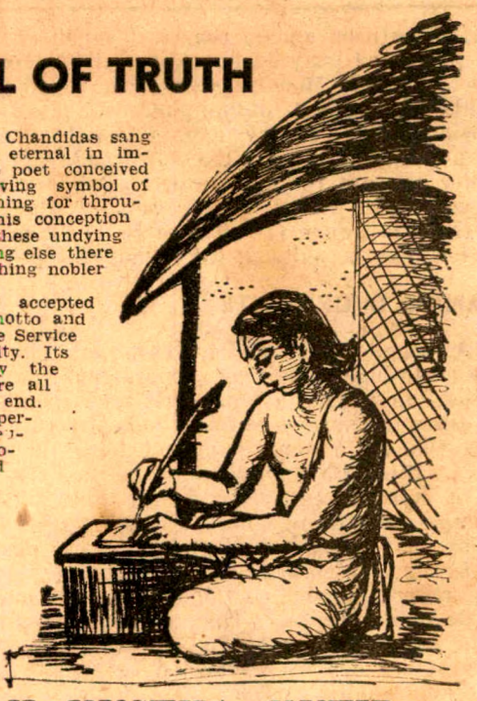

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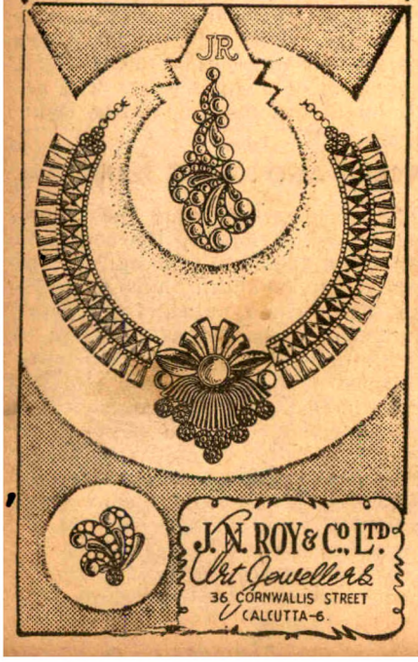

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THE RIVALS

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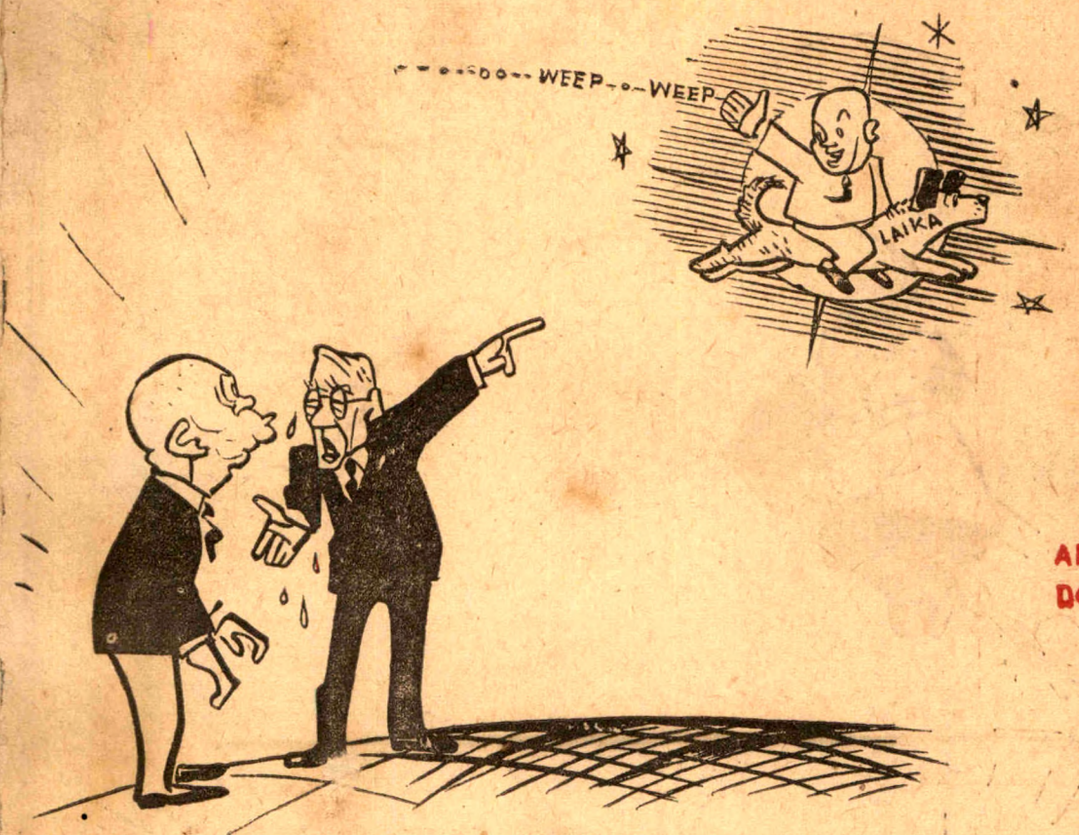
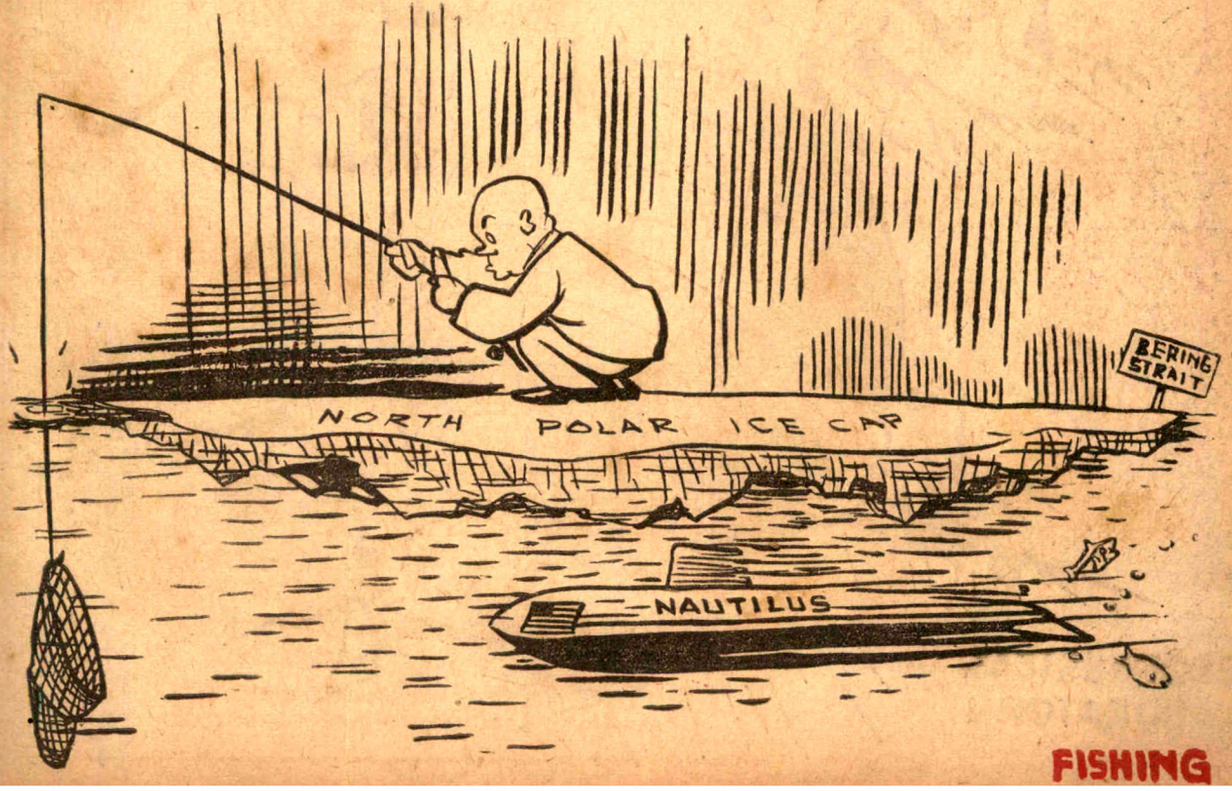


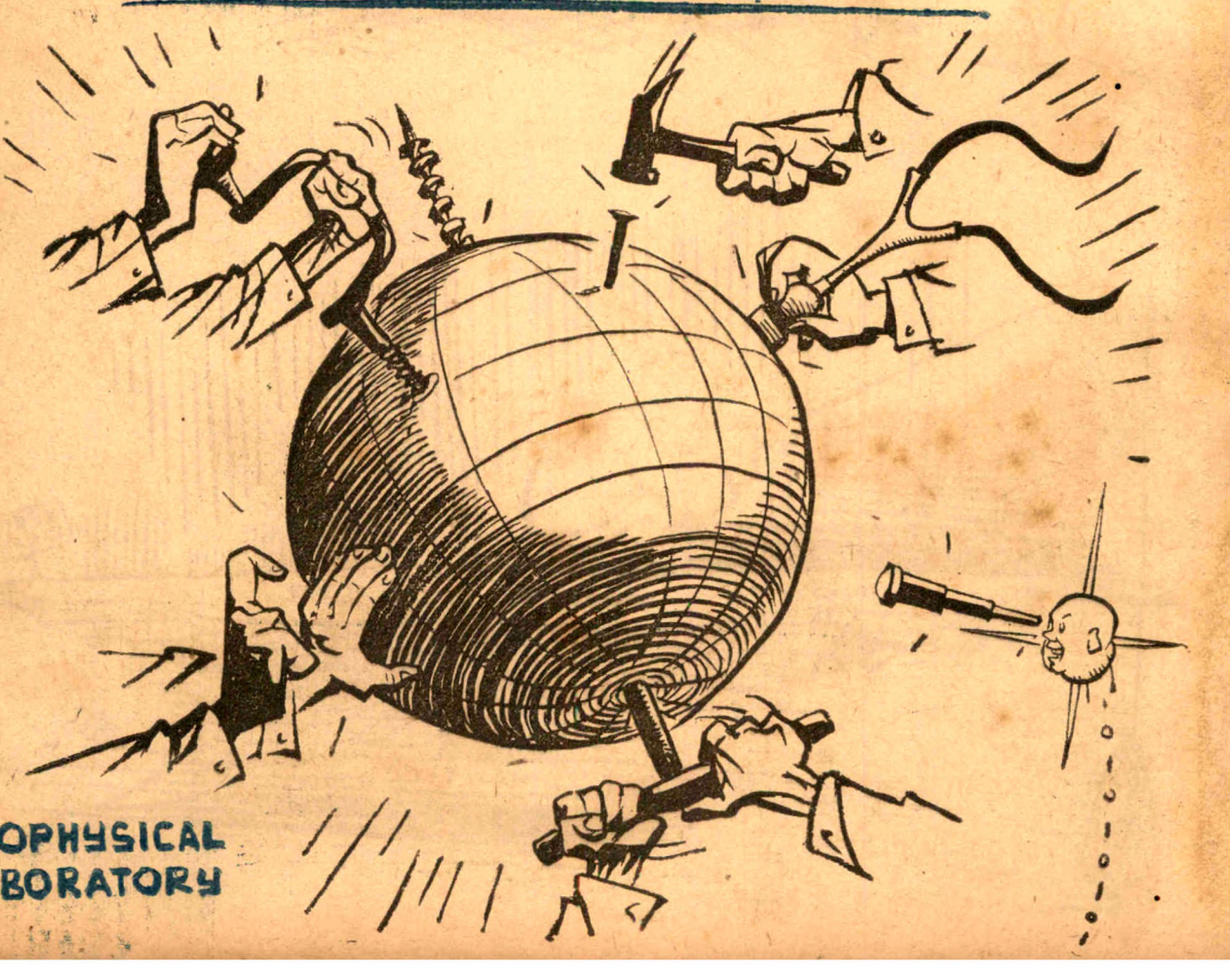
ANOTHER DOG STAR



FISHING

THE RIVALS
(CONTINUED)

DOG FIGHT



GEOPHYSICAL LABORATORY

THE RIVALS

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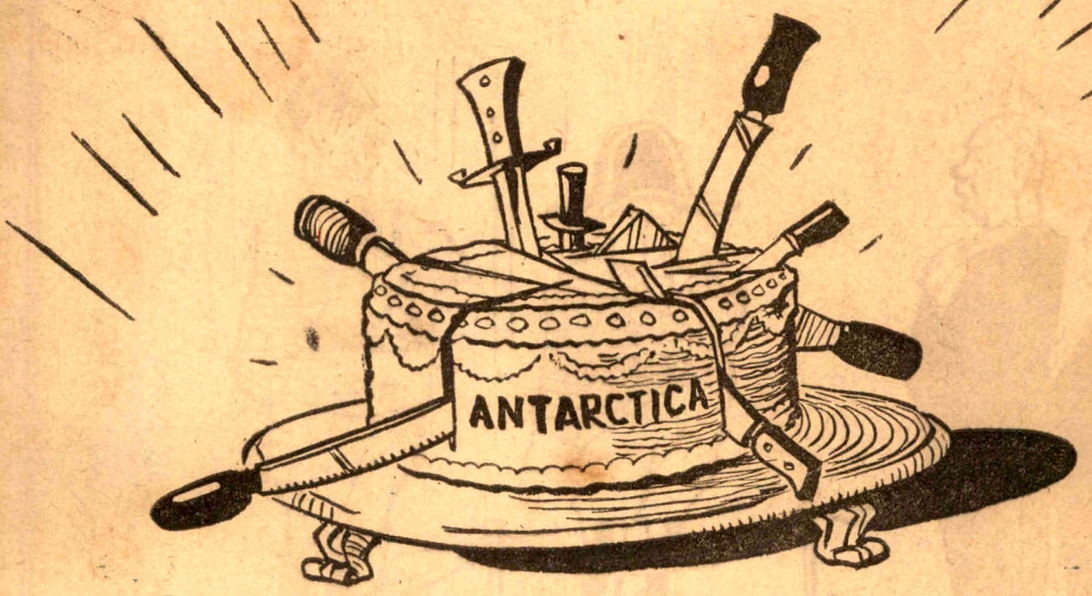

THE CAKE

THE CHALLENGE

THE RIVALS
(CONTINUED)

Ariel

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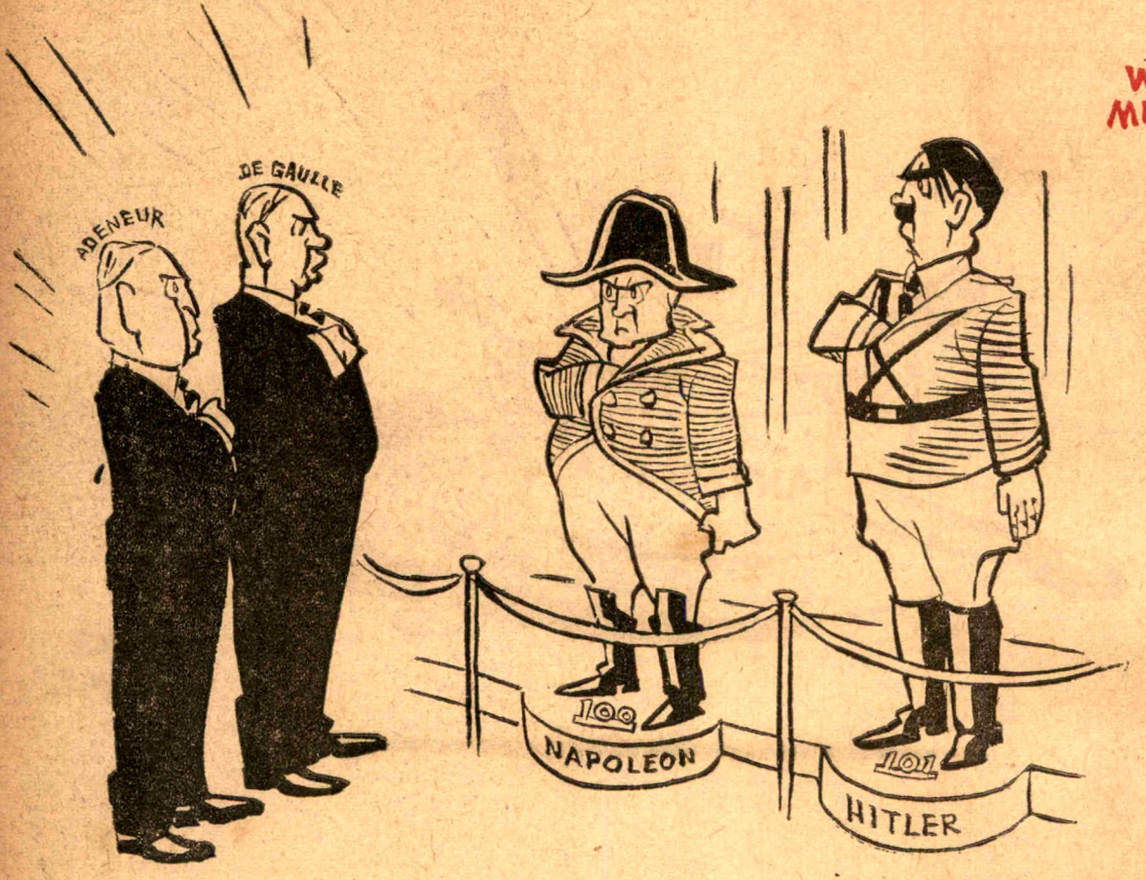
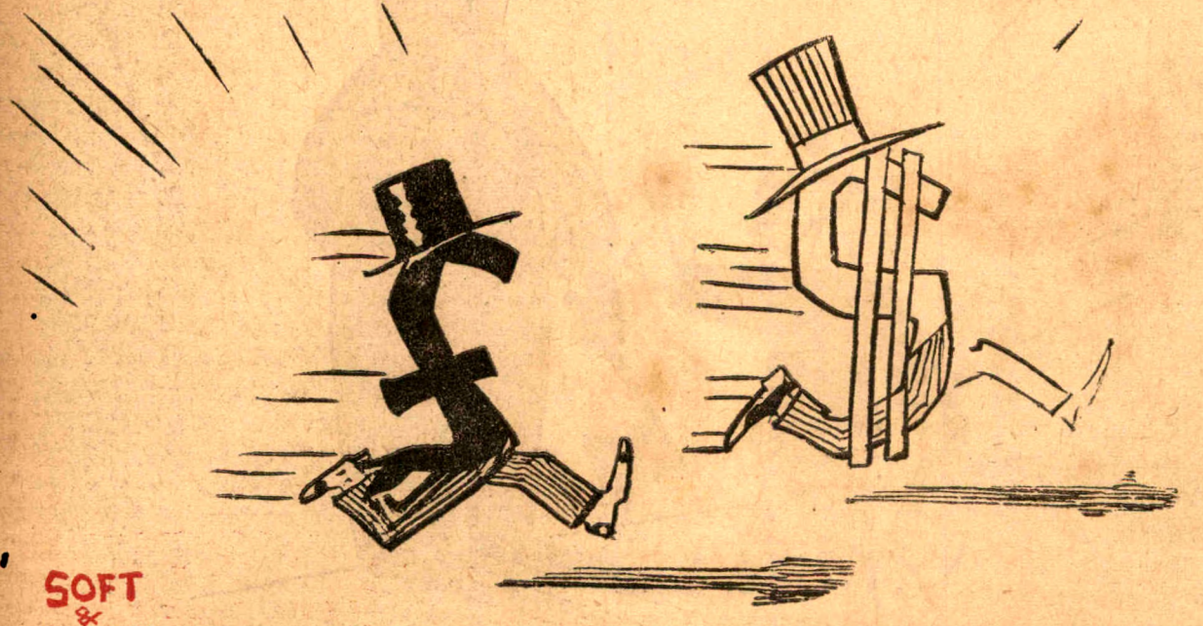


SOFT & HARD RACE



Dancers I Have Met

By
PROJESH BANERJI

The writer, in this article, gives miniature pen pictures of a side of the life of the well-known dancers of the country, with whom he is intimately associated. He does not make an attempt to give a criticism of their dance art. The account of the private life of the dance artistes is the result of the personal impression obtained by the writer from his friendship with them.

Rukmini Devi Arundale

A real and true dancer always dances, whether he or she be on the stage or away from it. The dance artistes' actions and thoughts are all rhythmic, peculiar to the conception of the general public. The difference between a common man and an artiste lies in the fact that the latter sees life in a perspective not similar to that seen by the former. The artiste's angle of vision cannot be explained or understood but it can be felt by him and by a very limited few who have an artistic bend of mind, and this particular type of feeling can be developed in the common man by means of several methods.

When I speak of artistes, I mean real and true artistes, who are every inch an artiste, and not the so-called ones whom you can find galore roaming on the streets. The artistes, who are artistes in actuality and not the fake ones, are temperamentally very touchy, sensitive and susceptible to the slightest provocation for sympathy. They are quickly agitated and excited and kind to the bereaved and oppressed. They are philanthropic to the extent their meagre purse can allow. They are patriots and martyrs and do not call themselves preachers of sermons, nonetheless the mass takes the benefit from their creations. Above all they are the worst sufferers as if born to suffer mentally, economically and are the targets of criticism and annihilation. They carry a heavy load of misfortune and traverse the path of life. For them paradise is lost and I cannot say whether they can regain it or not.

This is the fate of the artistes everywhere and more so in our country. The dance artistes are no exception; outwardly some of them might have given a contrary impression to their admirers and spectators. I have come across innumerable dancers, s of them well-known, others less known and others unknown. But the essential inherent qual of their character are almost the same; to speak nutshell, they have an artistic temperament. I h coined the last two words, which I cannot explain it is for you to realise, which I hope, you will d I place certain facts from their dynamic movem in everyday life and my impressions of them. T should excuse me if I go a bit astray in my missio

RUKMINI ARUNDALE

Rukmini Devi, a scholar and an educationis always eager to go deep into the traditional art, to keep its beauty intact. She embellishes the with her knowledge chiselling every aspect of art, whether it be its technical side or costume, m gestures or presentation. Her production bec crispy. She takes pains to go from door to doo the villages in search of real art, assimilates herself and then reproduces it with ornamenta The creation is novel and flawless. She smiles talks and teaches the little kids making the art simple, systematic and easy for the children. treatment is scientific, and she brings a revolutio art beneficial to mankind. She has a knack to plain things in a lucid way and never falters express her viewpoint. She is calm and serene dignified and is ever thoughtful in her endeavou create something new, never to be tied down by shackles of rigid rules and regulations of the t nical aspects of traditional art. She noneth adheres to tradition but builds new things on changes the dogmatic rules if necessary. She is

ways vigilant in codifying and has a peculiar grace while impressing some of her ideas on a limited number of artiste friends. She studies, works and thinks.

UDAY SHANKAR

I have spoken and written enough regarding this man, who I think, has a temperament which should be envied by all. For him money is no concern as if it has no value. Show is all in all for him. At any cost the show must go on and it must be the best in every respect. Never mind whether there is box office return or not. He sends some of his workers on a taxi, spending three or four rupees to buy a safety pin worth a pice. He invites his guest to dine at the most expensive restaurant when out of pocket or sends richly luxurious presents.

The safety razor he at present uses, is probably the one which he purchased or received as a gift, when he first learnt to get himself shaved in his boyhood. He is an ardent follower of the dictum, "Penny wise pound foolish." He will invite all, even his casual acquaintances, to come and enjoy his performances, and will pay for their entertainment tax, which often mounts up to several hundreds from his share of percentage. But I have seen other cringy stage performers (not dancers) who are reluctant to allow free passes even to those from whom they receive high and material profits. Uday is easily excited, easily agitated and gets angry at the slightest provocation, but quickly cools down and weeps like a child. He is repentant, courageous and is ready to face all odds, either social, domestic or economic. He is sympathetic and has a kind soul. Many have taken advantage of these qualities and have duped him. He is an utter failure as a businessman and receives less in return than he gives.

I have seen him spending sleepless nights working like an imaginative horse on his sets, painting the screens with the electric spray machine hanging on the shoulder and smoking like a chimney. I have seen dancers working day and night, composing, rehearsing or practising, and then the fruit of their labour, the endeavour of the oil lamp burning throughout the night, has landed them to fame and world recognition. Our country has produced such thinkers and artistes, whose only mission in life is to create and produce.

He embraces the ladies who are familiar to him, when he meets them after some interval. Some of the conservative ones might feel embarrassed. But they fail to realise the depth of affection in him.

He is satirical, humorous and can talk in the most filthy language in the midst of his intimates. On the other hand he is polished to the extreme and can adjust himself to whatever situation he is posted. His mind is never at rest, probably, the reason is that he eats less.

AMALA SHANKAR

Amala Shankar can handle business matters well, much better than her husband, who is absolutely a novice in that particular trade. She is very good at cooking and a better housewife than a dancer. She smiles and laughs, but seldom bursts into a vehement laughter. She talks with an affectionate tone, sometimes seems to be a typical country girl, has pleasing manners, is hospitable and tries to help everyone who comes for succour. She is never perturbed, knows her job well of helping and loving her husband, and drawls at the time of speaking. She has artistic tastes and ideas which are novel. She can save difficult situations by her tranquil nature. She remains calm, never agitated, has a cool brain, is always imaginative and uses balanced language.

RAM GOPAL

On a chilly December night at eleven in 1942 there was a knock at my door. As everyone in my family was fast asleep, and as I usually am late for bed, I opened the door. To my surprise a very handsome young man of about 24 with a turban on his head and wearing "Sherwani" and "Churidar Pyjama", and broad smiles on lips, wished me with a graceful nod. I requested him to come in. He said, "I am Ram, I have come to quarrel with Projesh." I enquired, "But why?" He replied, "He has condemned Bharat Natyam dancing of the South." Then we talked and talked and discussed about the particular type of dancing and its appropriate music till we heard the cawing of the crow. He danced throughout the night in the small study room of mine in order to explain certain characteristic features of the dance art. Ram asked, "Can you take me to a Kali temple?" Curiously I answered, "But I find a cross hanging on your neck." He laughed and said, "I am a worshipper of Shiva and Parvati and Kali. My mother, when I was a child, hung the cross around my neck as a talisman and it does miracles. I have faith and belief in everything." Then I escorted him to a Kali temple. On the way he asked, "Have you ever fallen in love?" I replied, "No, never." He again asked, "Did any girl ever express her love to you?" I readily answered, "I was never so fortunate." He exclaimed, "You are most unhappy. Love is God's

blessing. The lover and the beloved both have some godly qualities, as if some elements of God are bestowed on them."

I found in him a good athlete, a good conversationalist, an imaginative orator, an ardent devotee of his Guru, and above all in dance art a technician 'par excellence'. He is a charming personality and entertaining companion, a fanatic in his love for dance art. He takes refuge in and praises whatever he sees and thinks to be good. He publicly criticises if to his mind anything seems to be wrong. He is a polished and witty gentleman with a sharp tongue. He is a collector of art curios and takes pride in his collections. He is mannerly but very bad in correspondence. He says, "You are fanatic, I am fanatic, every artiste is fanatic towards art."

BALA SARASWATI

I cannot follow Bala Saraswati's language nor she mine, but we talk in gestures. She expresses through her eyes and smiles, and if she hears anything about tradition, technique and their training, and anything regarding strict adherence to the rules and principles of Bharata Natyam, she stands up and speaks in her own language in a loud tone without minding the audience, whether they can understand her or not. She never tolerates anything spoken against tradition or traditional technique of Bharata Natyam. Whatever her Gurus have taught her she considers that to be gospel, and will not budge an inch from it. She has a very lovely sweet voice. I wonder, why she was not destined to be a singer, but she is dancing personified.

INDRANI REHMAN

Indrani Rehman is a charming personality, keeping mum before unacquainted persons, but ceaselessly laughing and talking aloud in the midst of her friends. She will not allow anyone else to talk and can go on gossiping for hours at a stretch forgetting her meals and sleep and even children to whom she is very much attached. When Indrani dances or goes on with her vigorous practice, her husband Habib decorates the house with newly made lamp shades, sometimes a crepe paper mask or a cane basket will suit the purpose. He is expert in making dancing figures with the help of flexible wires. Sometimes he would take the daughter to the bazar to buy chocolates or skirt pieces or go to Bombay and bring toys for the son.

Indrani is anxious to appear on the stage. She keeps herself aloof from dance politics of the country. She is humorous when time for humour comes and is a true woman in the sense that she can never conceal any secret. She effortlessly discloses it and will even think aloud.

Once I told her, "Your show is from 6-30. When I say 6-30 I mean 6-30, neither a minute this side nor a minute that side. You will have to be on the stage punctually at 6-30." She readily answered, "You know I am 50% American." On one occasion on the dinner table, just while starting, I held forward the soup container towards her saying, "Ladies first." She said, "I am an Indian lady, my guest first, then my husband, thereafter my children and at the end myself."

She is a voracious reader, gulps in one sitting books on art, but very lethargic in returning them. She takes less care towards her toilette and make-up when away from the stage, which is rather unusual for a female dancer. She is very good at correspondence and is well versed in the art of letter writing. She is not good in cooking nor in house keeping, but a good friend.

DAMAYANTI JOSHI

Damayanti gave me a necklace once. One of its strings gave way and she wanted to have it mended. She was to use it that very night in the dance performance, and was anxious that it should be done before her show. She got it set right in time and asked me, "How much shall I pay?" I said, "Oh, you want to pay for the mending? All right, when you are ready to pay, pay me two thousand rupees." She kept quiet, laughed and ran away.

In one of her letters she wrote to me, "There was Vivekananda to spread the teachings of Paramhansa. There is none for Kathak. If I could climb to the highest house-top, from there I would shout that Kathak is the most beautiful, traditional, graceful and dignified dance of India."

On one occasion she and her mother were dining at my place. There were a few members of my family as well sitting at the dinner table. I requested Damayanti to take a chop more and she refused. Then I said, "I am not anxious whether you take one piece of meat-chop more or not. I am anxious about myself and I want to take one. But I cannot do it being the host. If you take one piece then only I can take the other." Then she readily accepted and took one piece. When the time of sweets came, and all of us had one 'Rasogolla' each, she asked me to take one more. I refused. She said, "If you take then I can take, otherwise it becomes impossible for me to take more."

Damayanti is meek and docile and polished in her manners and behaviour. She talks less, even her smiles are measured. She is the opposite of Indrani, who snatches the monopoly of laughing and talking. Damayanti, it seems, wants to conceal some-

thing, I do not know what, probably, some sense of sorrow, behind her suppressed smiles. Possibly that is her inborn nature. She gets pleasure in listening to everybody's romantic tale of life, and is an affectionate sister to a brother.

RAGINI DEVI

I was a school boy when I first saw Ragini Devi. She seemed to be a pretty young lady with all kindness beaming on her face, in her smiles and within her eyes. She had very little rest then, all the time dancing, staging shows and learning Kathak I had an opportunity again of seeing her when she came to Allahabad during the course of her dancing itinerary with Guru Gopinath as her dance partner. I was a law student then. She came to our house and showed her willingness to my mother to enlist me as a musician in her troupe. My mother objected and said that her son was to take up the legal profession. Ragini was a bit depressed and told me when I was taking her in the car to her hotel, "Your mother is right. This profession doesn't pay." Ragini is emotional and has dedicated herself to this art. She is one of the pioneers in the field.

MRINALINI SARABHAI

A cultured and polished lady, Mrinalini Sarabhai is highly educated, extensively travelled, a good speaker and conversationalist, and tactful in her dealings. She is ever ready with her comments and suggestions, utterly free to ventilate anything which she considers to be wrong or unjust. She is not at all shy but on the other hand is not a bully. She is prompt in her promise to everyone that she will write letters to them, but never keeps her promise.

KUNJ KURUP

Guru Kunj Kurup talks through his eyes. I cannot follow his dialect except the word "Namaskaram," so he does not talk to me nor I. He smiles and expresses his feelings through the eyes. Never grumbles if inconvenienced. He is very obliging and is always ready to show his art if requested by anybody at any time. He has a dignified and majestic personality.

SHIREEN WAJIFDAR

Shireen Wajifdar is such a campanion for whom time has no value. If she once takes to gossiping that will be a non-stop affair, and no consideration for time. Her mouth will not be shut, and she will not listen to any weighty deliberation in which she or her listeners are expected to participate. She is bold in her wit, carries the day for her humour and far from being reserved. She is jovial, but engineers well thought-out plans. She seldom writes letters, but whenever she does, her letters carry an affectionate touch to the utmost depth which is absent in the letters of other dance-artistes. She is keen to get a glimpse of the domestic life of others and loves to eat rice and fish prepared in a Bengali home.

SIMKIE

Madame Simkie has a sharp sense of making a distinction between good and bad art. She admires those dance artistes who are technically proficient. She is simple in her manners, talks in a low tone, gives uncalled for smiles, very reserved, and eats less. She takes pride when praised. I suppose, even the gods are also no exception to this weakness.

GOPINATH

Guru Gopinath is always jolly and merry like a child, has strong likes and dislikes, very satirical and acknowledges defeat if any wrong is pointed out to him which is in fact an error. He possesses a sportsmanlike spirit. He can very well express his ideas through a foreign tongue, English, but apologises with modesty as not well versed in that language. He is a good friend, a good teacher, and is always ready to explain the themes of the unintelligible South Indian dances without even asked for. He is a creative artiste and is courageous in asserting any artistic improvement done on a traditional piece. He seeks for beauty more than for technical accuracy or traditional background and depth.

ACHHAN MAHARAJ AND FAMILY

The late Achhan Maharaj had a child's simplicity and a pure heart, free from jealousy and had deep affection for his pupils. With his bulky body he used to do miracles on his two feet. His hearty laughs were enjoyable and so were his talks. His remarks were never pinching nor they wounded the feelings of others. His brother Shambhu Maharaj has pungent talks in his lips, bitter in criticisms, loves art and gives credit to the deserving artistes. He uses slangs belonging to Lucknow, chews *pan* and tobacco, and is an arch smoker. Lachhu Maharaj, their cousin brother, labours hard, smiles and gives vent to his feelings through peal of laughter. For him time is no consideration. He is ever ready to show his talent and is immensely glad if appreciated. He cannot check his emotions. Birju, son of Achhan, is a mere boy, has boyish behaviour, smiles, talks less and is serious in everything.

I have come across innumerable other dancers, unknown dancers and dancers of less repute. I have met a number of Kerala Kathakali dancers, who are less known in Northern India, but they are quite

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MESSAGE OF DANCE THROUGH FILMS

By UDAY SHANKAR

IT is a matter of great pleasure to find that dance has come to be almost a part of Indian film production, whether the picture represents mythological, social or folk elements. One can very rarely find a film in which, by some way or the other, a sequence of dance has not been presented. But the question is — is it merely dance for the sake of dance or has the dance got any definite purpose behind it and is it used as a medium to convey some message to the public? For the film is one of the most vital media through which a very large number of people can be reached, and also a medium that serves to give the public not only entertainment but an opportunity to receive a message, consciously or unconsciously. Thus, the more we can make use of this medium, the better we can serve our nation.

THE ART OF CHOREOGRAPHY

There have been several outstanding pictures in India of which we can justly be proud. At the same time, India stands second largest in the world as far as total turn-over of film production and its consumption in the market are concerned. We have highly enthusiastic audiences; we have some of the finest cameramen, directors and producers; we also have the good wishes of big personalities with very strong financial background. But, instead of a welcome combination of all these talents, opportunities and finance, there arises a discord. The financier complains of the delay in production and wishes to hurry the same to obtain quick box-office returns; the director cannot give of his best either because of hurry or want of proper and adequate rehearsals of the artistes; while the artistes in their turn want somehow to finish their parts and take up other assignments and rehearsals on a different floor for shooting in other pictures.

All things considered, we cannot blame them either. The producers will, naturally, be willing to spend a good deal on thorough long-term training or rehearsals, and the directors and artistes have got to divide their services between contracts in order to earn their livelihood. As a result, when the picture is produced thus — even though sometimes it is popular and paying — it does not really have anything much to give.

So we find the whole approach itself to the thing is wrong and misconceived. The producer, the director, the dance director and the artistes must take one another fully into confidence and do their utmost to render their individual services up to the standard.

First of all, we have got to choose the dance according to the tenor of the whole story, rather than for a portion of the story only, and for that, the film director, the dance director, the costume department and the artistes, who will execute the dance, must all become one united body, well acquainted with the theme and the characters. They also must have a good knowledge to be able to create the sequence according to the time and the environment that is to be represented. Then only they can put their ideas to the best advantage through choreography.

NEED FOR TRAINING CENTRE

How to achieve that? To achieve that, we need one central institution, where, together with dance drama and music, training for efficient production as well can be acquired. It is not enough to learn only dance unless the dancers have enough understanding to bring out in their dance the life of other people to feel the art they are portraying. To personify Lord Shiva or Krishna and dance like them would be a sacrilege until and unless the artiste has enough understanding of the radiant and sublime personalities of these divinities. The posture, the look, the appearance, — every gesture of the gods of our mythology is surely different from that of us living in the twentieth century. For sometimes I had been working on the shadow-play 'Ramalila,' based on the life of the great King Ramachandra. Though the artistes had been selected from the best-known dance circles and institutions, yet it took me a long six months to make them bring out representative characteristics of each character. How should Rama —a great king and symbol of all that is great and true — walk, stand, move, and how should he create that radiant personality even while merely standing with his bow and arrows, was, for instance, a lesson which necessitated elaborate training. In the same way, they had to work for months together to bring out the best characteristics of the monkeys, that is to say, the peculiarities of their movements which, even though they are mere dancing, would show that they were monkeys. The boy playing the role of Jatayu (the eagle) had to watch for days the movements of similar birds flying high in the sky, and so on.

The point I should like to make is that the artistes who have gone through this training will for ever remain conscious and aware of the part they represent. Moreover, they thereby get well-trained to adapt themselves to any part. A boy may even be justified in refusing to personify Lord Shiva or Krishna if he finds his figure is not proportioned enough to do justice to the part and would not be able to radiate and create a personality which would be befitting. In the same manner, if the directors and producers are also equipped with this training they themselves will choose the particular type of dance and the artistes suited to the characters of the dance, and turn out something wonderful with their combined talents.

I doubt if there is any country in the world with such vast resources in the realm of dance as India. Since times immemorial, dance has been an integral

part of the life of the nation as a whole. Even today people, who live far away from the so-called civilization, beautify their social and religious ceremonies with dances. Why should not we — who boast of being civilized and cultured?

FOLK DANCES IN FILMS

As for using the classical and folk dances in our films. I find that there are several types of folk dances in India, each of which is beautiful, rich and original in its own way. But we must not forget that these dances were not meant for our film industry; they are not even suitable for presentation to the audiences of today. They have their own environments, their own audiences and, above all, their own characteristics. We can make the best use of them by making documentary films. But even then there may be a risk of these dances not being portrayed with real authenticity, if the approach is not made from the proper angle.

It is a fact that there lies a big gulf of difference of sentiment and outlook between those people and ourselves, and only if we approach them with love and respect for the ingenuity of their art, and make them feel that their art, however old-fashioned or crude, is surely something to be proud of, and that it is something which we miss in our modern social life, then alone will they come out with an open heart and give of their best. For I know, somehow they have been given a wrong idea of their art and are now shy to come before us. I was once invited to see a Naga and Manipuri cymbal dance by male dancers and, to my surprise, I found they were all supplied with newly-purchased tennis shirts just for the occasion of dancing before me — as I was considered to be a 'Sahib' and they were probably afraid that I might not approve of their dancing barebodied. Therefore, my request to those, who are interested in making such documentary films, is to remain conscious of these facts and try to take as true and natural a picture of their dances as possible.

In spite of the innumerable varieties of our folk dances, it is indeed very disappointing to see some of the reproductions in our motion pictures. The artistes, the dance number, the costumes — none do justice to the dance or dances they portray; they do not even harmonise with each other. I do agree that it is not possible to bring the artistes and musicians from different parts and have the dance filmed. They can only be expected to give of their best amidst their own surroundings. They have their festival days, the sentiments to go with them; they then, generally, get a little drunk — the sort of preparation needed by them to catch the mood and thereby to reach the joy of dancing. How can we expect them to express the same feeling on a shooting floor with all the unaccustomed blinding lights thrown on them, and the technicians and the crew staring at them and with the camera as their only audience? But still it is possible to do it. We can generate the same warmth and create the same environment and effect through our dance artistes if they undergo the training I have mentioned before, and with that training they can bring out those inner significant qualities and consciously reproduce them. These artistes must have the training so that they can create the same effect at any time or place.

CLASSICAL DANCING

As regards classical dances, it pains me to find that with the growing interest to introduce dance in motion pictures, a slow deterioration of classical dance is casting its shadow over the art itself, and is bound to cause great harm to our classical dance in the near future. I may even call it "motion picture classical dance", instead of characterising it as representing the real one. For example, it seems to be a craze in South India to dress the dance artiste in the Bharat Natyam costume while the dance, though supposed to be of pure classical type, is far from it.

It is still more painful to see the name of Manipuri dance being misused and exploited even by some of our well-known dancers of the stage. It should absolutely be stopped — the reproduction of any of our classical dances — unless proper justice is done to it. The directors should have a basic theoretical knowledge of these dances before they engage any dance director, and the producer — at least for the sake of the love for his country's art — should sacrifice his selfish interest and should not take undue advantage of something which is so noble and beautiful a thing to be proud of.

I can well imagine why the motion picture producers in India have particularly chosen only a certain type of our classical dancings; it is neither to popularise our country's art nor for their love of classical dancing, but just because a certain school of classical dancing is meant to be performed by female artistes, and, therefore, there are possibilities of introducing as much cheap sex-appeal as they desire.

UNDIVINE AIR ABOUT THINGS DIVINE

Films dealing with any mythological or religious theme have a special appeal to our people of India. We are a God-fearing nation and we are ready to do anything if it is in the name of religion. That is the reason why our outlook has become so perverted as to tolerate even those sublime characters dancing on the screen, where they create an atmosphere which can be anything but sublime or even a near approach to it.

As a lover of my country and her art and as a person who has devoted almost thirtyfive years of his life towards its uplift, I can prove that we can convey through dance any aspect of our own lives, of our gods and of our country. Dance can convey a message more powerfully than it has been done even through literary works or any other vehicle, and if we can make the film our medium to reach the masses, there is nothing like it.

How I wish I had resources enough to produce a film entitled "Dance and Its Message Through the Ages". I would love to show the costume, the dance and the music, with strictly Indian musical instruments to accompany such dance, dating back to time immemorial right down to the present day, showing the gradual changes as we imagine they may have been.

I cannot help stating here that we can have perfect music to accompany any form of dance or songs with our purely Indian instruments, thus avoiding the violin, cello, harmonium, piano or any such foreign instrument which does not do adequate justice to our Indian tunes. We have to keep pace with changing civilization, we have to acquire a new outlook, a new angle of looking at things, which conform to the nature of our nation and our peoples.

MODERN INDIAN CHOREOGRAPHY

I have already stated that any story can be told through dance. I have indicated the short-comings

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Shikar and SHIKARIS OF DAYS PAST

By DHIRENDRA NARAYAN ROY (Lalgola Raj)

IN Sanskrit, we come across the word *Mrigaya* which implies chasing and killing a beast. Now-a-days, *Shikar* is the more commonly used term for it. But its application is more extensive inasmuch as it implies not only killing a beast but signifies hunting of beasts, birds, crocodiles, whales etc.

In the primitive ages, man perhaps took to hunting chiefly for purposes of food and self-protection. In the graphic sketches in the caves, we see a family of the father, mother and the daughter-in-law anxiously awaiting the return of the son who would bring some *Shikar* for, in fact, the meat would be their food. At that stage, stones or cudgels were the only weapons. But, whatever they might be, some *Shikar* must be done. Gradually various weapons were devised, such as spear, bows and arrows etc.

The Greek goddess Artemes has been identified with the goddess Diana by the Romans. She is the presiding deity of hunting. She is equipped with bows and arrows, with a hunting dog by her side—such pictures are current.

Our *Shastras* have not commended hunting and so we have no presiding deity for the same. But, however much we have decried the same, it was in vogue in very ancient days as will be apparent from copious references to it in the ancient Sanskrit poetry. In the *Ramayana*, we find King Dasharatha going out for hunting which proved fatal to the sage-boy Sindhu, son of the blind hermit, who was mistaken for a wild elephant. Dasharatha was cursed by the sorrowing hermit and made to realise what separation from his extremely beloved son Rama Chandra meant to him. In the Panchabati forest Rama Chandra hunted the golden deer during his stay there with Lakshman and Seeta. Bows and arrows were used in those days by skilled hands in hunting. Reference to numerous types of arrows is found in the *Ramayana*.

In the *Meghanad-badha kavya* of Michael Madhusudan Dutt we hear Seeta speaking to Sarama : Soumitri collected fruits, my husband would go on hunting occasionally but refrained from killing beasts unnecessarily.

DAYS OF MAHABHARATA

In the days of the Mahabharata we find Arjuna while on a hunting expedition killing a boar with an arrow which had also been shot by the great God Mahadeva in the guise of a hunter. A duel ensued between the two and eventually we are glad to see Arjuna receiving from Mahadeva the famous weapon *Pashupata*. There are numerous pictures and paintings on the subject. The exciting combat centres round the slain boar. Arjuna is clad in red cloth over which there is the panther's skin, the arrow carrier on the back, the bow in hand, a sword hanging from the waist, with hair fastened in a tuft on head. No ornaments are seen. The disguised hunter has a tiger-skin on, a horn tied in the waist, equipped with bow and arrow, hairs fastened in a tuft, with bangles in the wrist, decorated with ear-rings and rosary in the neck. With him there is a woman, clothed in panther-skin, with suitable ornaments, holding a dead swan in her right hand and a long spear in the left. The subject is Arjuna receiving the *Pashupata*. No trace of horse or chariot is available anywhere.

The great poet Kalidas is contemporary with Chandragupta II and historians ascribe the date as 424 A.D. or even earlier. The ideas of this age differ from those of the days of the *Mahabharata*. Maharaja Dusmanta in a chariot is seen chasing a deer and then there is a hue and cry trying to restrain

him from doing so—such is the picture given by Kalidas in his *Avignanasakuntalam*. From the utterances of the King's companion Madhabya we come to know that King Dusmanta was fond of going a-hunting very often. At this time, some changes in the outlook also can be noticed with regard to hunting. Kalidas himself has very nicely written about the virtues of hunting when in enumerating them he says that exercises involved in hunting keep our body free from the superfluous fat and thus render it fit for any energetic work Through hunting we become familiar with the ways and manners of wild beasts when they get frightened or angry and what a joy it is when after chasing we eventually succeed in bagging a fleeing animal. So we fail to adequately justify what Manu and other authors have written on hunting.

HUNTING BY SABARAS

A.D. 608 to 648 is the period of Emperor Harshabardhana. His court-poet Banvatta in his *Kadambari Kavya* has given a graphic description of hunting by the *sabaras*. What a commotion and noise and scene of confusion in the forest! The roaring lions and horses, deer elephants desperately running about. A hell, so to say. has been let loose! There are the tigers. bears. boars buffaloes and rhinoceroses rushing out violently and disappearing! There is tumultuous uproar on all sides! When this subsides a little, appears the *Sabar* General with a hunting dog followed by many of his clan During this period along with various implements and weapons, a snare also was frequently used in hunting Hunting at this stage had transcended mere individual skill and depended much more on collective efficiency. Dogs, snares etc., had complicated the operation.

If we look to the West, we find that in the fourteenth century, means had to be devised to deal with a dragon that had proved a scourge to the priests. Nobody was bold enough to go by the road leading to the Church of St Stephen. Even the courageous people were afraid of doing it. But nobody knew what the dragon was like, a snake or a crocodile or anything else One thing that was clear to all was that anyone moving that way was sure to fall a prey to its wrath. That had been the fate of many a pilgrim. At last a young Knight contrived a novel means to cope with the situation. He secured a pair of dogs and a horse and gave them training to attack a fabricated dragon's figure. The Knight conceived that the dragon had no scales on its breast and that being the vulnerable spot it could be hit hard there. The object he had in view was eventually achieved. This story is the subject matter of the German poet Schiller's epical treatise

In mythological stories and those of the medieval period we find such weapons and implements being largely used in the hunting as sword, shield, spear, nets and snares. A horse or chariot was used as instrument for carrying. A dog was liked as a companion of the hunter. Dogs are recommended even now.

GUN-POWDER INVENTION

With the invention of gun-powder, a great change came about in warfares, also in hunting expeditions. It can hardly be ascertained with certainty as to where—whether in Germany or in China —the gun-powder was first invented. In the middle of the thirteenth century, towards the beginning of the first use of gun-powder we find a barrel of iron or bronze being loaded with gun-powder first and then a metallic ball used as shot. Thus muzzle-loader, match-lock, wheel-lock, flint-lock, single-barrel, double-barrel guns were made, and were in use in almost all parts of the world. We read a story in our school-days how one Ameerali killed a tigress. Fire was being lighted in the match-lock gun; that went on burning, after which there was a continuous ringing sound and both the hunter and the hunted fell flat on the ground; the tigress was killed and the hunter hit by the recoil.

In the case of a moving target or otherwise, guns were profusely used by the hunters, whether on foot, on elephant-back or while going by boats. In our country, in shooting game-birds, heavy guns were used. Now-a-days these are not so much in vogue.

HUNTING IN ENGLAND

We read the description of a hunting expedition in England in the sixteenth century during the regime of Queen Mary. Lords and Peers went out to hunt deer with a large number of followers and attendants Bows and arrows, swords and short swords were their weapons. Several hundred men were in the forest roaming in search of deer. The beaters with bows and arrows, swords and musket guns, killed a few first, keeping them for their own purpose. What a marvellous sight! Herds of three to four hundred deer at a time were not very infrequent. They were to be led to the appointed place where the noblemen were ready with their various weapons and dangerous Irish dogs and killing three or four scores of them at a time. In a description of hunting of the year 1715 A.D., there are references to weapons like bows and arrows, guns, short swords etc. Dogs are mentioned as helpers. There is no mention of spears or lances.

In Africa, the spear and the shield were the most commonly used weapons in hunting. The Arab hunters used horses as carriers and killed lions with guns and spears.

In our country too, firearms began to be used in hunting. We read, in the autobiography of Emperor Jehangir, descriptions of hunting excursions.

AKBAR & JEHANGIR

Emperor Akbar was a skilled hunter. Once he went out in the shooting of lions. He had four thousand followers, all equipped with match-lock guns. As the Emperor riding an elephant entered the jungle, three lions at a time jumped towards the elephant. One of them thrust its claws into the Emperor's thigh. In no time a brave and resourceful attendant of the Emperor, Mushahab Khan rushed his horse *Kolpara* to the spot, himself by one hand caught hold of the lion's manes and by the other which held a short sword continued to strike the animal on its neck forcing it to release its claws off the Emperor. But the other two attacked Mushahab Khan who, however, was undaunted. With his two hands he clutched the heads of the two lions and smote violently one with the other till they were crushed.

Then and there Mushahab Khan was decorated with the title *Sher-I-Fraz-Khan* by Emperor Akbar. It is said that the district of Hissar in the Punjab was the abode of hundreds of lions. Emperor Jehangir's autobiography furnishes many examples of personal valour. In one case, we find a lion being beheaded with one stroke of the sword. Emperor Jehangir himself was a brave *Shikari* and Empress Nur Jehan a skilful huntress who used to accompany her husband in hunting expeditions. Once Jehangir was attacked by a tiger; the Emperor shot at it but had hardly any time to replenish the gun for a second shot. His life was in danger when Nur Jehan came forward, shot down the beast and thus saved her husband's life.

Before this, Seikh Farid fought a tiger with the

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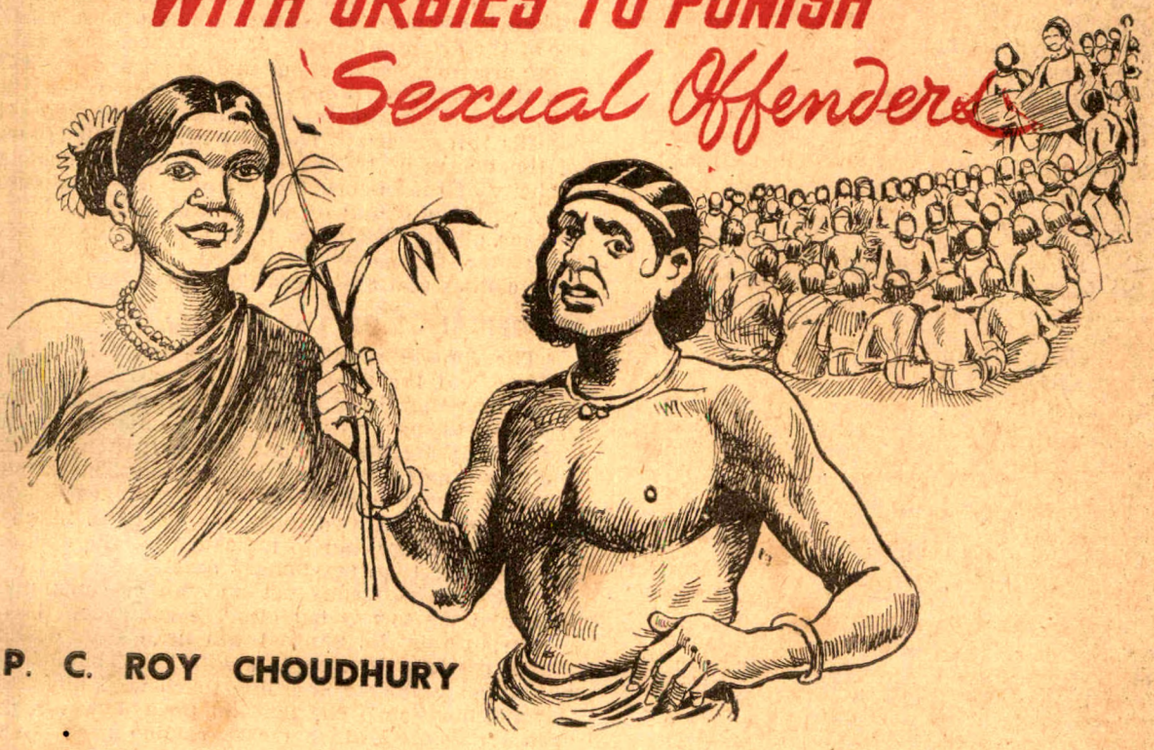
BITLAHA, A SANTHAL RITUAL WITH ORGIES TO PUNISH Sexual Offenders



By P. C. ROY CHOUDHURY

OCCASIONALLY, one reads of a *Bitlaha* or an attempt to perform *Bitlaha* in a village of the Santhal Parganas in Bihar by a frenzied mob of Santhals, an aboriginal tribe, and of police interference to stop it. The ordinary picture that is given is that infuriated Santhals commit all sorts of bacchanalian dances and orgies in somebody's house, damage the hutments, break up the kitchen *(chulha)* and the utensils, urinate in the *angan* (courtyard) and if the offender is found, he is mercilessly beaten. The offence is usually a traditionally prohibited sexual intimacy between a Santhal woman and a non-Santhal commonly known as *Dikku* or a Santhal woman with a Santhal of the prohibited degree or sept. Occasionally, there have even been arrests and prosecutions of Santhals while committing *Bitlaha* or in the course of preventing a *Bitlaha*. The reader gets an idea that *Bitlaha* is an unmitigated orgy quite in fitting with the uncivilized stage of the Santhals.

SIMPLE CODE OF MORALITY

This is a very distorted conception. In order to appreciate *Bitlaha*, which is almost the last mode of punishment of what is considered a sexual crime according to tribal law, one has to study the background of criminal law according to the Santhal tradition. Even a cursory study of this background will show that the Santhals whom we call backward or uncivilized have a simple but a highly respected social code of morality for keeping up the solidarity of the Santhals. The code is quite elastic and accommodating so far as the Santhals are concerned. There are recognised social offences and their punishments. *Bitlaha* is an extreme step which is resorted to as the last measure for keeping the bonds of Santhal society intact and to keep the *Bongas* or tribal gods satisfied.

STEP BY STEP MOVE

In spite of the onslaughts of the present trends the Santhal lives in a world of his own. To him the tribal gods or the *Bongas* are a part and parcel of his daily life. If crops fail and if the cattle die in an epidemic, the reason is not far to seek. There have been some lapses somewhere causing displeasure to some *Bongas*. If the Santhal boy or a girl goes against the tribal law, he or she has to atone for it. There is always a provision for punishment which is not at all severe according to our standard. But if the offence is such that the tribe is dishonoured, the *Bongas* will be thoroughly displeased and the whole tribe will be punished by the *Bonga*. A *Dikku* (a non-Santhal) having intimacy with a Santhal girl is an offence of this type. But even here a monetary fine and an injunction by the village council that the illicit connection must stop would be the first steps. But if the erring parties do not heed in spite of other warnings, a *Bitlaha* has got to be ordered. But a *Bitlaha* is never a sudden move. The procedure to be followed as a condition precedent shows that it is a deep premeditated move, step by step, where

obtained, where other villages are also informed and a prior intimation is sent to the *Manjhis* or the village elders where the culprit resides that a *Bitlaha* is to be performed.

SANTHAL WOMAN'S RIGHTS

It may be mentioned here that the Santhal Code of law and morality has given substantial rights, privileges and obligations to Santhal women whether they are spinsters, married or widows. The Santhal woman has her civil rights also. Although not encouraged and usually condoned by a small fine she has further a right to her body and can give it to anyone she likes even before marriage but the man must not be of the prohibite degree. Pre-marital sexual intimacy within the non-prohibited degree, however, is discouraged by the imposition of fines and is condoned only after the punishment is realised. Sexual relations outside marriage have no social sanction or public recognition but if brought to book there is the possibility of condonation by paying fine and by following the taboo. There are, however, taboos both on women and men just to keep the tribal society together.

CODE OF CRIMINAL LAW

In the Santhal Code of criminal law it has been aptly mentioned by W G Archer that sex and its regulation account for by far the largest number of rules and conventions. There is, on one hand, as mentioned above very great freedom and on the other the strictest control. The Santhals have a very great abhorrence for rape as they strictly hold that the woman's consent must be won first before there could be any intimacy even within the sanctioned sept. An offence of this type against a woman within the sept is on the border line of a major and a minor one and will depend on the circumstances. But sexual intimacy outside the sept or with a *Dikku* is different. The village elders often moderate an extreme view. There have been cases where the village meeting recommended *Bitlaha* but the 5 Manjhis who form a higher Santhal tribunal moderated the verdict by the imposition of a fine. When the 5 Manjhis give a decision their order is taken to be final but there is a Supreme Court as well.

THE SUPREME COURT

That Supreme Court is known as a *Birsundra* or annual hunt. The *Birsundra* tries an offence usually when the complainant or offender has failed to secure satisfaction from the 5 Manjhis or the incident has occurred immediately before the hunt and it has been decided by the people to include it in the proceedings.

When it is finally decided that *Bitlaha* has to be performed on a date fixed by the 5 Manjhis, a message is sent to the various markets *(hats)* through a messenger. The messenger is usually the complainant. A branch of *Sal* (Sorea robusta) wood with a few leaves stripped (to indicate the date of *Bitlaha*) is taken by the messenger and exposed. A symbol is made out of some leaves which are left to indicate that a sexual offence has been committed. The Santhals at the *hats* would query and a wide publicity of the offence and the date of the *Bitlaha* would be made.

The *Sal* twig sent out is known as the *Dharwak* and has a terrific traditional force behind it. It is a command and only in very exceptional circumstances when the punishment has been realised, a *Dharwak* may be called.

On the previous evening of *Bitlaha* people start coming in batches headed by their *Manjhis* or their deputies with drums, flutes and buffalo horns. There is a strange frenzied abandon and the dance known sung and folk tales with strong sexual slant are recited. The night passes in this manner and the stage is set for the actual *Bitlaha* next morning.

THE ORGIES START

On the morning the offenders are sent for but usually the offenders have run away days before. If, however, the offenders come up, admit their guilt, pay the fine and throw themselves on the mercy of the council the *Bitlaha* is not performed. The actual *Bitlaha* is attended by dances, songs with the beating of the drum and many of the dancers are naked. There are thunders of shout and laugh and the walls and the courtyard *(angan)* are desecrated, the kitchen broken up, the earthen pots cracked and the utensils thrown away The fury of the mob is only on the houses of the offenders. There is complete publicity of the offence, the offender is ex-communicated with the recital of chants and certain offerings to some of the *Bongas* as their share. The sacrifice being over, the naked jokers and dancers put on their clothes and the crowd liquidates.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RITUAL

The *Bitlaha* signifies that the tribal custom is supreme and the offenders are animals to be hunted because they have behaved like beasts. The tribe by this punishment throws out the offender and remains conglomerate. Defiling by urination is the symbolical purification by holy water. The kitchen being broken up indicates an ex-communication. The naked dances and lewd songs are meant to highlight the sexual offence and to indicate that the offenders are no better than sex-hungry beasts.

The *Bitlaha* means not only an ex-communication from the society but also the consequent loss of the civil rights. No Santhal will have any dealings with a person subjected to a *Bitlaha*. The *Bitlahed* man is contaminated and any touch with him leads to contamination. The Santhal Code, however, provides for *Jomjati* which means coming back to the fold by an atonement in the shape of an offering of a feast of pigs and fowls to the *Bongas* and to the caste men. The *Jomjati* function is marked with a peculiar sobriety and want of speeches or ceremonies.

If we analyse we will find the Santhals have not yet been able to throw away their allergism to the *Dikkus*. It was the oppression of the *Dikkus* that had caused the Santhal rebellion of 1855 which led to the carving out of the Santhal Parganas as a separate district. The Santhals think that the *Dikkus* have taken away their lands, right of hunt in the forest at their will etc., and the only thing they can do now is to keep back their girls from contamination. That is why they are anxious to save the girls from the *Dikkus* as well as from the contamination of the other septs.

INTERFERENCE UNDESIRABLE

A question arises if the Santhals should be allowed to practise their *Bitlaha* which is, probably, out of tune in the present trends. But if one takes a rational view and goes through the *Bitlaha* cases which are not more than 25 or 30 in a year, probably there is force in the argument that the *Bitlahas* should not be stopped but should be regulated. There have been experiments in suppression by Police and Magistrates. The results have not been always satisfactory. A Santhal can never reconcile himself to the fact that their action may in the modern terminology of law be an unlawful assembly or a criminal trespass in somebody's house. It is this attitude which has to be slowly tackled and any sudden executive action may not have the proper remedy. A *Bitlaha* according to experienced administrators is to be controlled and the ceremony should be allowed to be

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SHIKAR AND SHIKARIS OF DAYS PAST

(Continued From Page 188)

help of his sword and shield and killed it. He thus came to be known as Sher Khan and eventually ascended the throne of Delhi as Sher Shah.

FESTIVAL OF THE RAJPUTS

The Rajputs were much interested in hunting, Aheria being their annual hunting festival, the celebration of which took the form of hunting expeditions with the display of spears on the backs of horses and elephants. Success or failure in such expeditions would determine their well-being or otherwise throughout the year.

From the beginning of the last century to the first half of the current one, trained elephants were

Seikh Farid fought a tiger wth the help of his sword and shield and killed it.

highly prized. In tiger-hunting, no vehicle would be as helpful as a trained elephant. Excepting the Sunderbans, an elephant is always the covetable animal because a search through the dense forests or through swamps and thickets of reeds can far better be done by elephants. In the Sunderban area it is impossible for an elephant to move because the area is rather peculiar being full of marshy lands, mud, rivers and canals. I would like to relate here a story as told by Mahamahopadhyaya Haraprosad Shastri in the *Bener Meye*—a short novel.

It was in the Bengali year 995. Bihari Dutta of Saptagram was returning home after doing his trade abroad; his boat was anchored on an extensive sandy delta at the mouth of the river Ganges. It gradually sloped down to the water. There being a dense forest in this place—mostly of Sundari tree—it was the common haunt of crocodiles in the water and tigers on land. In the early hours of the day a boatman or two just got up from bed. Maya, a ten-year old daughter of Bihari Dutta, was collecting the oyster shells from the river-side, when suddenly, there was a hue and cry: 'Jackal, jackal'. The moment the girl turned round, she stood face to face with a Royal Bengal Tiger. The girl fainted out of fear. A disaster was imminent and people began to cry aloud 'Alas, oh !' Just at this time a small boat appeared near the place where the tiger was seen. From the boat whizzed a

wounded, the fierce beast groaned in agony and struggled desperately to rise on its legs but in vain.

As the boat touched the river bank, a young man of 18 or 19 jumping from it rushed to render aid to the girl who was still lying unconscious. The youth was Jiban Dhani, son of Sadhu Bene of Satgachia. Both father and son were capable hunters and their business was to collect honey and wax from the Sunderbans.

Before firearms came for extensive use tigers and wild boars used to be hunted with the help of long spears and snares. The operation would be highly effective if a few muzzle-loading guns were available. There was then no scarcity of big games, such as tigers, bears, wild buffaloes, rhinoceroses besides the more common snakes, crocodiles and deer. Belvedere at Alipore in the days of the Nawabs was a venue of deer-shooting.

There was yet another trick in hunting. When a place was haunted by a tiger, hunters employed a device commonly known as laying a *Vishala*. This was a long shaft designed to hurt the tiger that would by chance go that way, over which a trap had been laid. The shaft was fastened to the branch of a tree free to slide down as soon as the rope of the trap would be trampled by the tiger. The shaft would occasionally be poisonous. Before laying the trap, passers-by and villagers were cautioned against their movements in that area at night. Tigers also used to be trapped in a strongly built cage in which goats and sheep, being the tiger's favourite food, were kept to decoy the animal within it, so that, as soon as a tiger got into it, it found itself a captive. To set a trap and capture an animal was not an easy thing. It depended upon a careful and scientific calculation of all details of the device and intelligence, courage and skill of the *Shikari*. Such devices are still there ; the only variation now is that in place of the shaft, guns are used. Crocodiles were hooked by using live animals, generally small curs, as baits. One class of cunning crocodile-hunters used one-pronged darts and carried on their operation from a boat.

Even now, as in the past, the practice of making holes in the earth for catching a game, is prevalent. Generally, in hilly regions, this method is followed for the purpose of shooting wild boars. This is done just at the turn of any track rising from a low land to the higher altitude where games are generally found to move. Such holes dug with a good deal of care have definite measurements: at the mouth, it is five to six feet long, two to three feet wide and four to five feet deep. The base is rather narrower, viz., if the width is four or five feet at the mouth it will be one to two feet wide at the base. The mouth of the hole is covered with bamboo sticks or reeds over which are spread loose earth, grass etc., so as to give it a natural look in no way different from other parts of the surrounding area. Just as a boar goes up and takes a turn at the bend, it falls into the camouflaged hole. The base of the hole is designed narrower to prevent the boar from moving within it or trying to get up from it. The beast is then speared to death. Such a stratagem was devised in earlier days to entrap also a wild buffalo. This seems to be obsolete now.

Those who are fond of shooting wild boars are

nature of a net, made of raw jute. The lattice work of the net is four to six inches apart and thirty to forty cubits in length, four to five cubits in height. The jungle is surrounded with thin bamboo rods with one side protected with the said network the ends of which are kept loosely fastened and at both ends two sturdy persons are posted to guard against possible attempts towards escape by the boars. The chased leader boar changes its course at the sight of the net and the guards are always alert to see that it cannot run away which means disappearance of the whole pack. A chased boar gets enmeshed in a net which on account of its mechanism gets automatically overturned, and then begins to throw its legs in the air with the inevitable result that it is inextricably entangled. Usually two or three are thus trapped when the *Shikari* with a long spear comes up and kills them.

In our country when firearms first came to be used the British soldiers, sailors, and officers who were here, started giving training to our people in handling them. A workshop was started in Monghyr to manufacture these weapons.

Even though firearms of superior quality were not available games were so plentiful that hunters were always sure of their catch. In the 17th—18th century, a British officer killed forty lions within six months near Poona, no small achievement. It was not uncommon for a good hunter to kill hundred to hundred and fifty tigers.

ELEPHANT-HUNTING

In an account of elephant-killing towards the beginning of the 20th century, we find that in Ceylon a coffee-planter killed as many as fifteen hundred elephants with a 16-bore gun. Sir Samuel White Baker with his brother went to colonise a portion of Ceylon and very vigorously made arrangements in the New Era Elya for killing wild elephants. It was through his efforts that we got better rifles for big games. As a result of his efforts again the Express Rifle was made available and he himself was extremely fond of this weapon. But being a foreign import this type was mostly used by the native princes, rajas, maharajas and other noblemen of our country. Ordinary people had to depend wholly on muzzle-loading guns for hunting purposes. Some of them displayed such a remarkable skill in their use that it excited the envy of a nobleman hunter possessing better weapons. We read in *Baker's Accounts* that he came across two brothers in the U.P. who were wonderful shooters. These brothers used .16 bore single-barrel guns and could accurately shoot down any animal running at any speed and from any angle within a range of hundred yards. One shot was enough to hit the target right in the bosom.

SHIKARIS OF OLD DAYS

The wild tribes use bows and arrows in general. In the Garo Hills, the use of lance and a kind of big sickle called *Mlum* is very popular. They do not use bows and arrows. In Assam and the Hill Chittagong areas the muzzle-loading guns were more in use for elephant-hunting. In order to pierce the very rugged and hard skin of the massive elephants, *Shikaris* in this region would make the shots harder by mixing up tin with lead. Present-day *Shikaris* will hardly believe that with the help of this ordinary weapon, their compeers of those days could so easily finish off a wild elephant. Many examples can be cited where we find how the *Shikaris* of old days (in the nineteenth and the first part of this twentieth century) contributed to the total annihilation of rhinoceroses and buffaloes of the Sunderban area.

In our country, the rajas and maharajas and native chiefs achieved distinction even beyond the dra Narayan of Cooch Behar deserve special mention in this connection. Before them, Dalip Singh, son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who was taken to England by the British Government for his education displayed such skill in shooting that he was honoured as one of the best in the line. The efficiency of the Maharaja of Bikaner and Dholepur in shooting flying birds can be easily compared with that of the best of the world in this regard. The Maharaja of Mymensingh and Jnanada Prosanna Mukherjee of Gobordanga were hunters of renown, so was barrister Kumudnath Choudhury. Amongst the present-day *Shikaris* of India, mention may be made of the Maharaja of Surguja, who is a veteran shooter. He went to Africa and killed lions, elephants, rhinoceroses, hippopotamus. A few years ago his total 'bag' exceeded 1,111 Royal Bengal tigers and 2,000 leopards.

PIG-STICKING

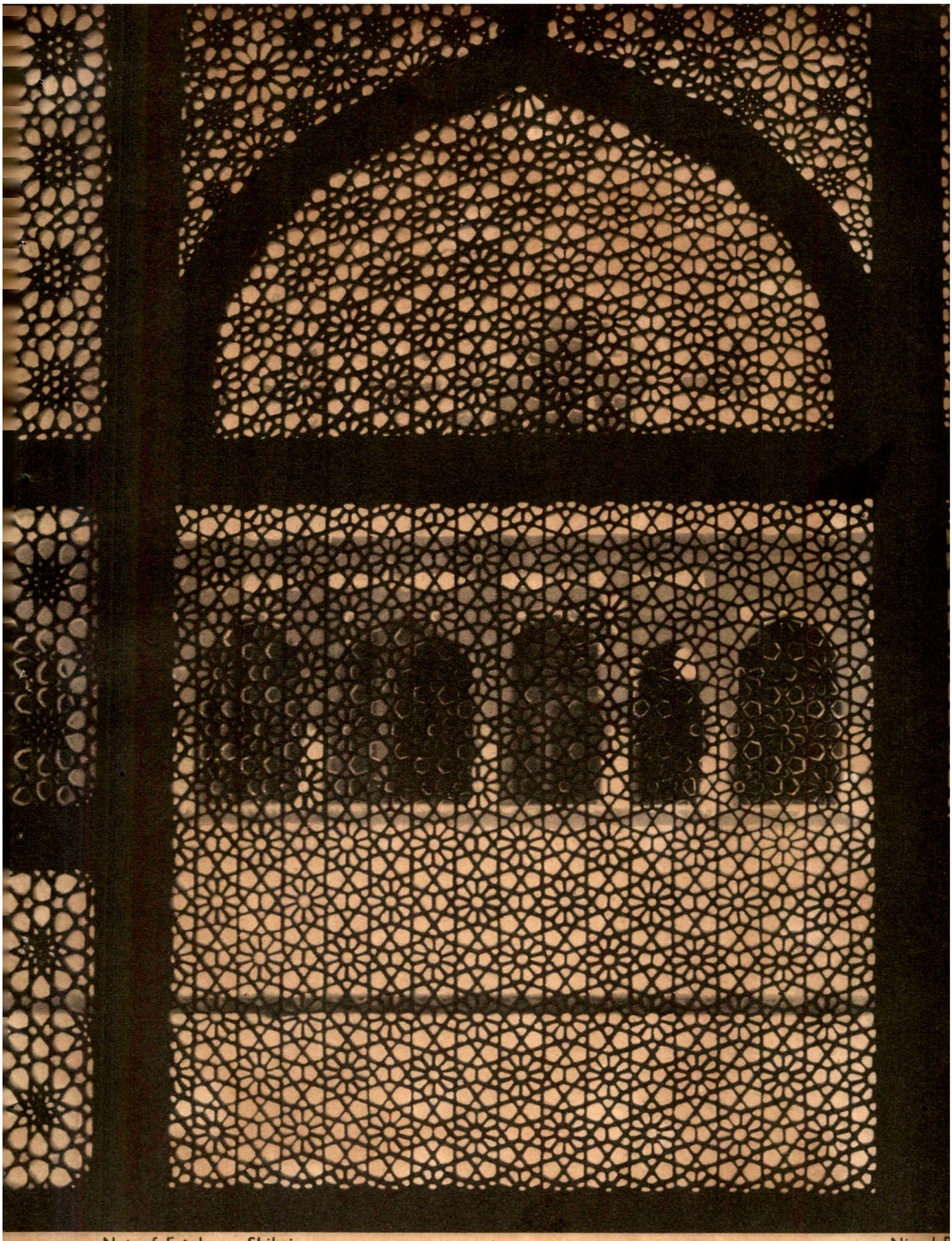
In the last century, pig-sticking was a very favourite pastime with the *Shikaris*. But this was not only a sport as it comanded a lot of courage and sagacity. Pig-sticking is hunting a boar with spear from horse-back and the peculiarity was that one should pierce the boar with a spear and then draw it up from the body of the wounded animal. The horse should also be properly trained for the purpose. My grand-father, Maharaja Rao Sir Jogendra Narayan was a skilled *Shikari* specially in pig-sticking. In 1868, the Duke of Edinburgh, second son of Queen Victoria, came to India and encamped at Dewansarai near Lalgola for pig-sticking. While in the operation, suddenly the Duke's horse got confounded and the spear held by the Duke loosened from his grip. My grandfather who was behind him at once rushed to the spot on horse-back and brought the animal straight to the ground with a single stroke of his lance, piercing it asunder right through the bosom. The Duke was so much pleased with his skill that he made a present of a valuable gun to my grand-father.

The high velocity cordite rifle is an invention of the second decade of the present century and telescopic sight has made a shot surer indeed but it must be remembered that at a time when a *Shikari* could not venture to proceed with a gun within a specified range, Emperor Maximilian of Austria could very easily kill an Alpine Chamois goat at the top of a hill far beyond that range with the help of nothing else than a cross-bow, which, in fact, he did more than once, as is evident from his diary. Arrangements and mechanical equipment in hunting have no doubt improved now-a-days, but it must be admitted that the present-day *Shikaris* lack much in point of sharpness of the eyes and accuracy of aim as compared with those of days past.

BITLAHA

(*Continued From Page 188*)

done in accordance with custom but as far as possible minus the bacchanalian element. W. G. Archer is right when he holds that the Santhals neither be opposed nor be given impression of opposition if a *Bitlaha* is to be performed peacefully and according to custom. A Magistrate should attend the *Bitlaha* ceremony only in the capacity of a friendly observer and explain that he has come to prevent obstruction to the due performance of the ritual. He should remind the Santhals through their *Manjhis* (head-men) that the ritual should be done in the customary manner without violence or damage. These principles had been applied to more than 20 *Bitlahas* in 1943-44 and in every case the ceremony was performed in perfect order. As a matter of fact the *Bitlaha* is a ritual, part and parcel of Santhal life and an interference should only be done in a very extreme case of administrative expediency.



Net of Fatehpur Shikri

Nirod F

Punishment

Rabindranath Tagore

WHEN the two brothers, Dukhiram Rui and Chidam Rui, set out in the morning, wood-chopper in hand, to work as day labourers, shouting and quarrelling were going on between their wives. But the entire neighbourhood had got used to this quarrelling and noise, accepting them like the many other daily noises of nature. As soon as people heard a shrill voice they said, "There! They are at it again!" that is, just what was expected had happened. Today also there was no departure from this law of nature. As no one asks the reason for it when the sun rises in the east, so when a row started between the two sisters-in-law of the Kuri home nobody had any curiosity to find out its cause.

Of course no doubt this quarrelling affected the two husbands more than the neighbours, out they did not consider it any sort of discomfort at all. The two brothers seemed to be travelling along the lengthy way of life in an *ekka*, accepting the incessant squeaking and rattling of the two springless wheels on either side as one of the ordained rules of the course of life.

On the contrary, if on a particular day there was no sound in the home and everything was ominously silent, it gave rise in their minds to a fear of some imminent unusual trouble. No one could tell for certain what would happen that day and when.

On the day that the narrative of our story begins, when the two brothers returned home just before dusk wearied out after working as day labourers, they found the silent house oppressively quiet.

It was very stuffy outside too. There had been a heavy shower at midday. The sky was still heavily overcast with clouds on all sides. There was not a breath of breeze. The undergrowth and weeds about the house had grown luxuriantly during the rains. From there and from the submerged fields of jute the thick steamy odour of wet rotting vegetation hung solidly all around like a motionless wall. In the pond behind the cowshed frogs croaked and the silent evening sky was filled with the chirping of crickets.

Nearby the monsoon-swollen Padma under the shadow of new clouds flowed with a very still and menacing look. It had washed away most of the cultivated fields and come near the habitations of men. In fact near where the river had scoured away the bank the roots of a few mango and jack fruit trees stood exposed as if trying to clutch at some last support in the air with the spread out fingers of their helpless fists.

Dukhiram and Chidam had gone that day to the zamindar's cutchery to work. *Jalidhan* had ripened on the *char* lands across the river. In order to harvest the paddy before the monsoon washed away the island every poor man of the place was employed either in his own land or as hired labourers. A peon came from the cutchery and took only these two men by force. Water had been coming down through the thatched roof of the cutchery room. To repair that and to make some screens of woven matting they

had worked all day. They were not allowed to come home. They were given from the cutchery something to eat. At times they had to work in the rain too. They were not given their just dues. The unmerited abuse they had to hear instead was much more than whatever they had earned.

Returning home at evening wading through mud and water the two brothers saw the younger sister-in-law, Chandara lying silently on the floor on her spread sari end. Like this rainy day of today she

too had shed copious tears at midday and stopping towards evening had become very sullen, while the elder sister-in-law, Radha with a swollen face sat outside on the mud platform. Her one and a half year old baby son had been crying. When the two brothers entered the house they saw the naked child asleep on his back on one side of the yard.

Hungry Dukhiram without wasting a moment said, "Give me rice."

The elder sister-in-law shouted back instantly raising her shrill voice to the skies, as if a sack of gunpowder had been ignited by a spark—"Where is the rice that I should give you any? Did you give me rice before going away? Shall I go out and earn it myself?"

After the whole day's weariness and insults, in the dark cheerless foodless home, on top of his burning hunger his wife's harsh words and especially the hidden ugly innuendo of the last sentence suddenly became entirely intolerable to Dukhiram. Like an angry tiger he roared out, "What did you say?" and saying this within a moment picking up his chopper without thinking he plunged it into his wife's head. Radha fell down near her younger sister-in-law's lap and died in no time.

Chandara in blood-soaked clothes shrieked, "Oh! What has happened!" Chidam covered up her mouth. Flinging away the chopper Dukhiram sat down like one lost. The baby awoke from sleep and began to yell aloud through fear.

Perfect peace was then reigning outside. The cowherds had returned home to the village with their cattle. Those who had gone to harvest the freshly ripened paddy on the *char* on the other side of the river returned in parties of five to seven men in small boats and all had reached home with a few bundles of rice, the reward of their labour.

Uncle Ramlochan of the Chakravarti family had gone to post a letter in the village post office. On returning home he was serenely puffing at his hooka.

Like an angry tiger he roared out, "What did you say?".....

Suddenly he remembered that his under-tenant, Dukhi had not paid his rent. He had promised to repay that day some part of it. Judging that they must have returned home by then, he flung a chaddar across his shoulders and went out with his umbrella.

He had an uncanny feeling on entering the home of the Kuris. He saw that the lamp had not been lighted in the room. A few dark shapes could be seen indistinctly on the dark mud platform. At intervals from one corner of the platform a suppressed wail of weeping welled forth, and the more the child tried to cry out "Mother," "Mother," the more Chidam pressed his mouth shut.

Becoming somewhat frightened Ramlochan asked, "Are you there, Dukhi?"

Dukhi had sat up till then still as a stone statue. As soon as he was called by name he burst qut crying helplessly like a young child.

Chidam quickly came down from the platform

into the yard and came to Chakravarti. Chakravarti asked, "Have the two bitches been quarrelling again? All day today we have been hearing their shouts."

Up till then Chidam had not been able to think of anything to do. Many impossible stories had been coming to his mind. For the time he had only decided that a little later at night he would remove the dead body to some place. He had never even thought that Chakravarti would arrive in the meantime. So no words came to his lips. He blurted out, "Yes, they quarrelled a lot today."

Making a move towards the platform Chakravarti said, "But why does Dukhi cry for that?"

Chidam saw that the situation could not be saved any more. He said suddenly, "While quarrelling the younger sister-in-law had given the elder one a cut on the head with a chopper."

It is not easily realized that there can be any danger other than the one present. Chidam was then thinking, "How shall I escape from the hands of this terrible truth?" He did not realize that the effect of a lie could be much more terrible. As soon as he heard Ramlochan's query an answer came to his mind and he said it.

Ramlochan startled said, "What! What do you say? She isn't dead, is she?"

Chidam said, "Yes, she is dead." Saying this he fell at Chakravarti's feet.

Chakravarti had no way of escape. He thought: "Heavens! What troubles have I stepped into in the evening time! My life will be finished giving evidence in court." Chidam refused to let go his feet. He said, "Dada-Thakur, now how can I save my wife?"

Ramlochan was the chief adviser of the village in all matters concerning litigation and court cases. After thinking a little he said, "See, there is a way. You run to the police station at once and say that your elder brother Dukhi had come home in the evening and wanted rice. Because rice was not ready he had hit his wife with the chopper. I tell you definitely, if you say this the girl will be saved."

Chidam's throat became dry. He got up and said, "Thakur, if I lose my wife I may get another, but if my brother is hanged I shall not get another brother." But when he had put the blame on his wife he had not thought of all this. He had done something hastily. Now unconsciously his mind was collecting arguments and consolation in support of it.

Chakravarti too thought that this was reasonable. "Then tell just what has happened. It is impossible to save everyone."

Saying that, Ramlochan at once made off, and soon it was known all over the village that Chandara of the Kuri family had killed her elder sister-in-law with a chopper in course of a quarrel.

As water comes down when an embankment is breached, so the police force rushed into the village. The guilty and the innocent all became extremely anxious.

II

Chidam thought he would have to follow the path he had marked out. He had himself said something to Chakravarti. This had been broadcast what could lead to what if something new were now exposed. He thought that there was no other way to save his wife except by somehow keeping to his first statement and adding several more things to it.

Chidam requested his wife Chandara to take the guilt voluntarily on her own shoulders. She was thunder-struck. Consoling her Chidam said, "Do as I tell you. Have no fear. We will save you."

He offered her consolation but his throat went dry and face turned pale.

Chandara was not more than seventeen or eighteen years old. Her face was plump and round, the body of medium height and tight build. There was such a grace in her healthy body that there was effort-

Chakravarti had no way of escape. He thought: "Heavens! What troubles have I stepped into in the evening time !"

lessness in all her movements. She was like a newly built boat, quite small and shapely, easy of movement with no parts loose. She had an inquisitive interest and a sense of fun in all things of the world. She liked to go to gossip in the neighbourhood and whilst going to fetch water with the pitcher at her waist, opening her veil a little with two fingers she observed with a pair of restless black eyes all that was of interest on her way back and forth.

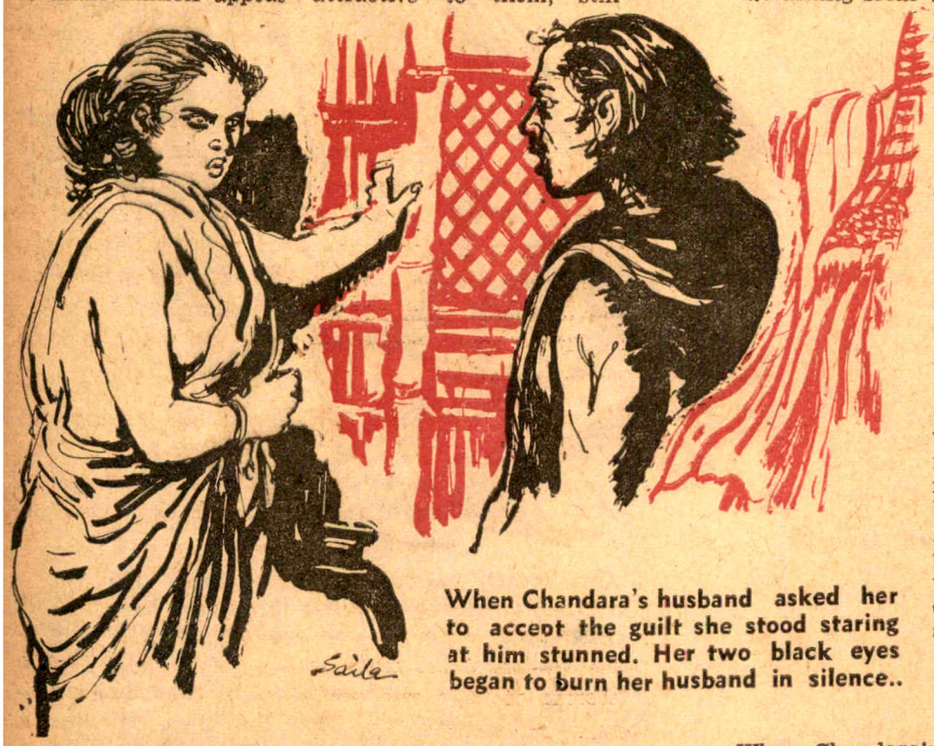
The elder sister-in-law was just her opposite. Extremely careless, slipshod and slatternly, she could not manage to keep the veil on her head, handle the child in her lap or do house work properly. She had nothing in particular to do, yet she seemed

ter-in-law did not say much to her. In a mild voice she said one or two stinging words and the elder one blazed like a fire and fuming with anger scolding and abusing she upset herself and disturbed the entire neighbourhood.

There was a strange similarity in the nature of these two pairs of husbands and wives as well. Dukhiram was a man of rather big build with thick bones and a flat nose. His two eyes did not seem to comprehend this world properly and yet did not want to ask any questions either. A man so harmless yet terrible, so strong and yet so weak, is rarely to be found.

And Chidam seemed to have been carved by someone with great care out of a shining black stone. There was not a trace of superfluous flesh on him, not a single dent anywhere on his firm body. Each limb had achieved great perfection in being blended skilfully with strength. Whether he jumped down from the high bank of the river, punted a boat, climbed up on a bamboo clump to select and cut tapering pieces from near their tops, in all he did was a balanced finish, a natural grace. His long black hair was oiled and brushed back from his forehead on to his shoulders with great care. He paid quite considerable attention to his clothes and appearance.

Though he did not look indifferently at the beauty of other village girls and had enough desire to make himself appear attractive to them, still



When Chandara's husband asked her to accept the guilt she stood staring at him stunned. Her two black eyes began to burn her husband in silence..

Chidam cared for his young wife with a little special love. They used to quarrel and also make up; neither could defeat the other. And for another reason the tie between them was somewhat strong. Chidam thought that Chandara could not be properly trusted, for she was a girl with a gay and restless nature. And Chandara used to think, 'My husband's eyes roam about in all directions. Unless I tie him up strongly, there will be nothing to stop him from getting out of my grasp some day.'

Much ill-feeling had been going on between husband and wife for some days before this present incident took place. Chandara had seen that on the pretext of going to work her husband went away at times to distant places. He even returned after one or two days without bringing back any earnings. Seeing that the signs were bad she too began to show a little extra frivolity. She began going to the riverside at all hours, and after strolling through the neighbourhood came back to praise highly the second son of Kashi Majumdar.

Someone seemed to have mixed poison into Chidam's days and nights. Whilst at work he could not be at ease for a moment anywhere. One day he came and scolded his elder sister-in-law a lot. She waved her hands and clanged out addressing her absent and dead father—"That girl runs faster than the storm. Me manage her! I know, one day she will bring about some calamity."

Chandara came out of the next room and said softly, "Why elder sister, why are you so afraid?" At this, a fierce quarrel started between the two sisters-in-law.

Rolling his eyes Chidam said, "If I ever again hear that you have gone alone to the river ghat I will reduce your bones to powder."

Chandara said, "Then my bones will have some rest" and at once attempted to go out.

With one leap Chidam dragged her in by her hair and locked her up in the room, bolting the door from outside.

Returning from work at the end of day he found the door open and nobody in the room. Chandara had gone and arrived at her maternal uncle's home three villages away.

Chidam brought her back from there with great effort and much pleading but this time he admitted defeat. He saw that as it was difficult to hold tightly in one's fist a handful of quicksilver, so was it with this tiny wife of his. She seemed to slip through the chinks between the ten fingers.

He did not try repression on her any more but continued to live without any peace of mind. His ever suspicious love for this young restless wife began aching like an acute pain. At times it even seemed to him that if she were dead he might then have a little peace. Men do not envy the god of death as much as they envy other men.

In the meantime that calamity took place.

When Chandara's husband asked her to accept the guilt she stood staring at him stunned. Her two black eyes began to burn her husband in silence like black fire. Her entire body and mind gradually shrank and wanted to escape somehow from this monster of a husband. Her entire soul turned away from him in revulsion.

Chidam assured her, "You have nothing to fear." Then he taught her many times what she was to tell the police and the Magistrate. Chandara did not lis-

ten to any of those long tales. She sat still like a wooden doll.

In everything Dukhiram's entire dependence was on Chidam. When Chidam told Dukhiram to put the blame on Chandara he said, "Then what will happen to sister-in-law?"

Chidam said, "I will save her." Big-bodied Dukhiram was relieved.

III

Chidam had taught his wife, "You say 'My elder sister-in-law came to kill me with the fish knife. I tried to defend myself with the chopper and somehow she got hurt'." All this was fabricated by Ramlochan. He had also taught Chidam in detail all the embellishments and evidence necessary in support of this.

The police came and began investigations. The conviction that Chandara had murdered her elder sister-in-law was firmly rooted in the hearts of everyone in the village. So was it proved by all the witnesses. When the police questioned Chandara, she said, "Yes, I have committed the murder."

"Why did you do it?"
"I hated her."
"Was there any quarrel?"
"No."
"Did she first come to strike you?"
"No."
"Did she ill-treat you in any way?"
"No."

Everyone was astonished to hear this sort of a reply.

Chidam became extremely agitated. He said, "She is not telling the truth. It was elder sister-in-law who first....."

The Police Sub-Inspector silenced him with a sharp rebuke. In the end cross-examining her according to law again and again he received the same reply. Chandara refused to admit at all that there had been any attack from the elder sister-in-law.

Such an obstinate girl was really rare. She was straining with all her might towards the gallows. It was impossible to keep her away from it. What tremendous pique was this! Chandara was telling her husband in her mind, "Leaving you I have accepted instead the gallows in my fresh youth. The last ties of my mortal life will be with it."

In police custody Chandara, an innocent lively little fun-loving village wife went along the well-known village path, past the *Rath-tala*, through the village *hat*, along the edge of the riverside, past the house of the Mazumdars, by the post office and school house, past the eyes of all who knew her. Branded with infamy she left her home for ever. A crowd of children followed her, and the women of the village, her near and dear friends—some through an opening in their veil, some standing behind their doors and others standing hidden behind a tree—on seeing Chandara being taken away by the police, shivered in shame, revulsion and fear.

Chandara confessed her guilt before the Deputy Magistrate as well and it did not come out that the elder sister-in-law had ill-treated her in any way at the time of the murder.

But that day coming to the witness box Chidam burst into tears and said, "I crave your mercy, sir. My wife is completely innocent." Scolding him the Magistrate checked his emotional outburst and continued to question him. He revealed the facts one by one.

The Magistrate did not believe his words. Because the main trustworthy respectable witness, Ramlochan said, "Immediately after the murder I arrived at the place of occurrence. The witness Chidam confessed all before me and falling at my feet said, 'Give me some advice. Tell me how I can save my wife.' I said nothing in reply, good or bad. The witness said to me, 'If I say that my elder brother killed his wife in anger because when hungry he had wanted rice and was not given any, will she be saved then?' I said, 'Never, you rascal! In the court you must not lie one word—there is no greater sin'....."

At first to save Chandara, Ramlochan had built up several stories, but in the end when he saw that Chandara herself was adamant against it he thought, "Oh my! Shall I at last be charged with perjury? It is better to say the little I know." Thinking this, Ramlochan told only what he knew. If anything, he did not desist from adding a bit more.

The Deputy Magistrate sent the case to the court of sessions.

Meanwhile sowing and harvesting, buying and selling at the bazars, tears and laughter, all the activities of the world went on. And as in the years before, incessant showers of Sravan poured down on the fields of young paddy.

The police were present at the court with the accused and witnesses. In the Munsif's Court facing the Sessions Court many people were waiting for the hearing of their own law suits. Regarding the dispute over a piece of a ditch behind a kitchen a pleader had been brought from Calcutta, and for that on the complainant's side fortynine witnesses were present. So many hundreds of people had come to obtain hair-splitting decisions on their claims. They felt that in the world there was nothing more serious than that. Chidam stood looking out from the window at this extremely busy everyday world and everything seemed to him like a dream. A cuckoo was

singing from the huge banyan tree in the compound. They had no litigation or law courts.

Chandara said to the judge, "Oh sahib, how many times more will I repeat the same words?"

The Judge explained to her, "Do you know the punishment for the crime you confess?"

Chandara said, "No."

The Judge said, "The punishment for it is hanging."

Chandara said, "Oh, I beg at your feet, sahib, give me that punishment. Do whatever you wish to do. I can't bear this any longer."

When Chidam was brought to the court, Chandara turned her face away. The Judge said, "Look at this witness and say, who he is to you."

Chandara covered her face with both her hands and said, "He is my husband."

"Doesn't he love you?"
"Oh, terribly!"
"Don't you love him?"
"I love him very much."

When Chidam was questioned he said, "I have committed the murder."

"Why?"

"I wanted rice. The elder sister-in-law did not give me rice."

Dukhiram fainted on coming into the witness box. After recovering consciousness he said, "Sahib, I have committed the murder."

"Why?"

"I wanted rice, She did not give it to me."

After much cross-examination, the Judge understood clearly that the two brothers were taking on the guilt to save a woman of their home from the indignity of death by hanging. But Chandara had gone on saying the same thing from the time of the police investigation right up to the Sessions Court. There had not been the slightest change in her statement.

Two pleaders had of their own accord tried hard to save her from the death sentence, but in the end admitted defeat at her hands.

On the day when a short little plump dark child with her round chubby face had left her toys in her father's home to come to her father-in-law's house, at that auspicious moment of marriage could anyone even dream of today? When dying, her father had said with relief, "Anyway I have given my daughter to a good home."

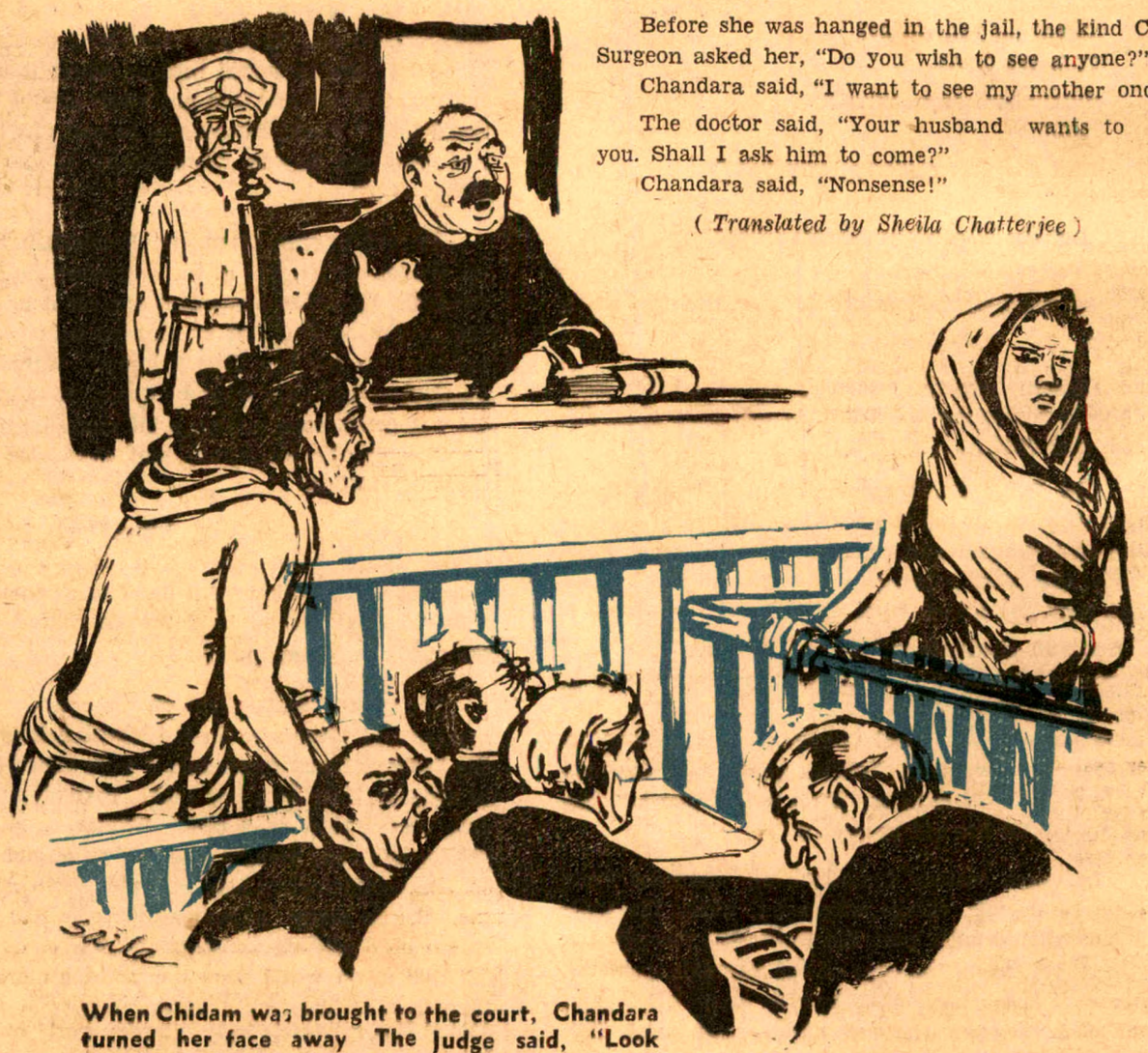
Before she was hanged in the jail, the kind Civil Surgeon asked her, "Do you wish to see anyone?"

Chandara said, "I want to see my mother once."

The doctor said, "Your husband wants to see you. Shall I ask him to come?"

Chandara said, "Nonsense!"

(Translated by Sheila Chatterjee)



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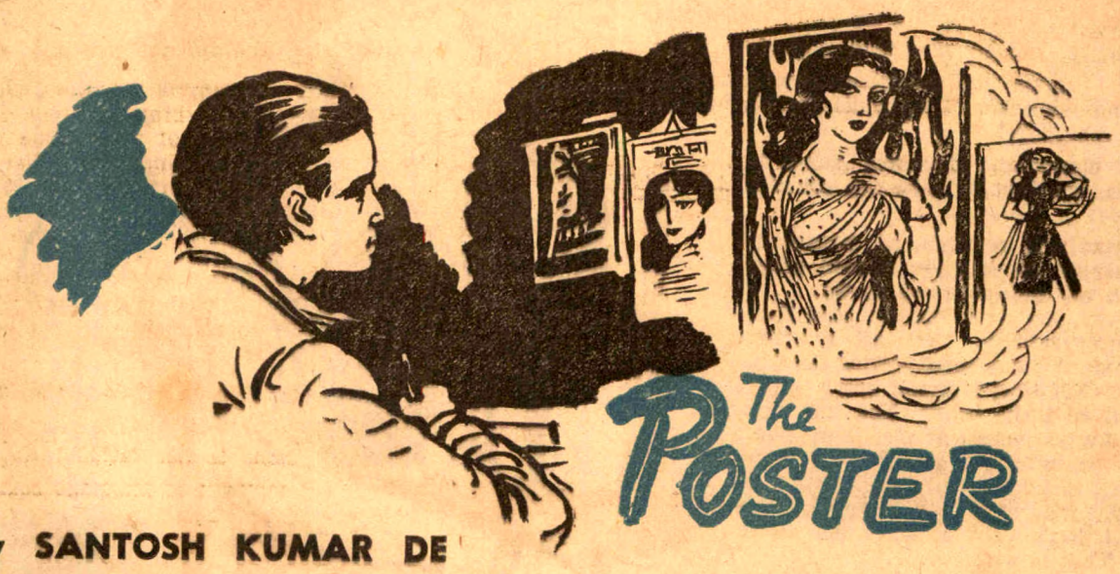


The POSTER

By SANTOSH KUMAR DE

RAMEN looked at the poster smiling on the wall. Beautifully framed it was, and glass-covered too. The covering glass was scrupulously cleaned every day so that not a speck of dust could obstruct clear vision through its transparency.

It was a multi-colour poster printed by the offset process, depicting a delightfully lovely and shapely damsel in a nearly diaphanous saree. The original artist had done a splendid job, displaying the lady's extraordinary shapeliness through the flimsy textile which by half concealing only revealed all the more: and the offset printers had evidently done full justice to the work of the original artist. The combination of colours was wonderful; *fascinating* was the word for it. In the background there were flames apparently fast approaching the feminine bundle of curves and loveliness. Were they meant to be real flames, or were they merely symbolic? Anyway, they served as a splendid background to beautify further what was already more than beautiful.

A masterpiece of art, and a masterpiece of offset printing. Once you looked at it, you could not turn your eyes away soon or easily; it would hold you spell-bound for some time. And it held Ramen spell-bound too, though he had seen it many more times than one.

It was a cinema poster portraying the heroine to her best advantage; but, judging from the expression in her wonderfully attractive face, she herself seemed to feel the situation disadvantageous for her. Anxiety and horror seemed to mingle on her face. And at her feet in luminous scarlet colour shone the words:

THE FLAME

Featuring the one and only CHITRA CHATTERJEE

Chitra Chatterjee! Who knew Chitra Chatterjee three years ago? She was then just an ordinary housewife, the wife of Gunen Chatterjee, a petty clerk in a petty office. Gunen fell ill. The illness continued. Doctors and dispensaries sucked off the petty savings bank balance he had, and as his employer refused to keep his post indefinitely waiting for him, he lost his job. He lost his job and asked his friend Ramen to help him out of this difficulty.

But what could Ramen do? He himself was unemployed. He wrote stories, some of which were published in various periodicals, but what he earned by writing was not even enough for pocket money. Gunen's illness had been too severe and left him unfit for work at least for some years to come, and he had no relatives whose help he could count upon. Could some work, any suitable job somewhere, be found for Chitra? Gunen hated to think of it, but there was no help. Could Ramen find a suitable job for Chitra?

"I shall see." Ramen had assured his helpless friend. "I shall try."

As luck would have it, it was exactly at this time that a short story written by Ramen, published in a weekly paper, attracted the interested attention of Parimal Roy, the well-known film producer. Mr. Roy had financed two films that had flopped. For his third venture he wanted a good story, for he felt convinced that his first two ventures had flopped mainly for poor story elements. Ramen's story "Satee Daha", in which he had painted the tragedy of a virtuous but unfortunate woman, seemed to him to be exactly what he was looking for, and he at once sent for Ramen. A big, luxurious car took Ramen to the palatial house of Parimal Roy, the film magnate.

Roy received him cordially and congratulated him on his beautiful story. "It has good film possibilities", he said, "if you just touch it up here and there and add some more dramatic incidents. Also introduce a funny character to provide comic relief. Make some situations for fine songs, so that I can have them played back by Miss Ratri Sen and Chandan Choudhuri. I want to make a hit this time. See?"

Ramen undertook to reshape the story as desired by Parimal Roy and within a week of his first meeting saw Parimal Roy with the final script. Parimal Roy glanced through the script and frowned a little. It was not exactly what he wanted, he said.

"Very well." he then said. "I shall have the whole thing revised and scenarised by our own

scenarist. I shall pay you for the basic story. Five hundred rupees won't be a bad price. Will it?"

Ramen's eyes almost came out of their sockets. Five hundred was beyond his wildest expectation for a story. Besides, filmisation of his story meant wonderful publicity, and he visualised a glorious future for himself. Editors and publishers coming forward with big sums as advance payments for his writings and books.....!!!

But his dream was shattered when he looked at the contract form he was asked to sign upon.

"My name will nowhere be mentioned as the writer of the story?" Ramen asked. "Your name will be publicised as the....."

"Well, well, my dear friend", said Parimal Roy encouragingly. "You are a writer. You can produce many more stories like this quite easily. Not that I myself can't write, but where have I the time? Yet my wife, you know, always laughs at me, her point of ridicule being that I am no good at story-writing. She once had the ambition of becoming the wife of a well-known author, you know. I don't want to leave her desire unfulfilled. That is why....."

"Of course if you don't like the idea, Ramen Babu," said Mr. Roy, "you can take your story back. I shall select one from the other stories that have been submitted to me for consideration."

Ramen could not afford to miss five hundred rupees. His wife was sick and he was unable to take sufficient care of her for lack of funds. Besides, friend Gunen Chatterjee was in difficulty too, and some help should immediately be given to him. Ramen signed on the dotted lines, surrendering for ever the right of ever claiming the story as his own, and with trembling hands received five hundred-rupee notes from Parimal Roy.

"That's like an intelligent man," said Parimal Roy, smiling benevolently. "I could have offered you less, or purchased a good story for less from some other young writer. There is no dearth of story-writing talents in our country, you know; only they need to be found out and encouraged. But somehow I took a fancy on you and you get five hundred, hard cash. If this picture makes a hit, even though nothing is mentioned in the contract, I shall give you another two hundred, don't worry. Parimal Roy is not chicken-hearted. And, by the way, I want a new face for the heroine in this film. She must have beauty and personality. A good figure is essential of course. As for acting talents, we can train her up if she is intelligent enough. Can you possibly recommend any candidate? You don't mind my asking, do you?"

Mind? Ramen was rather grateful to Parimal Roy for the asking. He at first hesitated, and then said "I have a lady in view, and I think she will be wonderful if she agrees. And if her husband agrees."

"She is.....I mean....she has personality, and beauty?" said Parimal Roy. "Has she ever....."

"She has never acted," said Ramen. "May be she or her husband will not agree. Anyway, I can ask. I think she will be splendid."

When saying so, Ramen visualised the incomparably lovely Chitra Chatterjee as the heroine of his *own* story, his own story that was going to be filmed. He quite forgot that he had sold the right to call the story his own.

"Do try to persuade her," said Parimal Roy, determined to have the honour of introducing a "sensational" new find.

Chitra Chatterjee hesitated at first, and so did her husband. At last they both agreed. There seemed to be no other way of keeping the wolf from

Ramen's eyes almost came out of their sockets. Five hundred was beyond his wildest expectation for a story.....

the door, and the opportunity seemed too good to ignore. Chitra Chatterjee went with Ramen to interview Parimal Roy and signed on the dotted lines to appear in the main female role on a starting salary of five hundred rupees per month on trial for two months. This was beyond Chitra's wildest expectation too.

In the film, Chitra's was a tragic role and she played it well. She did not need much of acting talents. The sadness of her life so naturally revealed itself in her acting that everybody said she had lived her role.

Before actual release of the film, Parimal Roy spared no pains in taking all possible precautions against unsuccess. He gave Kamal Choudhury, the leading poster artist, one of the most effective *stills* showing Chitra Chatterjee, the heroine, at her best, and asked him to paint a most effective multicolour poster from it.

"Make it the best you have ever done so far, and I shall pay you handsomely, said Parimal Roy. "Make it so effective that no one seeing the poster can resist the temptation of seeing the film."

And Kamal Choudhury did it. The Chitra Chatterjee of the poster was even more alluring than the Chitra Chatterjee of real life. Mr. Biswas's "Paragon Printing Co., Private Ltd.," well-known colour printers, printed the posters wonderfully well too. Wonderfully well indeed, the offset printing was so lifelike. It seemed as if Chitra Chatterjee herself was standing in front of the flames.

A fortnight before the release of the film, the city streets were "flooded" with the poster. It became the talk of the city and every film-lover eagerly awaited the date of the release. Who was this "one and only" Chitra Chatterjee? Parimal Roy had adopted a novel publicity stunt; he had not given advance editorial publicity of his new and sensational "find". The poster was the first publicity he had given her, and it took the city by storm. Whoever

(Continued On Page 202)

THE FARAKKA BARRAGE

By DR. RADHA KUMUD MOOKERJI, Padmabhusana

THE Farakka Barrage Scheme has been handled by Government for over a century.

As far back as 1853 Sir Arthur Cotton first proposed a plan for constructing a barrage at Rajmahal, together with a canal from the Ganga to flow into the Bhagirathi, and bring fresh water to the Hooghly. Periodically, and at intervals, notes of due warning as to the steady deterioration of the Hooghly were sounded by anxious engineers, especially in the years, 1863 and 1895. Again, in 1913-14 the then Chairman of the Calcutta Port Trust raised the alarm and called for a thorough scientific investigation of the conditions of a river upon which depends the very existence and the prosperity of the Port. This was followed by an enquiry made by the Director of Survey of Bengal. The results of this enquiry again led to a scientific examination of this primary riverine problem. The examination revealed that the bed levels of the Bhagirathi had been steadily rising at its source at the headwaters so as to call for "immediate steps to be taken to ensure a flow of water through the upper reaches of the river, which might be sufficient to keep open the channel." All this mountain in labour produced a mouse : only periodical dredging of the lower reaches, along with training works. This was all that was done before World War II, after more than half a century of scientific and engineering cogitation, with its output of technical and theoretical notes. But all this delay does not delay the natural decline of the river. Coupled with the steady deterioration of this main artery of communication for an entire State, there has been going on a process of a continuous and heavy silting near the intake of the Mullick Ghat Pumping Station, with the growth of increased bars in the river, the consequent increasing inconvenience to the movement of shipping, and alarming and uncontrollable salinity of the river exposed to regular tidal attacks of salt from the sea. These hundred years' schemes for the improvement of the Hooghly will not, it is hoped, supply another proof of the adage that history repeats itself. It is to be hoped that it may be given the lie by the Government of Free India recently declaring that everything possible was being done to expedite decision on the matter. But Bengal, mutilated and truncated, can expect only one decision in the matter, the revival and resuscitation of the main stream of her life and prosperity culminating in the capital and port of Calcutta, itself an all-India concern and asset built up by the effort of two centuries.

MAIN POINTS

The main points of the situation may be thus summed up :

1. The level of the Ganga has fallen much lower than that of the Bhagirathi at its source. After rains, the silt of the floods is deposited in the stagnant river of which the flow lacks the velocity which can carry it down to the sea. This silt raised further the bed of the river.

2. In the lower reaches, the river is exposed to another difficulty. The tides of the sea bring in deposits of sand and salt which are not washed down by the river, as its flow is too sluggish. Hitherto, the mischief of the tides in silting up the river was confined only to a limited length of the river down to the Hooghly point (confluence of the Hooghly and Rupnarayan), but it is now extending downwards, depositing sand along a longer course of the river towards the sea. As regards salinity it is spreading upwards as far as Kalna.

3. The Farakka Barrage Scheme is to have a weir and a reservoir out of which will be created a canal 150' x 9' to carry its water into the Bhagirathi at a point near Berhampore about 15 miles distant from the dam. The accession of this additional water to the river will keep up its flow at a velocity which will scour its bed, and will also render the river navigable from Calcutta to Patna (as in the days of the Buddha), opening up a cheap avenue of transport as a factor of economic development.

4. The Scheme may be completed by its culmination in a broadgauge railway up to Bursoi to speed up traffic, and open a market for Assam, North Bengal and Bihar for their dollar-earning products like tea which may be quickly carried to the port to be shipped abroad to gain valuable foreign exchange.

THE POSTER

(*Continued From Page 200*)

this Chitra Chatterjee, this "one and only" might be, she was a paragon of lovely shapeliness undoubtedly, everyone thought, and if she was so wonderful in the still poster, how more wonderful she must be on the screen which will visually bring her to life.

Moralists declared the poster to be a scandal and lamented that while there are film censors, there are no censors yet for film posters. But such moralists were, as they always are, a microscopic minority, and their voices proved less effective than crying in the wilderness. Gunen Chatterjee saw the poster displayed in the street, from his sickbed, and shuddered. Chitra Chatterjee herself felt shocked She had seen the completed film screened in the projection theatre of Parimal Roy's studio. Nowhere in the actual film was she portrayed so revealingly like that ; the poster was shockingly exaggerated. She tried to protest, but Parimal Roy simply laughed her protest away. "You are much too squeamish", he said.

The poster, as a piece of masterly publicity, did a splendid job. Thousands and thousands flocked to

"My dear friend, you will see her in person," said Mr. Biswas. "Right here in this office and very soon too".

see the film which had a long continuous run in several houses in the city and suburbs at the same time. Chitra Chatterjee became famous as the most glamorous lady of the silver screen. She was *made*. And Parimal Roy was congratulated on his new "find".

As for the poster, it was awarded the first prize in the Graphic Arts Exhibition as the most remarkable specimen of offset printing in recent years. As a result, big orders for high class offset printing came pouring in to "Paragon Printing Co., Private Ltd."

Parimal Roy, it seemed, was not an ungrateful man. Finding Ramen jobless, he took him one day to Mr. Biswas, the proprietor of Paragon Printing Co., and from the next day Ramen became Personal Assistant to Mr. Biswas. The pay was not much to speak of ; Mr. Biswas did not believe in paying his men a single copper above the minimum he could make them accept. Duties were multifarious too. Besides, he had to come early and go late. But Ramen was glad to have a secure job at last.

Chitra Chatterjee gradually gathered many fans, and changed fast. Ramen often felt sorry that he had introduced her to Parimal Roy. At the same time he also felt that there was no other way. He blamed Fate. When he found Chitra Chatterjee too much of a celebrity, he counted himself too small for her continued acquaintance, and gave up meeting her altogether.

All these episodes of past history passed through Ramen's memory as he looked at that same poster smiling on the wall. Mr. Biswas, his big boss, was busy with a friend on the other side of the wooden partition that separated the grand boss from his petty personal assistant.

The friend had come to see Mr. Biswas soon after his return from overseas. Ramen could hear their conversation.

"Yes, it is splendid, this poster," said the friend. "One wouldn't believe it produced in India; it can compete with the finest foreign production. And this Chitra Chatterjee seems to be wonderful too. How one likes to meet her in real flesh and blood. The poster fills one with that yearning, to be brutally frank.

"That's the chief merit of the poster," said proud Mr. Biswas. "And I can challenge that in this city only Paragon Printing Co. can produce such wonderful work. It is our lucky poster too. It not only helped the film to make a hit, but since our turning out this wonderful work, huge orders at very high rates have literally been thrust on us from all the big firms. This bids fair to be the golden year of our printing concern. And let me tell you that the one and only Chitra Chatterjee, who once disliked, nay, resented this poster, now admires it most. How these women change!"

The last sentence was uttered in a tone as if Shakespeare's Hamlet was saying "Frailty, thy name is woman!"

The two friends on the other side of the partition talked and Ramen on this side listened in silence.

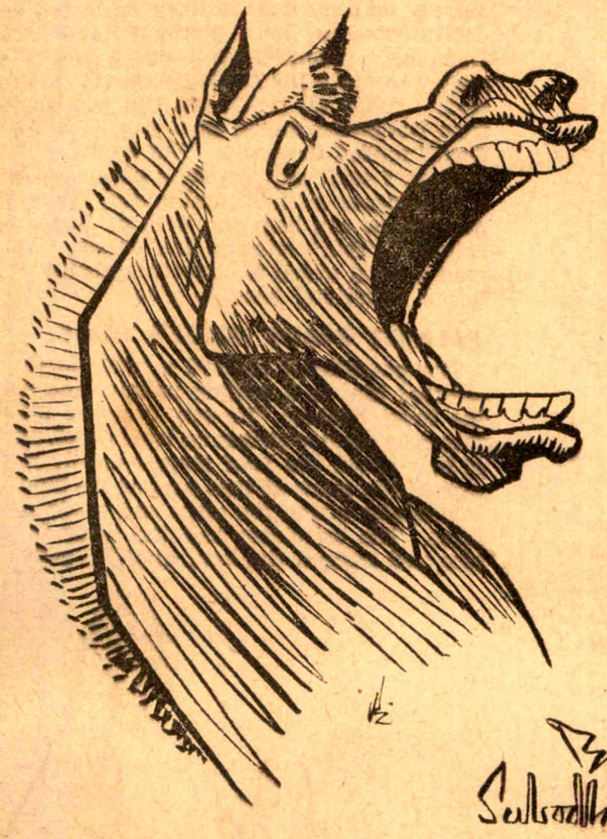
"The poster is wonderful. But how was the film: The Flame?"

"Wonderful too," said Mr. Biswas in reply to his friend's query. "Chitra Chatterjee was a sight for angels to see and swoon. She didn't have much to act; her very presence and personality almost did the whole trick. Such beauty of face and figure is rare, you know. And she knows, now at least, how to make the best of it."

"Unless the poster be a d-d liar," said the friend fresh from foreign lands, "this Chitra Chatterjee would have created a sensation in Hollywood or anywhere in the continent. How I would like to see her in person!"

"My dear friend, you will see her, in person,"

(*Continued On Page 207*)



A MYSTERIOUS RACE-HORSE THAT NON-CO-OPERATED

By Subodh Chandra Mitter

PANCHANANDA was a country race-horse of redoubtable fame. He had acquired in him several equestrian qualities of a high order which made him a hot favourite in the race-course, to wit, vim, vigour, mettle, courage, impetuosity, cautiousness, steadiness, grit and, above all, balance of mind and power of judgment which latter sometimes approached even those of human beings. Beyond the fact that he was of country origin nothing more was known of his pedigree. Naturally he was classed 'B' in spite of these fine qualities in him. Never in his racing career was he sick or sorry, never did he flag or fumble, stumble or drop, or in any way did he show signs of inferiority to 'A' class races. In this way he had run several races and had built a large fortune for his owner and had been ear-marked for promotion to class 'A', when all too suddenly on a Christmas Day he displayed an alarming pessimism which let down his owner with a broken heart which took a long time to recover. He had behaved remarkably well, so characteristic of him, in every trial, but in the final he was a crest-fallen creature right from the beginning. He not only made a bad start, but also, from the very moment of his start, he showed ugly signs of obstinacy which the jockey with all his skill failed to remove. The jockey sometimes frowned and fretted and at other times he caressed and cajoled, but all t no purpose. The animal must have his own way a through the race.

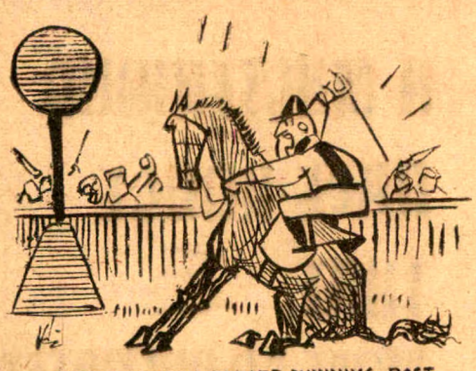
STRANGE BEHAVIOUR

And what was wrong with him? Once he woul try to be an aberrant racer. On another occasion h would hop on his hind legs moving the fore ones in sprawling manner, as if trying to swim in air. On third occasion, after overtaking all others, he pur posely slowed his steps almost to the point of stop ping just a length before reaching the winning pos allowing all others to overtake him. On a fourt occasion gathering his feet together he would swi his body round and round all along attempting t bite the tail and would thus spin like a top. Naturall all others overtook him. The jockey was a vetera one and an old one too. Never in his life had he ex perienced such equestrian vices. "The animal mus be a knowing creature or else he could not have be haved so shabbily", muttered the jockey within him self. "I can cure the vice which originates from ani mal spirit, but to cure a vice seated in a purposive wi is beyond my power," continued the jockey withi himself. "What to do with an animal like this? Le Heaven take charge of his racing career," added th jockey within himself. Eventually, however, the day' run proved a genuine upset race. Neither the jockey nor anybody else was responsible for it.

OWNER FAINTS

The net result of those happenings was the spread of a deep gloom all over the arena and the stadium which slowly permeated beyond the fencing where

unlicensed betters had assembled to watch the race. The owner fainted on his seat with hardly a man to console him or bring him back to his senses. Hysteric screams of the lady betters rent the atmosphere. Cursing tongues of rich gamblers took undue advantage over their sense of decency. "Shoot him out-

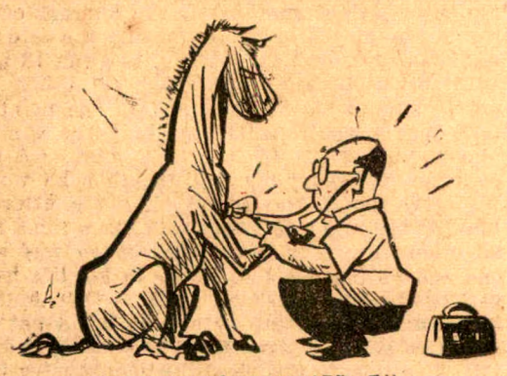


— JUST A LENGTH BEFORE WINNING POST

right!" *"Salako Maro!"* "A damned traitor!" "A rascal of the first water!" "An imp of Satan!" were some of the elegant expressions which could be mentioned. The other expressions are left to the readers to imagine. One fat gentleman of *plethora opula*, who had been accosting the racer from his distant seat with terms of endearment such as *'Ao Mera Soneka Chand'; 'Ao Tu Mera Mai Bap Hai'; 'Tu Mera Dharamki Dhwaja Hai'; 'Ajao Bhaia, Sone Chandi Hira Moti, Sav Kuchh Denge'; 'Jilepee, Laddu, Pera, Sav Kuchh Khilaenge';* suddenly ejaculated *'Dhat Sala, Haramika Bachchha, Baiman Khahaka.'*

PROBE INTO CAUSE

The race over, the owner, relieved of the swoon, started an enquiry into the cause of the day's happenings. His first suspicion rested with the jockey. So he engaged a private detective who after an impartial enquiry into the matter negatived the suspicion. The next victim was the groom in whose rearing care the animal had been placed, but the detective after making due enquiry declared him also innocent. "What then can be the cause"? pondered the owner within himself. He next got the animal examined by a veterinary surgeon of outstanding fame. The sur-

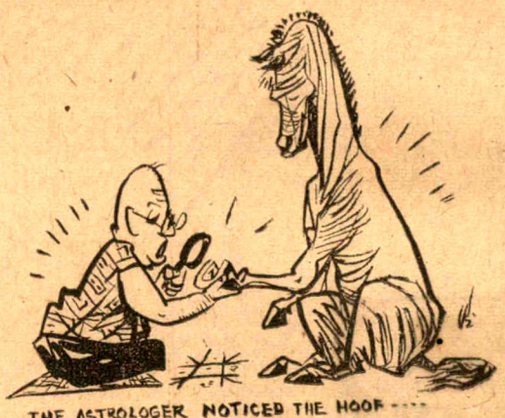


THE ANIMAL WAS EXAMINED BY A VETERINARY SURGEON

geon too could not help him much in the matter and declared the animal to be perfectly sound with absolutely no physical defect in him. The owner grew perplexed in mind. The more he tried to get at the cause the more it became shrouded in mystery. At long last, he came to the conclusion that either it was a case of mental perturbation pure and simple or some evil spirit must have taken possession of the animal. India is a land of clairvoyance. There was no dearth of clairvoyants in this country. The owner lost no time over the matter and forthwith ran to a famous practitioner of occult science. The latter demanded the birth date and a family history of the horse. The owner fumbled over the matter and said: "Up till now the pedigree of the animal is unknown to me, nor do I know his birth date. The horse has been presented to me by a Sadhu after having extorted from me a promise that I would spare no care and money to make the animal happy." The practitioner said: "That's all right, you can get the information from the Sadhu direct, can't you?" "No, the Sadhu is dead," replied the owner. "But I must have the information, I can't say anything off hand," rejoined the occult-science scientist and added, "Why not go to a palmist, he can help you with a horoscope of the animal." "Tut!" retorted the owner, "Can a palmist read a hand which is altogether absent in the horse? Speak something sensible please."

PALMIST READS HORSE'S HOOF

The practitioner beamed a smile on the owner and referred him to a leading palmist and astrologer of the town adding: "He can decipher many startling things by reading stripes on horse-hoof, and the course of hair above the hoof more specially if there be a *panchkalin* mark at that part of the limb." The owner reluctantly wound his steps and made for the astrologer. The astrologer had the horse brought before him and noticed the hoof and the *panchkalin* mark



THE ASTROLOGER NOTICED THE HOOF ----

above it with great scrutiny, a scrutiny that surpassed the skill of a research-loving scientist. With a look of profound solemnity the palmist asked: "Where did you get the horse from?" The owner replied, "From a Sadhu who is no more on this earth." "Yes", said the palmist gravely, "it is a spiritual horse no doubt—it is not a horse at all—the soul of a great renouncer is encased in the body of this horse. I shall give you more details tomorrow morning after I have finished my matins, say at about 7 A.M." The next morning witnessed the presence of the owner before the palmist seated on a piece of carpet. With the usual greetings the owner begged to know the further revelations in the matter. The palmist motioned him to a carpet seat arranged in front of him.

SOUL ENTERS EARTHEN HORSE

After the owner had reposed on the seat the palmist went on narrating the further details. He said: "A young boy, hardly out of teens, of a robust mind, having joined the non-co-operation movement in its early days, was belaboured with a lathi by the police during their lathi-charge. As a result his right leg got slightly damaged and in consequence he had to limp for some time. The mother of the boy prayed to the deity Panchananda Thakur for his speedy recovery and offered an oblation of an earthen horse

(*Continued On Page 207*)

ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY IN WELFARE STATE

By P. K. GUHA,
Professor Of English, Jadavpur University

INDIA is no longer a Police State concerned only with the maintenance of law and order. She is a Welfare State that has declared in her Constitution her resolve to promote the well-being of every single inhabitant of the country. She is a democratic State that recognizes the fundamental right of all citizens, men and women alike, to an equality of opportunity and an adequate means of livelihood. She fully recognizes the essential need for the imparting of a certain minimum of education to all citizens within a reasonable short period of time. She is alive to the fact that this provision of a widespread education is an indispensable prerequisite, second only to food, for the successful implementation of her development programmes and the establishment of a true democracy in the country.

The educational system of our country has an intimate bearing on the attainment of the general objectives of its welfare schemes and projects. It largely determines the quality and the social climate of the community. On it rests the fulfilment of the need of making available, in the various fields, personnel of requisite quality at the required rate. It is the products of our educational apparatus that are to furnish the army of teachers that are required to fight the battle of mass illiteracy and ignorance. It is our educational system that has to serve as an agency for that dissemination of knowledge that is necessary for fostering the spirit of co-operation and disciplined citizenship, which alone can evoke public enthusiasm in our development plans and welfare projects and build up local leaderships. Our educational system must be such as would train the people to place responsibilities before rights and to keep narrow individualism and acquisitive instincts within legitimate bounds.

NO CLOISTERED TEMPLE

The role of a University in the Welfare State, that India intends to be, must be viewed against the background of a tremendous demand for the diffusion of the light of knowledge among the entire population. No longer can a University in India afford to remain a cloistered temple of learning, a mere sanctuary of culture oblivious of what the community is yearning for in the shape of trained, enlightened personnel fit to put shoulder to wheel immediately they come out of the portals of the University. Our Universities must fall in line with the planning machinery that has been set up for achieving the general well-being and all round prosperity of the country. Our Universities must see to it that they do not destroy the potentiality of a single student by failure in examinations due to wrong choice of lines of study or ineffective method of teaching. And they must also see to it that they do not turn out a number of hopeless misfits who are bound to remain unemployed, for they are not employable for any practical purpose in life.

Of course the Universities of India must continue to be seats of scholarship and advancement of learning. They must continue to cater to the country's cultural needs, essential for the healthy growth of a nation. They must go on performing their traditional function of stimulating creative faculties, increasing the capacity of our youth for enjoyment and appreciation of literature and arts and providing for a study of sociology and natural sciences. They should continue to be a seminary of instruction in engineering, medicine, law. An adequate provision for a training of the highest standard in these various branches of knowledge is the vital need of every country or State.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

But in playing this traditional role a University in a Welfare State will have to provide full facilities for education under proper conditions of residence and study, free from economic stress and strain, to the students it undertakes to teach. It must also offer reasonable terms for a recruitment and retention of the right type of teachers and keep them carefree and happy and spontaneously devoted to their noble task of nation-building.

A University in our Welfare State will have to guard against wastage of precious human material. It should establish such a co-ordination between its mode of training and its system of testing that the chance of failure in examinations would almost disappear. It should not function merely as a weighing-machine operating at the termination of the course without having ensured the regularity and soundness of the training received by the student all through the course.

It should admit into its classes only such students as are competent to receive higher education, the rest having been absorbed in other suitable lines under the multi-purpose scheme of our reformed secondary education. At the University the number on the rolls should be strictly limited and there should be a reasonable teacher-student ratio for a proper system of tutorial instruction and intimate association between teacher and pupil. The University should aim at a development of personality in

ery one of its students. Mass-lectures should be duced to a minimum and debates, discussions, semi-ars, symposia should be the basic factors of educa-on. Care should be taken to develop in the students power of independent thinking and clarity and ease expression.

ASK OF MAKING LEADERS

Our Universities should be alive to their respon-bility of moulding leaders of thought and action. ney are to provide leadership in politics and admi-stration, in teaching, in the professions, industry d commerce. They have to meet the increasing emand for every type of higher education, literary nd scientific, technical and professional.

Extra-academic activities must have an expand-g programme in a University in our Welfare State. addition to the customary provision for athletics, ramatics, debates, publication of magazines etc., aining in social service should be organized through cial service camps, rural excursions, night schools n by the students, and such other activities.

These extra-academic activities will, of course, ay a large part in achieving the end of training would-be leaders for the community. But to tain this purpose the academic side of our Univer-ty life will also have to be reoriented. Self-nfidence must be created in the students and they ust be trained to develop personal convictions and ve expression to them with courage. They should longer be passive recipients of the teachers' ins-uction but should be active participants in all ademic transactions. Our Universities must not rget that teaching is a game at which both the acher and the taught must play.

UAL FUNCTION

In addition to this function of fashioning the nd and intellect of the students, as also their ysical constitution and health, a University in a elfare State has to undertake the responsibility of aining up the students as serviceable members of e community. Our University education must be rrelated to the new social order at which Free dia aims. The University must recognize its dual nction of building up the student's own individuality d strengthening his sense of responsibility to the mmunity, "to make him a better member of a better jority." In our University education there should a balancing of emphasis upon the individual and e social good. Our Universities should accept the inciple that their purpose is not to create theore-al scholars but well-equipped all-round men of actical utility in life. They should be endowed with broad general culture in addition to their profi-ency in their selected branches of special study. e students of Humanities should have some owledge of the Natural Sciences, and the students Science, Engineering, Technology should have me acquaintance with the Humanities. The eme of General Education, promulgated by the ion Ministry of Education, should be welcomed by Universities as an aid to this much-needed broad-ing of our University education.

There is a need for a revolutionary change in technique of University teaching and examina-ns, for a stoppage of the tragic waste of rich entialities by wrong educational alignments and a system of mechanized, large-scale factory method that takes no account of the individual student.

But more than this, there is a need for a transformation of the aims and ideals of University education. The students in our Universities must be imbued with a sense of their obligations to their less fortunate brethren. Mere acquisition of knowledge for themselves is not enough for University students of a Welfare State. They should acquire, while within the University, a missionary zeal for a diffusion of the light of knowledge among the entire community. They should come out of the University with the holy resolve that they must repay through *Jnana-Dan* the debt of honour that they owe to the community that provided them with the facilities for higher education.

BHOODAN MOVEMENT

(*Continued From Page 18*)

picture of a society based on *Gramdan, Gram Sankalpa* and *Gram Swaraj* is clear and has been put forward today. This is what I said the greatest contribution of this movement to India. I think, this is a picture which perhaps will not be questioned or opposed by anyone ; because most people talk of those things which they are not able to do themselves. I would like to add one note. It should be appreciated by all that what has been achieved voluntarily cannot be achieved by any action of compulsion. *Gramdan* and *Gram Sankalpa* are not possible with compulsion. If all the powers are given from the top, the situation would become much worse. This capacity for self-management has to be created in every village. Maybe in the beginning it would require great effort to do that. But when we have these things happening in 5,000 villages in the country, there will be a momentum created. Other villages would take to these ways. At present great effort is required for these. You compare the efforts that has been put in for *Gramdan* with that put in for election—1952 election, 1957 election, and the money spent and the large number of workers who came out into the field for propaganda. If the effort of one election could have been put in *Gramdan*, the movement would have gained a great momentum. If a similar thing has been done in the field of industry and commerce, I think, the movement would have already been the most dominating movement in this country. We have failed to create that impression in the towns. It is not possible to do overnight all together.

SANTI SENA FOR PEACE

Vinobaji has been talking of *Santi Sena*. He added it to *Bhoodan* and *Gramdan* movement. He has spoken of unilateral decision in India irrespective of what Pakistan does, to reduce the army by half. The first thing we have to do is to make it unnecessary for the police and the army to be maintained for internal security. The force of non-violence should grow to an extent that it is not necessary for the State to maintain this coercive power for the maintenance of the internal security. If there is a riot or dacoity or any such thing then the force of non-violence should be strong enough to deal with them. To that extent it would make the State unnecessary. Then there would be a time to talk of external security—the end of disarmament.

Vinobaji is at present emphasising on *Santi Sena*. *Santi Sena* is not to be conceived of as unrelated to the *Sarvodaya* Movement. The basis is the voluntary service performed by voluntary workers —devoting part or whole of their time as soldiers of peace or love. They must be social servants

A MYSTERIOUS RACE-HORSE

(*Continued From Page 204*)

as a token of sacrifice. The boy was cured almost in no time, but soon fell a victim to a cruel disease. The mother now went to Tarakeswar and prayed night and day to the deity Taraknath for a remedy and lay prostrate before the deity without food and drink for days together. Propitiated the deity asked her to immerse the earthen horse offered to Panchananda Thakur into the water of Dudhpookar, a tank attached to the shrine at Tarakeswar. This done, the boy was saved in life but remained permanently invalid for some years and eventually died. After the death of the boy his soul transmigrated into the earthen horse plunged in the Dudhpookar when suddenly it got galvanized to life and sprang on the bank of the *pookar* in the form of the present horse. A Sadhu enamoured of the courage and truthfulness of the boy took compassion on the horse and began to rear the animal as a pet child after christening him with the name of the deity. This is the short antecedent history of the horse."

MYSTERY EXPLAINED

Wrapt with wonder and admiration the owner heard the whole of the narration but failed to understand why of all days Christmas Day was taken exception to for the display of his racing feat. The palmist then continued: "Formerly on Christmas Days races were run for the Viceroy's Cup. The horse being still non-co-operation-minded would not display his skill in racing on that day more specially as the solemnities, grandeur and other arrangements of the Viceroy's Cup are still traceable in the present arrangements in the race-course on Christmas Day. Hence this purposive obstinacy and stubbornness."

The owner, however, did not dare make any pretence of disbelief in the presence of the palmist, but in his heart of hearts he felt dubious about the genuineness of these revelations. "A horse is an animal," he argued within himself, "how can he be intelligent like a man? Credulity is a human failing, rationality adds salt to a man's character. No, I mustn't indulge in credulity." Thus he promised within himself. For the next few weeks, however, he did not bring the horse to the race-course.

CORRECT DIAGNOSIS

A German lady, wife of a ross artz (equestrian doctor), who had come to India on tour, took a fancy on the animal. She took Panchananda to her own country and got him treated by her husband. The specialist's diagnosis was that the animal had been suffering from a type of gout peculiar to his race. When the palmist came to know of this diagnosis he used it as a handle to grind his axe and said: "Long immersion in the Dudhpookar was the root cause of this disease." The owner resented and retorted: "No sane person would believe that an earthen horse can be susceptible to any disease!" "Quite oh!" replied the palmist, "Western scientists believe that life can come out of something lifeless. That is their theory of abiogenesis. This apart, by the grace of Lord Taraknath, a ray of life had come from the body of the boy in the form of *sukshma sarira* (subtle body) and had lodged in the earthen horse immediately before its immersion into the water of the Dudhpookar and that was exactly the reason why the boy remained permanently invalid from that moment. It is because of this transfer to subtle body that the earthen horse has been ordered to be kept immersed into the water of the Dudhpookar. The world may believe it or not, the revelation of truth and fact that I have made is all correct and I cannot help congratulating myself highly for this discovery."

NATAL INCIDENT

The owner was partially convinced by this statement of the palmist and replied: "Be that what it may, I am glad that we are approaching the truth." After the diagnosis had been confirmed by a number of experiments upon the animal the horse was sent to the tropical country of Natal where under the influence of the climate he seemed to recover rapidly. For a good long time he showed no further sign of obstinacy and the doctors were about to pronounce him completely cured and give him a certificate to that effect, when with the creation of a white zone in the race-course of Natal, Panchananda again started ugly non-co-operation. The news reached this country almost on the wings of the wind and left no doubt on the minds of the public that the palmist was all correct in his discovery. The incident soon set the research students of metempsychosis a-thinking, if the habit of non-co-operation is such an impressive *sanskara* as would go with the soul during its course of transmigration to the next life.

THE POSTER

(*Continued From Page 202*)

said Mr. Biswas. "Right here in this office, and very soon too."

"How's that?" said the friend, surprised, and half unbelieving.

"I shall tell you," said Mr. Biswas. "This poster proved lucky not only to Parimal Roy's film concern and my Paragon Printing Co., but also to Chitra Chatterjee, and she is grateful to it. She wanted to see how this poster was printed in the offset machine, and I have invited her to come today. And as she does not want to be mobbed by fans, she will come unannounced, in Mr. Parimal Roy's car."

Very soon a car stopped at the gate of Paragon Printing Co. Private Ltd. and in came Mr. Parimal Roy, escorting the one and only Chitra Chatterjee. The news at once spread throughout the office and the various departments like wild fire.

Mr. Biswas and his friend rushed out to meet them. Ramen stood up, but on second thought he preferred to stay at his table. But he could see Chitra Chatterjee coming, chaperoned by Parimal Roy.

Ramen looked at Chitra Chatterjee and then at the poster in front of him. There was flame behind the Chitra Chatterjee of the poster, and there was horror in that painted face. There was now the notorious Parimal Roy, addicted to wine and its other associates, behind the Chitra Chatterjee of flesh and blood, but, oh God, oh God, there was a cheerful smile of endless satisfaction in Chitra's living face whose cheeks and lips were reddened with rouge! Chitra had shuddered at the self-revelation in the poster; but today Chitra's dress was far more flimsy, far more daringly revealing, far more diaphanous than in the poster. As Ramen looked alternately at Chitra Chatterjee and her poster, he felt that the dazzling poster, outdazzled by the reckless original, was fading away in sorrow.

What, alas, what would unfortunate Gunen feel like if he saw his wife like this, the shameless arm of Parimal Roy going serpent-like round her slender, white, uncovered waist?

Shuddering, Ramen took his eyes away from Chitra Chatterjee and looked at the poster.

(*English adaptation by Ajit Krishna Basu*)

"CRISIS" IN AMERICAN EDUCATION

(*Continued From Page 95*)

Government. This traditional distrust will effectively check authoritarianism.

Secondly, nothing will be done which will affect the basic ideal of the American system: to assist in the creation of useful and effective free citizens, capable of playing their parts in determining the destinies of the nation. Neither educators nor citizens will tolerate the systematic production of automata or of creatures so narrow that they cannot take their places in a society of free men.

The new policies and techniques that will emerge will be arrived at experimentally. There will be almost interminable public discussions of all proposals. Ultimately, they will be judged by their results and the judging will not be easy.

To make a specialist who will fill a pre-determined role in a rigid authoritarian society is relatively simple: it is only necessary to acquire likely-looking specimens of human material and induce or coerce them to submit themselves to a series of refined educative operations. The success of the process is determined by the subjects' ability to fulfil the functions for which they were created. A product of such a process may be something highly useful, even a genius of a kind. Indeed, the human spirit being what it is, the product may possibly be a man. Not, however, the man he might have been if any care had been taken to give him breadth of knowledge and vision and a sense of his potentialities and responsibilities as a mature individual person; not such a man as free institutions have always required and require now more urgently than ever.

AMERICANS CONFIDENT

It may be alleged that in attempting to do so much, Americans will find that their specialists are outnumbered and surpassed in quality. Surely, this is a serious criticism. However, they have believed and will surely continue to believe that an education primarily concerned with the production of human instruments will defeat its own purpose, and probably sooner rather than later.

It may be objected that these handsome ideals and sentiments give no definite answer to the immediate problems. How can so many millions be given the advanced and refined training they will need and an education that will prepare them for active lives as rational free citizens? The reply is that there can be no definite answer because the attempted solutions will not clearly be derivable from any specific theory. Indeed, the policies adopted will probably look like a series of half-measures, expedients, rather than a carefully-conceived and consistent programme. This impression will be essentially correct, for no serious effort will be made to arrive at an ultimate formulation. Whatever policies emerge will badly disappoint if they do not greatly irritate the creators of those neat, tight, carefully-proportioned theories which promise to solve all problems at once. Indeed, probably no one will be wholly satisfied, for the results will certainly be the fruits of repeated compromises. No one can predict with any assurance what positive measures will be decided upon, but Americans are confident that they will serve the purpose until something better can be devised. More than this no one seriously expects.

Tomorrow's needs will be different; more likely than not a new "crisis" impends which may call for wholly different measures. It is impossible to envision an end to the challenges which will require the evolution of new strategies. Aside from the few who have always been pleased to foresee an inevitable disaster, sooner or later, there are few who doubt that with common sense, determination and patience, the things that must be done will be done, and without compromising the basic ideal, always to be striven for, never wholly realized; the emergence of each citizen as the most complete and mature person his limitations allow. Believing, as they do, that human limitations are usually more apparent than ultimately insurmountable, Americans can be confident that in one form or another the great educational debate will continue as a central, living issue as long as the nation endures.

MESSAGE OF DANCE THROUGH FILMS

(*Continued From Page 186*)

of dance in existing films viz., the exploitation of sex-appeal rather than the furtherance of the art of dancing. This is more due to lack of training than to an absence of appreciation of good dancing. The fault lies with those who present the dances. I may be pardoned if I repeat that rather than bring a bad name to dances, they had better be excluded from our films till we have learnt to do justice to them. I have no doubt that the Sangit Natak Akadami would like to give all asssistance to all dance directors who portray this ancient art in a proper perspective. This will lay the firm foundation of modern Indian choreography, and the film, as a powerful medium, would be able to popularize the same to an ever-increasing audience.

Last but not least, on behalf of the devotees of art and our sincere, good-hearted yet intellectual audience, I earnestly request you to unite together and determine to do something really wonderful, and thus set an example to the motion pictures of other countries. Let us prove that India can contribute something original and something noble, and serve humanity through motion pictures and through dance. Let us all try our level best to maintain and uphold that glory.

DANCERS I HAVE MET

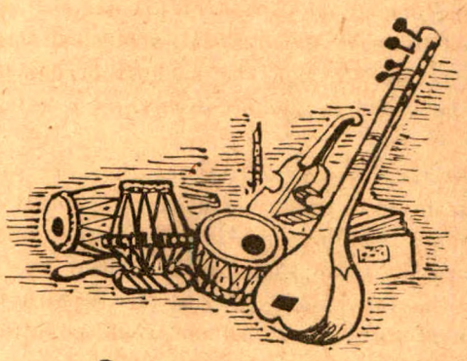
(*Continued From Page 184*)

famous in the South. But I have deliberately kept them in the dark, because in these parts of the country, as they are unfamiliar to the dance fans, it is somewhat meaningless to mention them. To give an account of all of them is uninteresting, and the limited space does not allow me to do so.

ROSHAN WAJIFDAR

Kumari Roshan Wajifdar is child-like in manners, and treats dancing as religion. She takes pains to write letters, which are usually big and full of repetitions. Though clever she has little experience of life. She works hard, means well, and is fastidious about the crockery she uses. She is adamant against odds and has a capacity to fight against misfortune. She bravely faces sufferings with a hope for a bright future. She makes a fine choice of toilette goods, costume and artistic ornaments. She has no sense of business. When cornered in discussions she hankers for help from outside agencies. She is a scholar, has studied a lot, and is eager to read books on art in English and Hindi.

I should be excused by my friends, brothers and sisters, the dancers, whom I have mentioned in this paper, for my sweeping but intimate criticisms, and in case I have gone astray



Music in the Dance-Dramas of Tagore

By SANTI DEV GHOSE

THE pre-eminence of Gurudev as a poet has overshadowed his contribution to dramatic literature. But to say that Gurudev was the most versatile dramatist in Bengal would not be an exaggeration.

At the age of 21 Gurudev was found for the first time trying his hand in writing dramas. Since then, till the age of 77 he has continually written more than fifty various kinds of dramas, short and long, employing diverse techniques. These dramas on mythological, historical, social and lyrical subjects have been written in blank-verse, in ordinary conversational style and in the form of music-dramas. Apart from them, there are certain other dramas which are mainly based on songs; dialogue, in accordance with the subject and the idea, has been introduced in them, only for the purpose of linking up the songs and creating an atmosphere. None of his ordinary dramas, however, are without songs excepting for a few ones.

WHAT IS DANCE-DRAMA?

The subject for our discussion today is music in the dance-dramas of Gurudev. Before going on to that, a little exposition on what is a dance-drama is necessary.

So far as the technique of composition is concerned, there is hardly any difference between a music-drama and a dance-drama. None of these types of dramas contain conversational dialogue. Dialogues in them are in blank-verse and are set to tune and *Tala*. Gurudev has written in all six dramas in this form, namely, *Valmiki-Prativa*, *Kal-Mrigaya*, *Mayar-Khela*, *Chitrangada*, *Syama* and *Chandalika*. Of these, the first three were composed between 1881 and 1888, and the last three between 1936 and 1938. In his career as a dramatist, it has been found, his first drama was the music-drama of *Valmiki-Prativa*, and the last was the dance-drama of *Chandalika*. But why has he called the first three, music-dramas and the last three, dance-dramas? It is because the first three were meant to be music-dramas, following the model of operas. These dramas were enacted in those days with movements and gestures employed in the ordinary dramas. Hence, they have been named the music-dramas. The last three dramas of his later years were the outcome of his desire to enact dramas through dances because by that time dance had been given an honoured place in the educational systems of Santiniketan and Visva-Bharati. These last dramas were enacted by means of dances right from the beginning and that is why they were named dance-dramas.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

In music-dramas, the actors act, singing the songs themselves in a conversational manner. As this is not possible in a dance-drama, a separate choir has to be employed, who sings from the background to aid the dances.

When Gurudev composed music-dramas, he belonged to the educated society of Calcutta. At that time, any sort of lesson in Indian dance was

totally unknown to that society. Dance was a taboo for the boys and girls of that society. So, while composing his music-dramas, he could not conceive of using dance as a form of expression in his dramas. But towards the latter part of his life, that is, during the period of his dance-dramas, he wanted to enact *Mayar-Khela,* a music-drama of his early period, through the medium of dancing and then he called it a dance-drama.

At the time of setting the tune or *ragini* to words in these dramas, Gurudev followed certain principles. For instance, in expressing a tumultuous exhilaration there would be a sudden rise in the tune; the tune would proceed slowly with the sentiment of sorrow, a rapid *tala* would slightly signify happy feeling, etc.

In music-dramas, the *tala* or the rhythms should change into fast or slow according to the change in the idea or feeling; the same rhythm should not be employed all throughout. While acting through songs it becomes sometimes necessary to leave out *tala* altogether.

The above principles he followed while setting the words of his dramas to tune, using the various *ragas* and *raginis* of Hindustani music as well as the various folk-tunes of Bengal. These *ragas,* thus combined with words, revealed a new beauty.

It is because these *raginis* can be sung in the manner of acting in accordance with the words and sentiments of it, the drama still continues to enjoy great popularity I am not certain whether its appeal would have remained the same, had it been written in ordinary conversational style. The absence of any fixed *tala* of *tabla* or *pakhowaj* in the songs has perhaps been discerned. They have been sung by breaking up those fixed rhythms and in a conversational way. On the stage, this music drama should be sung in this way.

CHARACTERISTIC DIFFERENCE

After hearing the songs of dance-dramas it may appear at a casual examination that there is no difference between the songs of these dramas and those of the earlier music-dramas. But there is a certain difference. The emphasis laid on *tala* is not so very great in the music-drama of *Valmiki-Prativa* as in dance-dramas. Gurudev deliberately made this difference. It is realised by every dancer that it is very inconvenient to dance without any fixed *tala* or rhythm. Therefore, he composed the songs of *Chitrangada, Chandalika* and *Syama* mostly in fixed rhythms so that this difficulty did not arise while acting through dances. But though these songs were composed in that way, it might have been marked that the songs were sung not in one single rhythm for a long time. The rhythm continually altered in accordance with the change in the tone of the dialogue. The reason for this is that rhythms themselves have the power to express different *rasas* or moods. For instance the rhythms in the *talas* like *choutal, dhamar, surfactal, trital, dadra,* etc. are different and as such the *rasa* created by one is different from the other. The expression of a *dhrupad* song in *choutal* is not the same as that of a song in *trital.* Gurudev understood this fundamental quality of rhythm and deftly assimilated various rhythms with the words and tunes of his dance-dramas. That is why he has introduced variations in rhythms along with the changes in the tone of the songs. The rhythm takes one form when the song shows the feeling of anger, and it is different when gravity is expressed while with the emotion of happiness it is used differently. The use of the same rhythm for the expression of the various feelings like anger, sorrow, happiness, etc. is not to be found in his music-dramas or dance-dramas. In his dance-dramas the tunes also have followed the pattern of the rhythm with the result a single *ragini* has been able to express diverse *rasas* with the variation in rhythm.

UNIQUE CREATIONS

The way Gurudev has employed *raginis* and rhythms to correspond to the different feelings illustrates his great powers as a composer. This was due to the fact that he had a very deep understanding of rhythm and of tune of classical music as well as the folk music of Bengal.

From the standpoint of compositions, his dance-dramas are unique creations in the musical tradition of Bengal. Through these dance-dramas he has broken fresh grounds for the *ragini* and *tala* in Indian music and opened up new possibilities for them.

Although he has not wholly followed the Indian tradition in setting tunes to his music and dance-dramas he has not altogether forsaken it.

Indian dance is mainly dependent upon songs. All the old dance-dramas are based on that. But in the revival of Indian dance during the last 30 or 35 years nobody has supported this, excepting Gurudev. Nobody has composed a new dance-drama based on songs. The instrumental music has become their mainstay while it has no influence on the dance-composition of Gurudev.

Thus, by composing more than one music drama for acting through the medium of dance he stands as the lone follower of the Indian ideal.

(Translated by Sri Viswajit Roy)

"NADA-BRAHMA"

By DR. BANI CHATTERJI
Professor of Western Music.
Bengal Music College

WHATEVER tends to refine, to civilize, to exalt the intellectual faculties of man is not merely an embellishment but a thing of vital necessity to his well-being and onward march to progress. This is the character and purpose of all the arts, whether painting, sculpture, poetry or music. Rising above and beyond the limits of the sensible and material, music, it would appear, of all the arts, delights in the contemplation of the infinite and the spiritual and knows no bounds or limit for the sphere of its application. Music, says Carlyle, is a kind of inarticulate, unfathomable speech which leads to the edge of the infinite, and lets us, for moments, gaze into that. The sages of yore perceived this truth very clearly, and gave expression to it in the clearest language, calling it, either the hand-maid of religion, as in the West, or as in the East, "Nada-Brahma".

MUSIC EASTERN AND WESTERN

Apparently, the Indians considered music invented for the purpose of raising the mind by devotion to the felicity of the divine nature. In India, the spiritual destiny of man and music has ever been kept in view by the authors of music. This, of course, is in perfect keeping with the philosophical cast of the Indian mind, of whom writes Professor Max Muller, "The transcendent temperament acquired a more complete supremacy in the Indian character than anywhere else". Nature and environments joined hands, as it were, to give a passive, meditative and reflective turn of mind to the Indians, and, in consequence, Indian music as one among their art-products, has all along been essentially idealistic, mystic, symbolical and transcendental. The spirit of communing with one's self led the Indian musician sages to enter into the heart of music and things, in preference to the externals of Nature. The result of their efforts over the ages have been embodied in the highest form of melody known as the *Rag-raginis*, which, in effect constitute the soul of music. The Westerners, however, conditioned by natural circumstances to a life of hard struggle for one's very existence, with little or no time for rest and meditation, to a congregational way of life, necessitating the accumulation of material wealth, accordingly reflect this active, social and outward attitude to life in their expression of music. As Poet Tagore puts it: "The world by day is like European music". Theirs, necessarily, is a flowing concourse of vast harmony that keeps arising with the multiplicity of sounds, and concords and discords, and many disconnected fragments. However, whether it is one expression or another, of music, the fundamentals are the same, viz., human individuals must be awakened to beauty and joy in the presence of the Supreme. The distinction, if any, in the music of East and West, is one of emphasis but not of kind, Thus, neither Eastern music is altogether void of simultaneous harmony, nor is Western music wholly divorced from the *Rag-raginis*. The *Rag-raginis* and simultaneous harmony are not mutually exclusive or antagonistic by nature, rather they are complementary to one another. When we amplify one or more notes of the scale of a *rag* or *ragini* with chords, counterpoint, harmony, etc. according to the Western method, we get the tune of the *rag* or *ragini* harmonized; again, Western musical composition when divested of its simultaneous harmony leaves behind the melody which comes within the purview of some *rag* or *ragini*, pure or mixed.

GOD'S GIFT TO MAN

Music, though now a very complete and difficult art, is in truth, a gift of the Author of Nature to the whole human race. Its existence and influence are to be traced in the records of every people, from the earliest ages, and are perceptible, at the present time in every quarter of the globe. The degree of

its refinement and eminence, however, is in proportion to the culture and civilization of its professors. From one end of its history to the other, music, it would appear, has an evolution parallel to that of society by reflecting all the changes of life, individual and social, the progress of the mind, lay and scientific, and labour, industrial or otherwise. In respect of India's musical science, our subject under consideration, it appears to have attained a theoretical precision yet unknown to Europe, and that at a period when even Greece was little removed from barbarism.

INDIA IN DAYS OF YORE

It is almost an admitted fact, now-a-days, that India in days of yore, rose to the highest pinnacle of civilization and culture, and it is needless to say that her music did not lag behind but made corresponding progress towards perfection. The highly technical science-grounded ancient Sanskrit books on music bear ample testimony to this. We may here mention a few of the many instances to show that Indian music stands on a true scientific basis. The Shrutis, if rightly construed, will no doubt, appear to correspond very closely to the overtones of Western music, the perception of whose existence is the fruit of long years of laborious scientific investigations and research. Again, it is rather significant that the *Sama-Veda*, whose "property, truly, is tone", is also characterized as "the product of the sun". This would suggest the ancients' knowledge of the physical relations of sound—the basis of music, light, heat and colour, a conception so well developed in the coloured representations of the Indian *ragas* of later time. This Indian conception of light in terms of musical sound finds echo in the heart of the Western mystic too. Swinburne asks of the void:

> *"Was Light that spake from Darkness or Music that shone from the Word,*
> *When night was enkindled with sound of the sun?"*

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS & TAL-SYSTEM

The Indian musical instruments as a body are another pointer to the progressive and scientific spirit of ancient India. Descriptions of these are found in many of the old Sanskrit treatises. Apart from the drum, the largest variety of musical instruments in India is found among the strings. The *vina* occupies the first place among them all, and has done so from time immemorial. This one instrument alone is sufficient evidence of the development to which the art and science of music had attained even in those early days.

One more instance testifying to the scientific nature of Indian music is its wonderful characteristic, *tal*-system, which may be termed as the time-essence of music. It seems that the *rag-raginis* as found in Indian music are more fully treated than its *tal*-system. But I think its *tal*-system deserves as careful an attention as its *rag-raginis*. The *tal* or time-measure of Indian music does not quite correspond to the bar system of Western music but allows itself to follow on like the ocean waves, following one after another in rhythmic motion corresponding to the tune-sections, long or short, of the respective *rag-ragini* and ending in the "Sum" or the accented beat, like the waves finding their rest on the beach. It is admitted that to many a Westerner this *tal*-system presents great difficulties to master, the main difficulty being as has been suggested by Mr. Popley that "they have not acquired the habit of resolving mentally every unit into its constituent elements." In the *tal*-system all possible varieties of rhythm that can be applied to music, have as far as possible been exhausted. In no other country, so far as we know, there is anything to equal or even approach the science-grounded *tal*-system or time-measures of Indian music. With permission of the famous musician-scholar of the West, Mr. Leopold Stokowski, "In place of our Western conception of rhythm, the Hindus have *tala*, which is far more developed and complex than our Occidental rhythm. Hindu musical rhythm is part of their conception of cosmic rhythm. One of the most highly developed forms of this rhythm is their system of drumming". This conception of cosmic rhythm, we may point out, merely reflects the cosmic philosophy so universally preached almost throughout the entire extent of metaphysical and mystical treatises of the *Vedas* termed *Upanishads*.

WEST'S DISCOVERY OF INNER INDIA

When the Europeans first came to India, they had practically no access to her inner treasures, and very naturally they could not know the value of the gifts that India made to the world. The more they came into contact with India, the better did they become acquainted with her high culture and civilization through her arts including music, literature, philosophy, etc. It was through the noble efforts of German savants and learned Englishmen like Sir William Jones, the founder of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Mr. H. H. Wilson, Professor Max Muller, Dr. Carey and others that the gates to India's inner treasures were thrown wide open, and the world came to know that much of the present day Western civilization and culture has its origin in India, and that her contributions of knowledge have enriched the world at large to a great extent. The acuteness of some has even led them to doubt whether this country was not in a state of civilization even before the most ancient of the three,—Egypt, Greece and Rome, nay, whether this was not the parent country—the root of civilization and culture.

THE COMMON HERITAGE

Of all the gifts that India has contributed to the world culture, music stands in the forefront. Of course, the most ancient part of Indian art belongs to the common endowment of early Asian culture which once extended from the Mediterranean to China and as far south as Ceylon. The wide extension and consistency of this culture throughout Asia in the second millennium B. C. throws important light on ancient intercourse, trade and cultural, at the time when the Eastern Mediterranean formed the Western boundary of the civilized world. This helps us to understand how in progress of civilization, Asian countries lying nearer West helped transmit and disseminate at that epoch and after, in the far-off Western and other lands, such as, Greece, Africa and others, the common heritage of the

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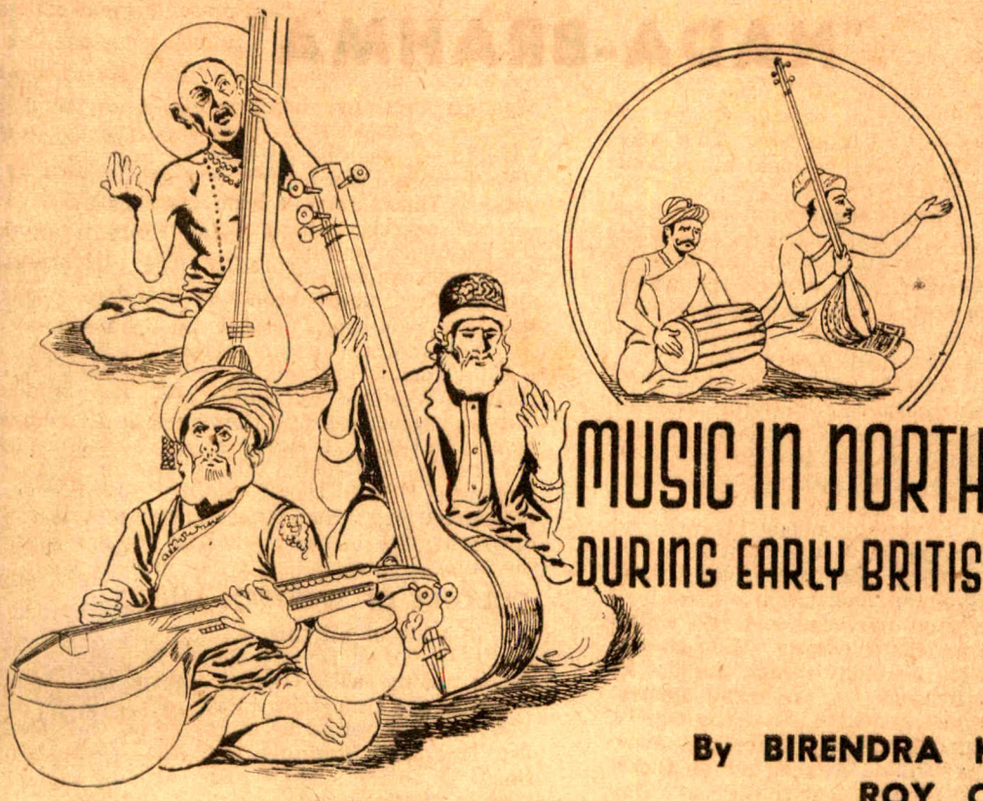

MUSIC IN NORTH-INDIA DURING EARLY BRITISH RULE

By BIRENDRA KISHORE ROY CHOWDHURY

DURING the latter part of the eighteenth century, the British traders consolidated their political power and position, first in Bengal, and gradually, throughout the major portion of Northern India. The sovereignty of the Moghul Emperor of India at Delhi continued as before; but the Nawab of Oudh, a very powerful ruler, made himself free from the central authority. Other Nawabs and Princes of various States also exercised their sovereignty in their respective spheres. But all of them and also the British East India Company showed their respects to the Moghul Emperor by paying him some kind of revenues or Nazars.

MOGHUL COURT'S PATRONAGE

The Delhi Durbar was gradually losing its former glory with the gradual loss of the splendour of the Moghul Court as a result of the depletion of the Imperial Exchequer. Yet music continued to be patronised by the Royal Court as all the Badshahas loved music. Some British ambassador at Delhi described in his diary that in spite of the decadence of the Moghul Court, more than a hundred top-ranking musicians were retained by the Emperor. He specially mentioned two great instrumentalists: (1) Jeewan Shah, the Veenakar and (2) Chhajju Khan, the Rabab-player. Jeewan Shah was a descendant of Naubat Khan, the son-in-law of Tansen and Chhajju Khan belonged to the line of Vilas Khan, the youngest son of that great musical seer. During that period, the greatest musician of the Court received the title of 'Shah' i.e., the King of the Musicians. Shah Sadarang, Jeewan Shah and his brother's son Nirmal Shah fall into that category.

Besides the Durbar of Delhi, there was the Jaipur Durbar where another line of Tansen by his eldest son Surat Sen, continued to shed its musical lustre. The most prominent among them were Sukha Sen the Dhrupadi and Murad Sen the Sitarist. Some famous descendants of Tansen, during the same period, settled in other States, of whom the names of Hyder Khan, the originator of Betia School of Music and Bahadur Khan, the founder of the Vishnupur School, should never be forgotten. During the first part of the nineteenth century several musicians of exceptional merits and outstanding genius adorned the stage of Indian Music. Bahram Khan, a descendant of Satyadeb, the disciple of Haridas Swami of Brindaban, immortalised his name, not only as a composer of Dhrupads but also as a singer of Sanskrit Verses, in the Dhrupad style. He belonged to Jaipur State, and for the special purpose of acquiring knowledge of the Karnatic style, he went to the Court of Hyderabad and stayed there for many years. He was retained by the then Nizam of Hyderabad, with honour and good honorariums. He not only learnt the Karnatic *Paddhati* of music but also gained proficiency in the Sanskrit language and the Sangita-Sastras. After that, he took up the Vedic hymns, Stotras of the Puranas, and the poems and hymns composed by Mahakabi Kalidas and applied Hindusthani *ragas* and *raginis* in singing them. He returned to Jaipur after he had passed the middle age and lived as a centenarian. He was respected by all Ostads as a great scholar, composer and singer.

FLOWERS OF OUDH COURT

Another great personality in the domain of Music appeared in the scene, but he belonged to the Court of Oudh. He also attained immortal fame, not as a vocalist but as a Veenakar. His name was Nirmal Khan but he received the title of "Shah" from the Nawab of Oudh and hence he was known as "Nirmal Shah". He was the only son of a brother of Jeewan Shah and got all his training on the Veena from Jeewan Shah, who was very famous for his manipulations with the left fingers on the frets of the Veena and thus was a master of *Meeds* and *Gamakas*. It is said that both Jeewan Shah and Nirmal Shah could draw the strings of the Veena in such a way that

(Continued On Page 218)

"NADA-BRAHMA"

(*Continued From Page 212*)

Indian tradition in the culture of music. This may well explain why India's ancient national music and that of Europe are so alike.

Notwithstanding these international relations from the earliest times, it is customary in the West to commence the history of music with the Greeks. Before their time, however, there existed the whole of the East, including Egypt and Asia Minor, with which they had direct relations. Through the Persian settlers of Asia Minor and Greece, connection of Persian music with Western music is genealogically established. Furthermore, Captain Willard ably compares and points out the similarity which the music of India seems to bear to that of Egypt and Greece Sir William Jones too, not unreasonably perhaps, connects the Indian musical system of Iswara with the old Egyptian music invented or improved by Osiris. Dr. Carey, in the preface to his Sanskrit Grammar, Calcutta, 1820, opines that these Egyptians whose culture and civilization historians compute as being ten thousand years old and whose knowledge, according to Plato, made the Greeks appear as children, were a colony from India. As regards India's contributions to Greece's musical culture, Strabo, the Greek historian, says, the Greeks consider music as originating from Thrace and Asia; and that others who regard all Asia as far as India, as a country sacred to Dionysus, attribute to that country the invention of nearly all the science of music. We perceive them sometimes describing the *cithara* of the Asiatic, and sometimes applying to flutes the epithet of Phrygian, (i.e., of Asian ancestry). The names of certain instruments, such as the nabla, and others likewise, are taken from barbarous (i.e., non-Greek) tongues. This nabla of Strabo is possibly the tabla, the small tabor of India. If Strabo took his orthography from the Persian or Arabic, a single point would constitute the difference between the N and the T. The supposedly Greek word "Saptantri Vina" clearly betrays its Vedic-Sanskrit origin. The affinity of the Greek Hypo-Dorian Mode with the Indian Ragini Gandhari may also be mentioned here. There are again in Africa types of musical instruments which have been borrowed from Asia in the dim past and from which the European forms of musical instruments have been laboriously evolved. Thus from pre-historic times, Asia and India have extensively contributed to the world-pool of musical culture and learning. In fact, the inhabitants of the ancient world did not feel that the world was divided into two halves, each strange and even hostile to the other. Rather, the people of Rome took an active part in fusing the East and West into a Hellenistic and Oriental culture.

INDIA AND WESTERN HARMONY

India now specialises almost to perfection in the system of *raga-music,* but her musical culture is wanting in regard to simultaneous harmony. There is, however, much fecundity, observe the Western authorities on music, in the application of harmony to the Eastern scales, and "we must learn from other countries", once remarked Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, "whatever we have not learnt. Indian civilization and culture has outlived the centuries because India has never been afraid of imbibing knowledge from friend or foe." To give fullness to her musical culture, we must follow in the foot-steps of the Sanskrit writers who never looked down upon the new additions but made room for them in their works, and henceforth developed her music in this essential particular also. On its practical side, well-conducted Western harmony, such as its choral music or orchestral compositions involve, offers potential advantage, making teamwork efforts, collective regularity and discipline obligatory for the participants. This should, for obvious reasons, in course of time, exercise a salutary influence on them. Given the necessary training, I find from experience, Western music can become quite popular with the Indian students, who much enjoy singing and playing together the "part-songs" and orchestral works.

Yet another use of Western harmony. In the U.K., I found that Indian music when presented through Western harmony was better assimilated and understood, and at the conclusion of my lecture-demonstrations, I would often be approached with the request to teach the songs in the original language. "It is time", rightly remarks Sri Rajagopalachariar, "that Asia looked at herself, realized her own place in the world and put her culture in a presentable form before other modern countries".

CULTURE OF WESTERN MUSIC

In view of all this, we are only too grateful to Dr. J. C. Ghosh for his timely inclusion of Western music, along with Indian music, as a subject of study in the University of Calcutta. Western music, however, has yet to be included in the course for the Teachers' Training, and like centres of education. To foster a right understanding and appreciation of Western music among the Indian students, the teaching, needless to say, should be entrusted to, and imparted by one who is competent in the music of both East and West. Provision should also be made for musical instruments, preferably a piano, in such institutions. It would be interesting to note that the piano of the West has an Indian origin, being evolved from the *Swaramandala, Kattayani* or *Satatantri Vina* of the East.

Throughout her long and illustrious history, India has shown a marvellous capacity for assimilation of cultures and traditions of other nations and peoples. "This synthesis of the art of the East and West", writes Mr. L. R. Fawcus, C.I.E., I.C.S., "is well manifested in the music and songs of Tagore, which has by this fusion become universal rather than local or ethnical in their appeal. Without trespassing into the regions of world politics it may be fairly said that the music and poetry of Tagore in this respect represent an approach to the goal of unity and brotherhood which humanity will have to reach if it is to survive at all". With its universality of outlook, its universal appeal, Tagore music, the crowning glory of India's musical culture, should be made available to the general public at large, irrespective of East or West, to enable them all to delve better and deeper into the spirit and the soul of India and her wealth of musical culture; for, all through the ages, since the very dawn of Vedic civilization and culture, her music and the Vedic Hymns have inspired humanity to unity and to the consciousness of one human family:—

"SUNGGERCHCHERDHWUM"

Be united, speak united, one another's mind ye know,
United forward march on !
One in motto, one in achievement, one in mind, all united!
One front, united stand, united forward march on !
One in effort, one in heart, all one body, onward march,
One front, united stand, united forward march on! *

* Music of Sunggerchcherdhwum By Sarala Devi Chowdhurani — Translation by Bani Chatterjee.

Historical Method in the Study of INDIAN MUSIC

By SWAMI PRAJNANANANDA

INDIAN music has a very long history from dim antiquity, and its onward march has not yet been concluded, nor will it come to an end so long as its creative force and artistic value have life.

A history is conceived as the narration or tale of memorable events, that preserves the memory and propagates the knowledge of glorious culture and civilization of man and his society. The term 'history' connotes the idea of progress. It does not stop for a moment, but marches onward towards eternity, weaving the networks of subjective thoughts and objective actions of the human society.

Such is the view of K. A. Nilkantha Sastri, when he says: 'History is such a wide subject that it knows no beginning and no end. Each act or historical episode is the effect of some previous episode and probably leads on to another.'

Further he says:

> 'History, then, is in part a science. It is also, and in a much greater degree, an art. It consists not only in collecting facts about the past, but in thinking and feeling about them.....We must have a proper conception of the facts, of the conditions, of the motives, and of the characters.....The past cannot be constructed by men whose knowledge of life has been gained only from documents. Mere accumulation of facts is insufficient. Using our imagination and our judgement, we have to interpret them. No, facts do not always speak for themselves. They have to be weighed and measured. They must be placed in their proper setting. There must be intelligent reflection upon the significance of the facts. There must be that insight into reality without which the past can have no vital meaning for living men.' *

Such is also the opinion of Bury. To Croce the average historian is a mere chronicler, for facts only crucible of an individual mind. No historian can forecast the future, and so Croce rejects determinism as decisively as Toynbee. Prof. Ranier emphasises the social role of history. Toynbee, like Spengler envisages history as a record of civilization rather than of centuries and continents. Spengler is a quasi-biological determinist 'who holds that all civilizations are fated to die, and that the future will be as the past.'

HISTORY AS AN ART

History can be regarded as an art, and the history of music shall, therefore, be known as an 'art of arts' or a greater art, as it is not only the narrative accounts or chronicles of sensible material facts of music, but of the supersensible grace and beauty of the tones and tunes also.

The mystic philosopher Schopenhauer was of the same opinion. He says, regarding the celestial beauty of music, that music is 'the metaphysical to everything physical in the world, and the thing-in-itself to every phenomena; it expresses in a perfectly universal language, in a homogeneous material, more tones, and with the greatest determinateness and truth, the inner nature, the thing-in-itself of the world.'

Plato and Aristotle call music an 'emotional import,' which is no other than the imitation or the idealization of reality.

Kant sums up in his *Critique of Judgment* that music is the highest of arts, as it plays with sensation, i.e. emotion.

Hence the history of music constitutes an artistic language of the annals of creative music, which is an emotional aspect of Nature. In short, both aes-

* Vide *Historical Method in Relation to Indian*

thetic and philosophic conceptions play an important role in the domain of the history of music, though its stuff is constructed out of the detailed chronological order of realistic events and tales of music of different ages.

HISTORY & SOCIETY

The history of music is closely associated with human society, and so it does not ignore the imaginative and creative faculty of man. It has rather a deep respect and regard for the human society. Therefore, the sociological factors, as background of the creation of music, can neither be neglected nor ignored, as it is really a product of the intelligence and creative faculty of the human society.

Theodore M. Finney is of opinion that music emerged into the historic era as a social art and consequently its history cannot be written without mentioning its social uses. 'The types of music may vary immensely, but the forms of its use, the purposes for which any culture retains music as a part of its social heritage, remain almost the same.'

INDIAN MUSIC

The history of Indian music should, therefore, be an authentic record of development of music of the Indian people. It has extended itself from the antique prehistoric age upto the present time. It has a gradual evolution or change, which is inevitable for the shifting phases or changing circumstances of the human society.

Regarding the evolutional nature of the art of music Cecil Gray says in his *The History of Music:*

> 'In no art, science, or other departments of human activity, has the doctrine of evolution been so enthusiastically welcomed, so eagerly adopted, and so wholeheartedly endorsed, as in music. Indeed, the whole history of the art has almost invariably been conceived and represented as a single, orderly, and undeviating line of progress from the simplest and most primitive beginnings upto the complexities of modern practice; and the account of this gradual process of development, which is generally to be met with in musical histories, reads exactly like the account given in scientific text-books of the origin and evolution of life from the amoeba.'

The gradual evolutionary process of Indian music forms a key to get into the whole range of musical production that came out from the imaginative conception of the Indian people. Many documents of treatises and stone pictures were preserved to record and commemorate the great art of India. Those should be studied in a right perspective and real spirit, to gather all that one should know of music: its different types and patterns, its presentations and appreciations with different values in different ages, because that will undoubtedly stir our emotional depths and uplift the level of consciousness. We are still in the spade work stage, and so we shall have to carry on research work patiently and indefatigably.

QUESTION OF UTILITY

Now, it may be asked what is the utility of the study of development of music and what is the importance of maintaining a historical outlook in the practical field of music. It is a fact that man is an aspiring and progressing soul, and he always marches towards the ultimate goal of success, keeping his eyes fixed upon the ideas and golden ideals of glorious India. He requires a guide—a faithful guide to lead him to the path of investigation into the forgotten chapters of music, to collect and preserve the materials, strewn here and there, for acquiring knowledge and making use of them. But the authors of the history of music should be unbiased and truth-seeking in their outlook. They should record the facts of development of music which should be properly interpreted, with their real purpose and intrinsic significance.

NEED FOR INTERPRETATION

We fully agree with Prof. Ogden when he says that in the history of art as much as in any other branch of historical research, facts are meaningless until interpreted, and the function of the musical historian is, or should be, as different from that of the period specialist as the function of the philosopher is from that of the chemists, physicists, biologists, anthropologists, and other scientists who provide him with his material. His concern, in short, is not with the discovery of facts, but with their interpretation, and the revelation of their intrinsic value and significance.

In the introduction to his *History of Music,* Cecil Gray subscribes to the same view. He says :

> 'But while it is unquestionably study of the greatest interest and profit to the musician to trace the gradual development of his artistic language, seeing how each period and each composer have played their respective part in shaping, modifying, extending, and perfecting the instrument at his disposal, rendering it more plastic and more readily responsive to every subtle inflection of his thought, it does not constitute the history of an expressive art such as music any more than a philological study of language could pass for a history of literature, or a description of a man's physiological development for a biography.'

Some are of opinion that the history of music being a collection of raw materials of music, has no value in the field of practice. To this it can be said that practice is no other than an active or applied form of theory, and practice is always preceded by theory. In music, a historical outlook is necessary to help the artists and lovers of music to get a clear vision of the entire field of music of all ages. It does not only furnish us with all the raw materials of music of our own, but as well equips us with the details of music of the other countries also.

WESTERN & EASTERN MUSIC

Human taste and temperament along with his outlook change in different ages. They change owing to different geographical boundaries, climatic conditions, also traditions, special taste and temperament of the society and also for other reasons, and that is why Indian music has become more or less *different* from the music of the Western countries.

Maintaining this difference, Alfred Einstein says in his *A Short History of Music:*

> 'The musical culture of the Near East is quite different from what may be called in a particular sense 'Oriental', that of India and Arabia and Persia. In India, the normal seven note octave is the basis of all melody, but it becomes transformed and overgrown by a whole host of minute intervals employed for the sake of ornament. The Arabic-Persian system is even further removed from ours; it is built up of small units of third of a note originally seventeen and later twenty-four to the octave—and shows the influence of Greek musical theory.'

But it should be noticed that though music of different countries differ in their systems, method of presentations, patterns and notations, yet amidst all the diversities there is a unity of a common fundamental psychic content. In the antique Vedic age, the chanters and common people were contented with purely sacred hymnal type of the *samans* or *sama-*

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Spiritualism

By K. C. CHATTERJEE
Retired District Magistrate.

ALL the religions agree that death is *not* the goal for the soul and that soul remains after death. As a matter of fact, our make-up consists of matter and spirit. The body is the gross physical matter and is kept going only if the soul be there. At death, the soul (*"jeebatma"* or individual soul) leaves the body taking with it mind and personality (consisting of memory, reason and its characteristics) of the late living person (GITA XV, 8). Different religions differ widely as to the dispositions of the soul after death. It is Spiritualism which threw considerable light on what happens after death.

I have stated that "personality" adheres to the soul after death. According to Hindu Philosophy, so long as this personality adheres to the individual soul, it goes on taking rebirth again and again unless it gets rid of that personality, when there would remain nothing as a separate entity, in which case it would be ready to merge with the Supreme SOUL or SPIRIT, which is the corner stone of Hindu Philosophy.

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS

Spiritualism has come down to us from ages, irrespective of religion and country. The Vedas were revealed to the Rishis. In the Mahabharat, it is said that after the battle of Kurukshetra, the great sage Vyasa invoked on the bank of a river the spirits of those who had fallen in the battle (for the purpose of consoling their living relations) and the dead came out of the water, met their near and dear ones for the night and vanished at dawn. The Old and New Testaments, the Apocrypha, and the Talmudic writings, all abound in angels' ministrations, spirit communications, trances, visions and apparitions. Indian Yogis, ancient Chinese Taoists and the Mystics of other religions have performed miracles; but it should be remembered that what is magic of the finite is logic of the Infinite. The underlying idea is, of course, obvious. It means that the soul is not only immortal and eternal but that in special cases and under given conditions manifestations are possible. Spiritualists take up this opportunity of communicating with the dead.

To know what happens at death, to know where are our near and dear ones who have gone ahead of us, is rather helpful and comforting. It is spiritualism which throws much light on what happens beyond death and it may be termed as being in the position of a practical demonstration of our present-day experiment.

SCIENTIFIC PROOFS

The advent of materialism in the West tended to discredit everything which the present-day material science is unable to prove through physical demonstration. And yet, since 1848, the West has begun accepting the truth of Spirit communication. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Sir Oliver Lodge and others threw great light on the subject and in the "Science Of Life" by H. G. Wells, J. Huxley and G. P. Wells, the phenomena connected with spirit manifestation could not be denied but the authors termed them as 'Borderland Science' saying that the experiments had not been performed with strict scientific rigidity for an infallible theory. But sledge-hammer proof which aims at knocking down and finally exterminating all opposition is hardly attainable, more so where the decisive factor is not under experimentor's control (as here, it is under the control of spirit as the term 'spirit manifestation' would signify). Further scientific proofs are of various kinds.

If I get a communication from my departed son in the same handwriting which he had when alive and if in that communication there be a medicine for asthma, which not only cured me of my obstinate asthma of twenty years' standing (1926-46) but I am curing others with it, cannot this be termed as a scientific proof? Of course there are sceptics who won't believe in anything and would not believe in the existence of God unless they can see HIM with their naked eyes—it is better to leave them alone.

DEATH IS NECTAR

The untimely death of a near and dear one leaves us gloomy and sometimes makes our life unbearable. If we can get in touch with the so-called 'dead' and get some words of comfort from them, are we not consoled ? For the benefit of a very large number of such mourners probably sage Vyasa brought the 'dead' to meet their friends and relations for one night. Is it not comforting if the soul of a dear departed son communicate words of comfort, quote from the Gita as to what is real, offer to guide us particularly for our benefit in the other world and in general convert us to the better ways of life ? This is probably the reason why a retired High Court Judge once told me that although my son was dead I did not lose him. This is what spiritualism does — it opens the gate of mercy, and

shows us the wider outlook of the Universe. When "death" is a decisive conversion and is a natural compelling event for one's progress, are we not by such knowledge comforted at the time of death and depart from this world with higher hopes and nobler aspiration? Death is bitter in ignorance but nectar if we know what it really is.

"DEAD" NOT REALLY DEAD

Spiritualism demonstrates before us that the "dead" are not really dead and the vistas opened before them are far wider than ours. There are different planes where the dead go and this depends on their merit—one of a higher plane does not like to come back to this world. But this is not the case with one who hankers after worldly passion. Spiritualism is a practical demonstration of the teachings of our Scripture—for example, Gita II, 20 says,

"Know this Atman
Unborn, undying,
Never ceasing,
Never beginning,
Deathless, birthless,
Unchanging for ever,
How can It die
The death of the body?"

(Translation by Swami Probhavananda and Christopher Iswerwood).

And, in our Spiritual practices, we find that the so-called dead, being 'atman' (or soul) still remains. Like worn-out garments, the worn-out body is discarded by the soul (Gita II, 22) and so on.

SOUL-DICTATED POEMS

Spiritualism even goes further than this. Many seers, poets, inventors and great men have visions from great souls to help them in their works. Some writers write in trance from dictation from some great soul. I know of a Moslem gentleman, a constant visitor to Pondicherry who is writing mystic poems from such dictation.

In this world there are men who have different grades of merits and advancement—some are so elevated that they at once merge with the ETERNAL SOUL on death, some attain different degrees of perfection, some go to Heaven as contemplated in GITA (IX, 20), some face a trial as described by the spirit of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Vide "The Great Mystery of Life Beyond Death", as dictated by the spirit of Sir Arthur to Diwan Bahadur H. L. Kaji), while some grope in the dark. I would rather say that spiritualism is a practical demonstration of what the religious books say. Different religions have different views and we find that the spirits of different orders describe different experiences. But at the same time I would say that nothing should be done in excess so as to reduce 'spiritualism' to 'spiritism' —the former is a grand moral science which offers the key that unlocks mysteries of ages, and which originating in God, Who is Spirit, and grounded in man's moral nature ultimately consecrates in what is good, beautiful and heavenly, while the latter is unhealthy, unholy and spookish which cannot elevate and benefit anyone. In conclusion, I may quote the following from "The Life Divine" of Sri Aurobindo:

"Spiritualism, in its essence, is an awakening to the inner reality of our being, to a spirit, self, soul which is other than mind, life and body, an inner aspiration to know, to feel, to be that, to enter into contact with greater Reality beyond and pervading the universe which inhabits also our own being, to be in communion with it, as a turning, a conversion, a transformation of our whole being as a result of the aspiration, the contact, the union, a growth or waking into a new becoming, a new self, a new nature..... There are four main lines which Nature has followed in her attempt to open up the inner being,—religion, occulticism, spiritual thought and an inner spiritual realisation and experience: the first three are approaches, the last is the decisive avenue of entry. . . . . Spiritual has used all the three means as starting point, but it has also dispensed with them all, relying on its own pure strength: discouraging occult powers as dangerous lures and entangling obstacles, it has sought only the pure truth of the spirit. . . . . ."

Or, in other words, in order to know what is really the life beyond death, we should study spiritualism but let it *not* be forgotten that the real aim and object should be to have communion with GOD, th SUPREME SPIRIT. We should begin with Spiritualism so that we might be comforted and guided by our near and dear ones or by some great soul and end with communion with GOD.

MUSIC IN NORTH-INDIA

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from each fret seven notes could be displayed by way of the *Meed*. They could finish the whole *rag*, using four strings on only one or two frets. They could manipulate prolonged *Meeds* and *Gamakas* not only in the *vilambita* portion of the *alap*, but also in the *madhya* and *druta* style. Such a command over the technique of the instrumental music is inconceivable to us as we are now used only to the style of Sitar.

Both of these musicians used very broad bamboos for the stem of their instruments, and such strings were used as to enable their sound to reach the ear of a big audience of a big hall.

The influence of Bahram Khan and Sukha Sen and Bahadur Khan in the vocal music, that of Morad Sen in the *Masidkhani Gatkari* and that of Nirmal Shah in the instrumental *Alap*, were far-reaching and long-lasting.

During the early nineteenth century, we find another new band of classical musicians, both vocalists and instrumentalists, most of whom belonged to some line of Tansen. Jaipur produced Dulha Khan and Aman Sen, both great *Dhrupadias*, who trained up many outstanding *Dhrupadias*, from the musicians of different *Khandans* not belonging to the Tansen line. Thus, gradually, we come to find out first class Dhrupadias, who, though trained up by the Seni musicians originated many new *gharanas*. Classical *Kheyal* also had its wonderfully progressive ways. The two disciples of Shah Sadarang, who excelled in *Kheyal*, were succeeded by Sakkar Khan and Makkhan Khan. These *Kheyalis* had wonderful command over the *ragas* and they used the *banis* of Kheyal to gradually unfold the *Vilambita Alap*. Then, when they took recourse to *tans*, they used *gamakas* in imitation of the 'Jod-style' of the Veena. But from the beginning to the end, they, not for a singie moment, deviated from the true lines of characteristics and rhythms of the particular *ragas*. Up to the first portion of the nineteenth century, this superb style of classical *Kheyal* was confined within the family-group of the *Kawal Gharanas*, i.e., the lines originated by the disciples of Shah Sadarang. The *Rangile Gharana* of which Faiaz Khan was an outstanding representative was one of these lines, founded by Sarasa-ranga, the son of one of the disciples of Sadarang.

From the line of Makkhan Khan came a great *Kheyalia*, perhaps the greatest of all *Kheyalias*, who was called "Bade Mahammad Khan." Besides the quick progress of classical *Kheyal*, we find the advent of *Tappa* style of songs, invented by Mia Shari, who also was a son of a *Kawal*, i.e., *Khandani Kheyalia*. Thus, though Upper India was torn by political rivalries and weak administrations the progress of classical music did not suffer in any of its multifarious aspects.

HISTORICAL METHOD IN THE STUDY OF INDIAN MUSIC

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ganas, which were possessed of different numbers of note, registers, metres and literary compositions *(sahitya)*. In the beginning of the classical period (600 B.C.) the *samans* were replaced by the *gandharva* type of music, which evolved in connection with drama. The *gandharva* music was a kind of stage-song or *natyadharmi-giti*, possessed of *svara*, *tala*, and *pada*. Similar changes happened in the music of the ancient Greek. The historian Theodore M. Finney says that music was an integral part of the drama, which bulked so large in the life of the Greek city-state. Music was a part, along with dancing of the Greek religious ceremonies. The epics of Homer or the odes of Pindar were never recited or sung except to music.

A NEW AWAKENING

The dawn of the Christian era brought with it a new awakening in the field of Indian music. In the second century A.D. the form and system of music were more systematic with a scientific outlook in the hand of Muni Bharata of the *Natyasastra*. The genuine type of *raga* came into being, with ten determining characteristics *(dasa-laksana)* and psychological value with the new names of *jatiraga*, and *gramaraga*. There came again a new change in the third-seventh century A.D., when Kohala, Yastika, Durgasakti, Matanga and others began to systematize the aboriginal and regional *(desi)* types of tunes in the high way classical music. This can be said to be an age of reformation, as the stereotyped puritanism was replaced by liberalism. The non-Aryan tunes gradually got into the Aryan stock and the result was that the volume and vital force of Indian music grew more deep and sensitive. Some of the foreign tunes were absorbed into the Aryan music. Hundreds and thousands of *ragas* evolved with their new and novel names and forms. The ancient *gramas* (scale) were gradually replaced by the *murcchanas* (series of upward and downward notes). Variations were found in the number of notes, as some displaced *(komala)* notes appeared by the side of the sharp ones. Such also happened to the Western music during the transition from Greek to Christian. The changes took place in the period of about six hundred years, from the time of Aristoxemus until Christianity became the Roman State religion early in the fourth century A.D. The Ptolemic system, having the Dorian scale as a model, was changed by diverse elements from Palestine, Greece, Rome and Alexandria. The Georgian chant, plain song, plain chant, psalm singing, Ambrosian metrical hymns, etc. were gradually changed in the beginnings of the age of polyphony in 850-1050 A.D. It may be known as a revolutionary action against the old type of music, in the domain of the Western music.

PRE-CHRISTIAN ERA CHANGES

From the historical accounts, placed by Curts Sachs in his *The Rise of Music in the Ancient World* we know that music underwent many changes even before the Christian era. He says that the oldest records of organized and systematized music were Sumerian and Egyptian of 3000 B.C.* That musical life was also changed in the days of David or Solomon in 1000 B.C. and many foreign instruments appeared all on a sudden, just as they had appeared in Egypt after 1500 B.C. and they were: harps, zithers, oboes, cymbals, sistra.** Again in the eighteenth century B.C. when Egypt had conquered the south-west of Asia, the subjugated kings had sent tributes of dancing and singing girls with their strange instruments and consequently Egyptian music underwent again some decisive changes, and nearly all the ancient instruments were discarded. This shows that before the beginnings of the age of polyphony in 850-1050 A.D. music of the Western world underwent several changes.

In the middle of the eighteenth century A.D. there came a radical change in the forms and groupings of the notes of the *ragas (vargikarana)*, in Indian music. The tonal bases *(svarasthana)*, in relation to the microtones *(sruti)*, were also altered for some unknown cause. The groupings of upward and downward notes or *murcchanas*, as generators or determining factors of the ragas, had already appeared with a new nomenclature of *mela* or *thata* or *melakarta*, in the fifteenth-sixteenth century A.D. The visual pictures *(ragamurti)*, with their poetical descriptions and contemplative composition *(dhyana-mantra)*, were already introduced, for better appreciation and intuitive perception of the *ragas*, from the fifteenth-sixteenth century. But gradually that psychological motive was changed, for want of aesthetic sense and proper historical outlook.

In the Western music there came also a renaissance, in the form of radical change between the period 1585-1610 in the domain of Western music. By the year 1600 A.D. the renaissance had reached and passed its high point. Theodore M. Finney reminds us: 'The years between 1585 and 1610 saw the unfolding of one of the most important episodes in the whole of history of music, because it furnished modern musical art with materials and methods hereto lacking'.

But that was not exactly the same case with Indian music. Because, though the Indian method of classification of the *ragas* was changed from the *raga-ragini-putra-vargikarana* into *janya-janaka* or genus-species (cause-effect) method, and most of the *ragas* appeared with their new tonal forms, yet their real motive and spirit behind did not entirely change. Again, from the study of the history of India it is found that Indian music has a tradition behind it and that tradition is no other than the preservation of the genuine culture and method of practice *(gharana)* of music, which are handed down from generation to generation or from the teacher to the students *(guru-sisya-sampradaya)*.

ISLAMIC PERIOD IN INDIA

Many are of opinion that our present system of North Indian music is much indebted to the Muhammedan period, because it produced many geniuses and creative men, like Baiju Baoran, Nayaka Gopala, Amir Khusrau, Rajah Man, Mira Bai, Baba Ramdasa, Surdasa, Swami Haridas Goswami, Mian Tansen and his worthy successors. Captain Dey is of opinion that the most flourishing age of Indian music was the period of the native princes, a little before the Muhammedan conquest. With the advent of the Muhammedans its decline commenced. Indeed it is wonderful that it survived at all. Such was also the decision of Capt. Williards, when he says that the

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"The oldest records of organized and systematized music are Sumerian and Egyptian. Sumerian texts, written in the third millenium B.C. frequently speak of ecclesiastic music in the temple of Ningiru at Lagash. A special officer was responsible for the choir, and another for the training of several classes of singers and players, both male and female. The guilds of temple singers at least became a learned community."
Vide *The Rise of Music in the Ancient World* (1944), pp. 58-59.

** Ibid, p. 59.

VEGETABLE RESOURCES OF THE TRIPURA STATE

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and the weather. The entire hill-sides are thus deprived of the natural soil fertility. Such a condition leads to heavy erosion. Forest Department should, therefore, take up the afforestation work in these hills on proper scientific lines. If the forests are preserved in a proper manner, the Tripura State can also be a potential source of valuable timber, like teak (*Tectona grandis*), sal (*Shorea robusta*), Tun (*Cedrela Toona*), Gamhar (*Gamelina arborea*), sissu (*Dalbergia sissoo*), Jarul (*Lagerstroemia flos-Reginae*), and many other valuable timber-yielding plants.

The areas along the river banks are exploited, and these should be under proper scientific cultivation of the various crops. In fact, all kinds of crops can be grown in suitable areas of this State. There is also another possibility of improving the revenue and health of the State by growing medicinal plants in this State. Some of the areas, particularly those exposed to the heavy rains and having sufficient humidity, may be used for the cultivation of Ipecac (*Psychotria ipecacuanha*) Some of the shady lands, particularly the hill-slopes are likely to prove very favourable for the cultivation of *rauvolfia serpentina* (Sarpagandha) — the so-called 'wonder-drug', whose uses for the treatment of blood-pressure, insomnia and insanity, are becoming more and more widely known and recognised all over the world. Genuine arrow-root (*Maranta arundinacea*) can easily be cultivated in the scarcity areas along with *Sati* (*Curcuma zedoaria*), which will serve as food for the convalescent. In fact, a small cottage industry can easily be developed by cultivating and manufacturing arrow-root. Tripura is very suitable for wide cultivation of Tung-oil, particularly the species — *aluloites mantana* — indigenous to China. The geological nature of the soil and climate are specially suitable for the cultivation of this oil-yielding tree—the oil of which is in great demand. This drying oil is used widely for the manufacture of paint, varnish, oil-cloth, Chinese-ink, and for various other products.

AYURVEDIC PLANTS

There are many hills in this State where Lemon-grass can be cultivated on a wide scale and, I am sure, the oil-content and the citrol content of Tripura-grown Lemon-grass will be upto the specified standard. Ayurvedic medicines can also be grown in different places for the use of the *kavirajas*. This will not only supply the raw materials for the treatment of their patients, but can also serve as the raw materials for making various tinctures, such as tincture of *vasaka, kurchi, kalmeg, ayapan,* and many others. Tripura is also particulaly rich in *hydnocarpus wightiana, taraktogenos kurzii, gynocardia odorata.* These trees yield valuable Leprosy-oil. Of late, there has been a great demand of this oil from the seeds of these species in China and countries of East Asia.

I have, in this article, mentioned very briefly the vegetable resources of the Tripura State. The possibility of the State in this respect is great, if properly worked out. It is hoped that our great administrators will develop the vegetable resources of this State in India along with the many National Development Schemes which are progressing satisfactorily for the welfare of the nation and the country.

MAGIC OF AN INVISIBLE DANCE

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blood cells and liver cells contain $2{\cdot}3 \times 10^{-9}$ milligram whereas the sperms have only about half the amount $1{\cdot}2 \times 10^{-9}$ milligram. The key substance, namely the DNA, is supposed to be constructed by 5 carbon sugar molecules and is linked in chains by phosphoric acid link. Each sugar molecule in the chain is attached to one or another of the four of nitrogen. Associated with DNA, there is also the RNA (Ribose nucleic acid) which is found in the nucleoulus and in the cytoplasm of a cell The RNA has one more oxygen atom than the DNA. From the point of view of synthesis, both the RNA and the DNA are related to each other.

In the great festival of life, the eternal variations, the progess of evolution, the transformations of animals, and all the pictorial sensitiveness of life are the result of the glistening performances of the genes, The much precious beaded necklace of chromosome is adorned by these genes. Under the vast canopy of the sky and before the presence of giant cosmic bodies, the tiny inestimable genes on the chromosomes appear to be the boldest and most enlivened reality. Their harmonious rhythms have a measured swing even in every action and a dominating pervasive style, as refined and delicate as they are discreet. Only credence in pure human knowledge and ingenuity will ultimately transcend their vibrant art by a scheme of a perfectly unvacillating science. The human fortune is enrolled in rhythms of the genes. Individual life appears short, but the art of the genes is long.

TOWARDS FAMILY PLANNING IN INDIA

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larly women, medical men, scientists, sociologists, economists, administrators and political leaders be launched."

FAMILY PLANNING VITAL TODAY

From the trends of population growth and the limit to which our productivity can go, the conclusion is inescapable that the plan to make all planning successful is to make every individual of the country conscious about the problem of human numbers we are now facing. Far greater earnestness and firmness of purpose is needed if family planning is to be the vital feature of our social and economic order. India was pioneer in opening Government-initiated birth control clinics twentyeight years ago and India was also pioneer in accepting family planning as part of the Government policy. Let this pioneering effort be continued with re-doubled enthusiasm and awareness of the crisis before the country and the solution needed to avert the said crisis. Let it be recognised that *"laissez-faire* in population is incompatible with social planning or planned economy—even more so with a socialist planned economy".

Philosophical Background of INDIAN ART

By ASIT K. HALDAR

IN India, all Fine Arts, *lalita kala*, —Music, Poetry and Painting—belong to the 'heart'; and as such, their aims are to be realised through intuition, devotion and imagination. Self-realisation is the artist's goal like that of Sadhakas or devotees. But Westerners believe in the "head" only. That is to say, intellectual and scientific realisation is their summum bonum in art and life. A Western critic, Donald A. Gordon, said: "The principles of art ordinarily taught to students—rhythm, proportion, balance, dominance, subordination etc.—do not fulfil the requirements of *scientific objectives*". He quotes Munro, who states these principles are "so vague and abstract as to mean very little in practice." These European critics, according to their own version, wish to make art *"enough for scientific usefulness."* It is, therefore, quite natural that they with their materialistic and scientific outlook in both art and life should like to employ art for various empirical purposes and artists too would mould their work accordingly. Oriental Art in this respect, however, differs entirely from the Western ideology.

PHASES OF WESTERN ART

Some Western art critics give us some idea of the modern phases of Western art. Modernism in European art made its first appearance after the invention of photography, with the result, that, from 1830-1865, the main interest in art centered round the 'story'; from 1865-1900, roughly speaking, 'more light' was the slogan; and from that time on until recently 'form' for its own sake (without conveying any meaning) has been the battle cry of art.

From about 1900, modernism in art can be roughly classified as (1) Cubism, 1909; (2) Futurism, 1911-1915; (3) Abstractism, 1911; (4) Dadaism, 1916-1922; (5) Surrealism, 1924; (6) Expressionism dating from Van Gough and also (7) Primitivism, which embraces all modern phases of Western art,—except impressionism which differs from the above-mentioned modern schools—was founded earlier by Turner, Delacroix and Monet. Unconventional bold touches of colours flashed on the canvas giving impression of the hazy winter sunset in mist and fog were their aim. The notorious quarrel between Turner and Ruskin which ultimately terminated in a court of justice is known to all. The slightest deviation from direct observation and exact reproduction of nature was never tolerated in those days. After this kind of realistic impressionism, Picasso and Braque subsequently encouraged 'Cubism' and claimed to have invented three-dimensional effect on the flat surface of the canvas. They were, according to a Western art-critic, "influenced by the angular distortion on Negro sculpture". Cezanne said about it, "You must see in nature the cylinder, the sphere and the cone." This statement is apparently a most arbitrary and senseless utterance on the part of an artist. It is interesting to note that in India, a mountainous background, wherever required in Ajanta paintings, was invariably treated in like manner. Further derogatory steps in art were taken by the Italian artist Marinetti in 1911-1915. It was called 'Futurism' and the meaning of the word 'good taste' and 'harmony' as understood according to the English dictionary, was expelled. It can, therefore, be termed as 'Fascism in art'. Artists like Carra, Russolo, Seroerin, Bella and Boccion, were among the followers. Still another deadly phase was 'Dadaism' which meaning 'hobby-horse' in art appeared in Switzerland. These artists, according to an European art-critic, "have too uncanny a fascination for complete revolt against all social conventions." It was followed up by 'Surrealism' (beyond the natural) and was founded by Andre Briton, a physician and writer, in 1924. He was obviously much influenced by Freud. He wanted actually to prove Freudian doctrine through his artistic creation. Being a man of science he was bound to think art in terms of scientific approach. In this way modern art of Europe merged in primitive form and Henry Rousseau, Morris, and Hershfield and others took up the brush without getting qualified as artists. According to Gordon: (1) They have no formal training as artist; (2) They take a simple view of life as a child or a primitive caveman does; (3) They pretend incapacity of being influenced by other types of work; (4) And they believe in producing in quantity to become widely known.

All these modern artists of the West—though, through minute psychological analysis, they look different,—are but all alike. They are in fact chaotic

(tamasic) type of artists as judged by Hindu-Buddhist view of art and life. Herein lies the fundamental difierence between the Occidental and the Oriental,—the realistic and the metaphysical—outlook respectively. Modern Western art in this way has already wrecked the spirit of art itself in acrobatic performances in brush and colour. Moreover, such drastic re-valuation of the fundamental is an enigma which can hardly be envisaged by any sane man.

INDIAN ART: IDEAL & PRACTICE

The ideology and philosophy of Indian art on the other hand, which still require proper study through the various *Shilpa-shashtras, Dharma-shashtras* and also the hereditary artists and craftsmen scattered all over the country, should be clearly understood. We have indeed a scanty knowledge of our own art. While studying European literature on art, we generally commit the mistake of comparing the ideology of our art with the foreign ideology. In Vatsayana's 'Kamasutra' sixty-eight kinds of arts—*kala*—have been described with six limbs of art—*Saranga. Mayamata* and *Shilparatna* are excellent treatises on art and architecture. Art was a subject learnt by the king and the commoners alike. From *Mahavamsa* we learn that King Jyaisth Tissa of Ceylon was a great artist himself and he used to teach people of his State various types of art. He sculptured a most beautiful image of Bodhisattva so perfectly that it seemed as if it had been wrought by supernatural power.

We do not wish to quote Vatsayana's Six Canons of Art *(shilpa sharanga)* as it is pretty well known through the work of Dr. A. N. Tagore. According to *Shilpa-shashtra* an artist should be like a priest and his art must be his *(dharma)* religion. In Ayitareya Brahmana a 'sloka' runs thus :

Silpini samsanti devasilpani etesham vai
silpanam anukritti silpam adhigamyate.
Hasti kamso vaso hiranyam asvatari-ratha
silpam.

Silpam hasminnadhigamyate ye evam veda
yad eva silpanam.

Atmasanas kritir vava silpani.
Chhandomayam va etair yajamana atmanam
sankurute.

(VI, 5, 1 Ayitareya Brahmana).

—They praise the creation of art that is divine. Here art is understood to mean an imitation of those very creations of art divine. The figures of elephant, the figuration in brass, drapery and gold and the mule-yoked chariots are art. By this devotee so fashions his self as to render it (chhandomaya) rhythmical.

In India art had much broader meaning. In *Satapatha Brahmana'* there is a sloka (III.2.1.5)

Vad vai pratirupam tach-chhilpam.

—Whatever is a facsimile is art.

THREE KINDS OF ART

According to *'Brahmana,'* there are three kinds f silpas : (1) 'Deva-silpa' (2) 'Manushya-silpa', (3) Agariya' or 'Asura-silpa' as in 'Sattva,' 'Raja' and Tama' gunas.

The Artist's behaviour is properly described in *Srimahavajrabhairavatantra:'* (given here in translation from Grunwedel's German version) :

"The painter must be a good man; no sluggard, not giving to anger; holy, learned, self-controlled, devout, charitable and free from avarice—such should be the character. The hand of such a painter may paint on 'Sura-cloth'. And if he is successful, then enters the gift of the 'Suras' into him. He should draw his design in secrecy, after having laid the cloth quite flat. He may paint if beside the painter only a 'sadhaka' be present, but not a worldly man be looking on."

Furthermore, *'Shilpa-Shashtra'* puts stress on the manner of thinking before painting a picture:

Alikhyetikttlekhanya su-muhurtye
shubhasthale
sushsthachitta sukhasina smritwa smritwa
puna puna
Tashmin-nimnaonnatadini chaya bhedena
dwarsayet.

—In an auspicious moment and auspicious place and in good health and mind, the artist will sit and by repeatedly thinking (the subject matter) should paint with 'kittalekhani' (brush made of peculiar type of grass as still in use in Tanjore by the indigenous artists). He will differentiate high and low surface using light against shade (but not light and shade of the Western school).

A commercial pattern of design or a piece of sculpture may be called *'Chitra'* but about *'Chitrabhasa'* the *Shilpa-shashtra* mentions three kinds:

Sadrishyam drishyate yasmin dwarpane
prativimbavat
chitravasamiti-skyatam tasva alepanam
smritam

Dhuli chitram Pushpa chitram Rasachitram
iti tridha
rasaliptam cheerasthai
sarveshamatirichyate.

—If like a reflection on a mirror a likeness of an object is produced (on a canvas) is called 'Chitrabhasa' or 'Alepanam.' There are 'Dhuli-chitra' (coloured powder decoration); 'Pushpa-chitra' (flower decoration); and 'Rasa-chitra' (painting embodying emotion) which has more permanency than the rest.

CREATION OF NEW FORM

From such *'Shilpa-shastras'* we can only study the ideology of our country's art and to recreate a new form one can find the way through them. The means of creation will depend upon the power of conception of various subject matters on the part of the artist himself.

Though it sounds paradoxical, a creative artist cannot create art and at the same time analyse his own work critically according to the standard laid down by the ancient *'Shilpa-shashtra'* or by the modern scholar-critics. Art cannot grow under official mandates to serve special purpose, even though it is intended to benefit the public. It will then be an oppression on art and aesthetics both of which would thereby be destroyed.

"Influence of ancient masters should be evident in contemporary art. But a real artist is he who can, in spite of that, create a myriad of original things of beauty. For beautiful expression alone they will be valued and attractiveness will not count. Beauty must be recreated beyond the influence of simple attractiveness. The novice and youngsters are apt to be the victims of ugliness and go astray as they lack conviction, personality and strength of their own. They are also incapable of analysing their own faults and, therefore, cannot select the right path to create beauty. A great artist only can reach the zenith of

his personality but not a mediocre. Mediocres are like a set of uncultured quacks and therefore foolishly boast about their own achievements. As they do not possess any strength and conviction themselves they cannot adjudge strength and value of other great art. A real artist should have his conviction and cannot be misled by others. Immature mind is apt to accept false doctrines preached by others and surrender to them, as they have no self-confidence. They also quickly change their views and readily lose connections or knowledge of the past and future."

So the clamour for the name and fame on the part of our modern mediocre artists is quite clear. These artists are anxious to earn cheap fame and do not wish to take the trouble to go to the fountain-head of our culture. They will not even take lessons from the renaissance school because perhaps that has originated in Bengal.

Poet Tagore in his *'Atmaparichai'* said:

"Youth is like a horse and the old should be its charioteer. What sort of disaster always happened if a chariot was drawn by a horse without its charioteer had been time to time experienced by us in the past."

We all know that Poet Tagore's literary art had as its background his country's ancient culture, which indeed made him unique in the eyes of the world. None could in our country, like poet Tagore, truly assess the fundamental value of our heritage. On the other hand, we now notice, in the matter of fine art in India, only mediocres wish to enjoy the fruit without taking the trouble to climb up the tree. They, therefore, avoid taking lessons from ancient masters or from the renaissance school sponsored by Dr. A. N. Tagore and a band of his disciples. Of course in this way, such mediocres can easily escape the drudgery of learning and therefore straightaway join the French school where 'beauty' and 'good taste' are banned. A natural growth of a country's art can be expected in her own soil. The Buddha said to Sariputta: "I praise not standing still; I praise growth: Herein is man a striver."

INNER PHILOSOPHY

From our *'Shastras'* we know of three essential attributes constituting Nature. These are the three *gunas : 'Sattva,' 'Rajas,' and 'Tamas,' Sattva* is purity; *Rajas* contains attachment to worldliness and *Tamas* is born of unwisdom. Nine kinds of *rasa* (emotion) are embodied in them. *Sattva* stands for *Image-ination*, bringing the image within. A very sensitive mind can only possess such a faculty to experience ultra-normal phenomena and realise the Self *(Atma)*. In *'sattvic'* condition psychic phenomena reveal themselves to him. All works of art done out of imagination in the Oriental countries are both subjective and objective. 'Sattva guna' contains three *rasas* (emotional aspects) viz. (a) Santa-rasa (quiescent); (b) Karuna-rasa (compassion); (c) Vatsalya-rasa (affection). Such art of sattvic types are classed as 'Deva-silpa' i.e. the higher type. 'Raja guna' focuses worldly activities with materialistic aims; all works of art with commercial objective (landscape and portrait paintings etc.) are included in this type. 'Raja' contains three rasas, viz. (a) Vira-rasa (heroic); (b) Sringara-rasa (tenderness); (c) Hashya-rasa (comic); and such art is called 'Nara-silpa.' 'Tama-guna' represents unbalanced mind, vague, incoherent representation (wrongly called rebellion). Three rasas belonging to it are: (a) Adbhuta-rasa (grotesque); (b) Vivat-sa-rasa (ugly) and (c) Rudra-rasa (fearful). All arts of primitive and immature types can be attributed to 'Tama-guna.' Such art is called 'Asuric.' It is nothing but snobbishness on the part of a man of letters to follow Ezra Pound or Elliot, instead of a great savant like poet Tagore who stood for India's cultural heritage. Similarly, by deliberately treading the path chalked out by the French artist Picasso or Matisse and brushing aside Dr. A. N. Tagore's direction and examples in Indian art our artists will go to the gutters of the materialistic Western culture and civilization (Tamas).

In conclusion, let us bow our heads to the artists of India's past who made art a part of their religion and gave solace to mankind and never inscribed their names on their work. One thing is certain that Varanasi will not become Mecca or Jerusalem. Art of different nations will always remain individualistic and in such diversity, unity of mankind can be maintained.

INDIAN MUSIC

(Continued From Page 219)

progress of the theory of music was arrested and its decline was speedy, although the practice, which contributed to the entertainment of the princes and nobles, continued until the time of Mohammed Shah of Delhi, after whose reign, the history of music is full of facts presenting many dismal scenes. But all these opinions should be reviewed with care and a sense of justice.

PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

The Gwalior School, founded by Rajah Man Tunwar, really revived the culture of the *dhrupada* type of *nibaddha prabandha* music, that was current even before the time of Sarangadeva (early thirteenth century) of *Sangit-Ratnakara*. It reached its climax during the reign of Emperor Akbar (1542-1605 A.D.). The *kawal* and *kheyal* types of music had already got their footing in the soil of India. Many of the noted Muhammedan and Hindu Ustads were patronized by the Nawabs and Hindu chiefs. But during the time of Shah Alam II (eighteenth century A.D.), the last titular Moghul Emperor of the throne of Delhi, the glorious musical tradition of the Delhi Sultanate came to an end, and all the Muslim and Hindu Ustads of Delhi and Agra and their adjacent places began to be dispersed in different places of India. The noted musicians, who belonged mostly to the Tansen school, began to seek their refuge in different Durbars of Muslim Nawabs and Hindu Kings and Zemindars of Rajputana, Oudh, Betiya, Rewa, Gwalior, Bengal and other places. This incident was in a sense a blessing to India, for the propagation of classical music outside the boundaries of Delhi and Agra. At present classical type of both Northern and Southern Schools of music are cultured in their true perspectives, in all towns and villages of India. The service of the All India Radio undoubtedly deserves credit for the spread of the culture of music. The folk and other regional music have already occupied their unique positions and got appreciations in different places of India and Pakistan. The future prospect of Indian music is more brilliant and hopeful, and it will surely bring a permanent solace of peace and love not only to the people of India, but also among all the nations of the world. The development and novel creations of the types and patterns of music are the signs of hope and life, and they will undoubtedly supply the fresh materials for the new annals of history of Indian music.

WHEN SCIENCE WILL SERVE SOCIETY?

(*Continued From Page 28*)

the other hand, they must also be properly nurtured if eggs are to be collected from the goose.

Science plays its role in the society through industry. So the proper application of science and technology in industry is of vital importance for human welfare. Many in our country cannot even conceive that a true industrial operation comprises research, development, production, marketing and distribution. In any expansion and/or growth of industries a full application of human science is a prerequisite. An industry, therefore, needs bands of men who may kindle the sparks of interest and reveal the talent which may be lying dormant in some workers in one or other unit of industrial operation. This is not possible if proper education be not imparted to the boys who are to be trained for functioning in the operation of an industry. In an industry one meets a wider range of colleagues, from a scientific assistant to an unskilled worker, and from a millionaire to a commoner. Further, in order to give a lead, men working in an industry must also give newer ideas for improving or widening the activity of the unit. They should try to co-ordinate the different sections of the unit and to canalise the same for future expansion and improvement.

TRAINING OF SCIENTISTS

The above concept of the qualities of scientific personnel raises the question of training of scientists and technologists who may serve the industry for proper utilisation of science for the benefit of our society. We have now an established chain of 20 national laboratories and we have also three units (I.C.M.R., C.S.I.R. and I.C.A.R.) that help in sponsoring research for economic development in the country. All these help in the work of adult scientists. For growth adult education is a necessity but for proper adjustment and sustained progress students from early ages should be trained in the methods of science. The U.N.E.S.C.O. has mentioned, "As long as children do not have a chance to attend school, there is no hope of turning back the flood of young men who swell the ranks of adult illiterates every year". This concept is more applicable in the scientific and technical field. Education in all fields is of basic importance in the planned development of a nation. This is well known and perhaps for this there has been no dearth of committees and commissions on education for the purpose of reforms even in our country. A search in the shelf will show the reports of Hunter Commission (1882), the Sadler Commission (1917), the Hartog Commission (1929), the Sargent Committee (1944) and the two recent ones—the Radhakrishnan and Mudaliar Commissions. These tend to establish that we believe in the doctrine—"the enlightenment and progress of a nation is only tested by the intensity of its devotion to the cause of education"; but for some reason or other it was not possible for us to implement many of the ideas incorporated in the above reports, and thereby make a real progress. One of the shortcomings in our approach was most probably in providing no scope for training of teachers who would work with a mission. This was more in case of those who are to teach in lower classes. It can hardly be denied that teaching of the lower classes requires complete mastery of the subject of study on the part of those who are to teach. This is more essential if we want our boys to get prepared for higher training in methods of science and technology. Equipping the National Laboratories alone or opening up of funds for provision of our high-graded scholars will not solve the problem if we cherish the idea that science would play its proper role in the economic development of our country.

In considering the application of science for the society in India one would recall her past history and culture. Architecture, matallurgy, textile technology, medical and agricultural sciences were much developed in ancient India. Perhaps the pursuit of knowledge was followed more for its own sake than for any utilitarian purpose. A change in the conception of physical sciences and the development in the fields of chemistry and physics altered the functioning of science in the western world. Still a remotest villager in India appreciates the value of germinated pulses, biological importance of certain *Jiyol* fish, the significance of rotation of crop, or similar other ideas based on biological sciences. Partly for political reason and partly for orthodoxy, people were reluctant to adopt the newer changes that were brought about by the advancement of industrial uplift in the West. The result was that we in India could not develop much materialistically, and as such had to suffer politically and went into oblivion.

SCIENTISTS' ROLE

Scientific discoveries and methods of science have reacted on society in different ways in different countries. This tends to indicate that the impact of science has not been uniform and the scientific method of thinking has not penetrated into the different social elements. Does it not indicate that social environment is still largely emotional? Herein again lies the difficulty in applying science for the benefit of humanity. In his quest for material progress man has neglected his own society and even his own mind. One may dissociate from the other, living in a different country and society. But this will ultimately lead to a separation with his neighbour. If one forgets the necessity of mutual relationship with his own associates, the day will not be far off when differences will arise in his own family and with his sons or daughters. What will be the result? Can man then claim to be a superior animal? Here science can play its role and India, which has a glorious history and cultural heritage, may adopt modern scientific methods to prevent the pan of the balance going down to a morass.

In order to serve the society the scientists with their advanced and adjusted knowledge of science must come forward and accept the responsibility of indicating how the modern society be reoriented where every soul will find a place for his own consolation. Here he may follow the doctrine as mentioned in the *Bhagabat Gita*:

Na buddhibhedam janayedajnanam
Karmasanginam
Jojoyet sarvakarmani Vidwan
juktah samacharan

Science will then create a world where men and women will live in peace and contentment both material and spiritual.

Calcutta Sports Reflections

By PEARSON SURITA

ANYBODY attempting even a brief survey of Sport in these parts cannot help being struck by the inescapable fact, the tragic fact that the man is always bigger than the game. This is an unfortunate mentality that has developed in recent years and it has cut deep and indelible scars into all branches of Sport in the city. It has stultified the growth of Sport and sportsmen, it has made too much of the minor issues while the bigger problems are allowed to go unsolved and it has resulted in a hide-bound caucus which, working in positions of authority, tends to give birth to a class of sportsmen imbued with very much the same ideas.

The rot set in some years ago when a handful of professional administrators decided to infiltrate into every sporting activity. One by one the reins of power in almost every controlling body were seized until the same coterie found itself in a position to dictate on all matters relating to Sport. If the method of achieving this had been somewhat diabolical, then it was only to be expected that a boomerang movement would take place and it was not long before the group found itself beset by jealousies and intrigues which, inevitably were of their own making. More and more enemies had to be pacified and in doing so a great and powerful junta grew into being and there seems little prospect of removing it.

The inevitable consequence is that Sport has suffered. Swept along in the tidal wave of opportunism there have been one or two administrators of good common sense: their presence has kept things, so far, within reasonable bounds. They have been men, generally of vision and with an ability to plan and see their plans carried through but they have been a woeful minority.

NET OF INTRIGUE

The majority has been the camp-follower type, the Committee member endeavouring to peddle a few yards of cloth to his Association, the office-bearer in the happy position of being able to divert large orders to his store or to those of his friends. The favours were there to be handed out, the sycophants were not long in coming forward and to-day you have as fine a net of tightly-woven intrigue as could be imagined. Nobody can let go because if he does, the whole thing comes crashing down about his ears.

In order to blind the public to all this — but more and more eyes are now being opened — administrators of Sport, you will notice, lay so much stress on pageantry and pomp and circumstance — the big charity match, the teams imported at great cost from abroad, the ventures to every international concourse, the long speeches and the promises that are never kept, the garlandings and the tea-parties, the glittering trophies, the multi-coloured neck-ties. But mention the Stadium, surely the most glamorous consideration of all, and everyone starts putting the blame on everyone else

And what of the small things, those details that mean so much to Sport, without which Sport grows sterile and eventually dies. There is no planned system for unearthing new talent; in this regard, the rural areas from where, understandably, the healthiest people should come are completely ignored. There has never been any coaching of an organised nature with the exception of the schemes put into action annually by the Cricket Association. Physical training on a mass scale is unknown. Periodic medical check-ups as are carried out in all progressive countries is an idea quite foreign to us. Making playing facilities in the shape of playing-fields and equipment available to boys of school-going age would be far too bothersome for those in office.

FARCICAL DECISION

But these are the essentials and if the essentials are completely overlooked then we are forced to the irresistible conclusion that those who manage Sport are terribly ignorant of the things they ought to do. It amused me to see the fuss that we made and the great lengths to which the authorities went to introduce the farcical "no promotion, no relegation" rule. This, they believed, was one of the finest things they had done for Calcutta Football and the sometimes intemperate speeches that were made at the meeting convened for the purpose led us to believe that by this legislation, Foootball would be cleaned up overnight and a brand new era of peace and prosperity would follow. I thought of certain politicians in this context.

I have failed to see any astonishing results except that a Club, for no fault of its own, is condemned to play for another season in the Second Division. But the thing that really amazes is that member Clubs of the I.F.A. continue to be bullied into making all sorts of decisions. It is high time the Clubs got organised and made up their minds to resist the dictates of one or two persons who seem to regard the I.F.A. as their personal preserves. We all know that this suspension of promotion and relegation was directed at saving certain Clubs that seemed headed for a descent to lower Divisions this year but why should the majority suffer for the sake of one or two favoured institutions?

INDISCIPLINED PLAYERS

When it comes to dealing with players under their control, the Sports organisations cut a still sorrier figure. The Hockey body, to some extent, makes a show of strength now and again but the other Associations are virtually powerless when it comes to taking action against erring Clubs or indisciplined players. A classic example of this arose recently when a complete bungle was made of the case involving a student footballer who, it seemed,

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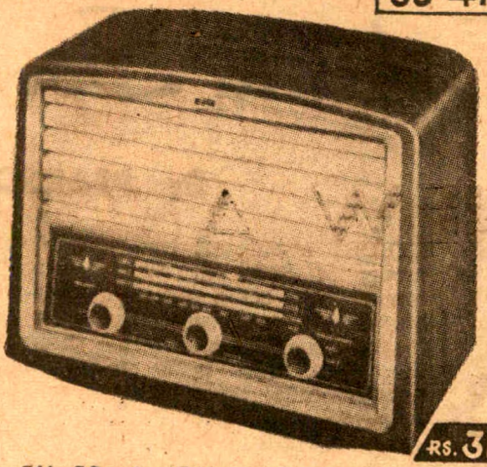

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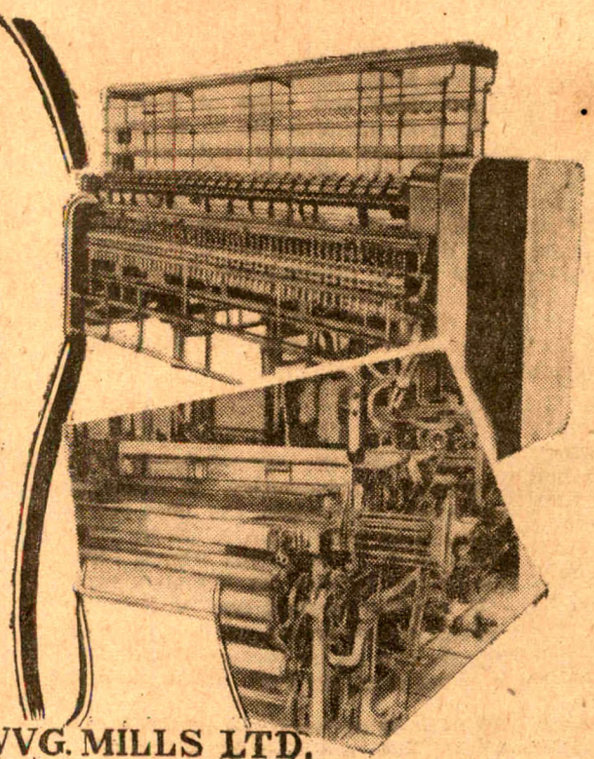

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'NEW ANGLE' IN FILMS

By N. K. G.

REFLECTING on films, a study of the present-day trends and tendencies of the production industry of Bengal leads one to the curious observation that our film producers and productions are increasing as the incentives to film-making in the nature of a sound investment are decreasing in a direct proportion.

The why and the how of this apparent contradiction in terms is a thing for the film statistician and economist to ponder or peruse. But even the most casual observer of films cannot help being struck by the phenomenal rise in the number of productions taken in hand by our adventuresome producers—new or old.

Indeed the production boom in Bengal just at this moment seems to have risen to a fever pitch. The intensity and the impetuosity with which both wary and unwary people are rushing to the fray, and the volume of their undertakings, give the lie direct to the pet theorising put forth in any manifesto or memorandum of the filmtrade that the imposition of the raw film restrictive measures and the governmental indifference to the question of grant of more licences for new cinemas are acting as a great damper to the healthy economic growth of the industry. Rather than affect the volume of productions, which should have been in the normal course of things, the raw film control has served to whet the stir and bustle of productions which is easily discernible in the various studios or from the newspaper film columns. The edge of the determination to produce, howsoever rigid the controls or unhelpful the conditions not excluding the stars' mounting rates, looks like having been sharpened instead of dulled. And it becomes a very curious thing to observe that just prior to the imposition of the raw film quota system, when film-making was a free enterprise, there was a distinct downward trend noticeable in the production camps of Bengal.

DISTRESSING ASPECTS

It is quite possible that this has been so because intending investors are finding themselves barred out from any other avenues of business due to the choking effects of the drastic import cuts and the general economic depression. And one can also say that there is nothing fundamentally wrong or unwelcome about this new boom in production so long as there is no undue strain on the supply of the raw stock. There is, however, one more serious and practical side to the picture. That is the vital question of finding the equity between productions and their releases corresponding to the law of demand and supply We have not quite unoften come across the uncomfortable experience that the quicker the releases of new films, the more accelerated the pace of their exit from the screen. There is then the more involved question of the bottleneck of the less fortunately placed films waiting their unknown turn of release. Judging from all accounts, we are not quite sure if the new film rush will be the forerunner of a new era of prosperity for the movie industry or if it will have in its wake a more depressing slump. Personally I am not so much elated at the new production fever-heat. Why suddenly so many people from different walks of life, thoroughly uninitiated into the art and the industry of a highly technical craft related to the aesthetics of the people should jump to the production ring obsessed with the notion that film-making is the shortest cut to a run of luck is a thing that passes normal comprehension. That brings in the debatable point of there being more to the job of film-making than meets the eye. An analysis of the past course of things shows that such a boom does not help the turning over of a new page of economic prosperity or industrial glory. But surely when there is the boom there must be a psychological bottom to this indiscriminate scramble for production and all notes of caution sounded to the new zealot will be unavailing, giving a fresh spurt to his undeterred impulse to join the holy brotherhood of producers. What is particularly distressing about the whole thing of over-production is that it is oftener than not likely to lead to a state of complete dislocation and unstandardization in the entire perspective of the production industry.

UNREGENERATE ADVENTURISTS

It is for the student of films to take count of these distressful conditions and contradictions of the production industry and to plead for greater sanity to prevail with those drunk with the idea of the get-rich-quick film producer. And it is for the industry itself to set forth a new code of self-standardization and self-guidance by which they can not only regulate the number of productions but prevent a sorry

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Any time
any place
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SISTA'S KMS-173

Revival Of The Folk Drama

By AHINDRA CHOWDHURI

THE problem of revival of the folk drama is engaging the attention of art critics today. They are, however, divided in their opinions about it. Comments have also appeared in the press in Calcutta, a section of which has favourably reacted to it. The problem, however, is a complex one and any hasty judgment might lead to deplorable consequences. What is necessary today is a balanced judgment pronounced with great caution.

The *Yatra* with its primitive art form is the oldest specimen of folk drama in West Bengal which is yet known to us. It has seen many changes and passed through many vicissitudes and has assumed a form today which hardly manifests its ancient traits. It has long deviated from its glorious past traditions and has become a spoilt art. The Oriya *Yatra*, next only in fame to Bengali one, has, however, preserved much of its primitive spirit and is not so much spoilt by the arrogant touch of modernism as ours is today.

INFLUENCE OF 'PALAGAN'

The *Palagan* is another ancient folk art which is a near cousin of the *Yatra* but has gone obsolete today. It was once so much in vogue in this country that frequently it was presented through a mythological theme which used to draw a host of pious hearers. The story of Behula, Nader Chand and Mahua are some of the famous *Palagans* which attracted large audiences. The well-known story of Kenaram the robber and Dwija Bansidas as described in East Bengal Ballads collected by the University of Calcutta will clearly indicate what tremendous influence such presentations through music by a singer and his companions used to cast in the mind of their hearers. The episode of Kenaram and Bansidas as presented by the balladist will surely reveal the truth of our statement. Dwija Bansidas and his companions were passing through a desolate forest away from home for attending a professional call at a distant village. Bansidas was a great ballad-singer. Bansidas and his party were late and dusk had already set in. The night was moonlit. Suddenly they were surrounded by Kenaram and his bandit group. They were about to kill the singer and his party and demanded their belongings. On their stating that they had no money since they were but a group of singers the fierce robber and his associates jointly asked them to sing. They sat around them with drawn daggers. Thinking that they would soon die Bansi and his group sang a swan song. The pale beauty of the moon and the stars percolated through the leaves and branches of forest trees. Bansi and his accompanists sang the doleful story of Behula. His magic voice blended with the pale beauty of the moon in a wild desolation cast a magic spell over the minds of Kenaram and his associates. They sat motionless and still and did not know that it was already dawn. Kenaram was seen weeping bitterly. He said that he would leave his murderous profession for good and set Bansidas and his party free.

Such was the tremendous influence of *Palagans* on public morals. Of course for its success it depended mainly upon the leader who usually had a sonorous voice, his musical companions and lyric accompanists. It further depended upon the melody, the deep undertone of sympathy with which the theme is presented and above all upon the story with a pious mythological background which awakens pity-wonder and awe in public minds—indicating the way divine dispensation is met. The writers of these *Palagans* were ordinary men and no poets or finished writers. They were mostly Hindus or Muslims and their audience consisted of illiterate men and womenfolk of the villages. The story, its philosophy and interpretation and the execution of the whole thing were blended in such a marvellous way by these writers in unison with the public mind that there remained no doubt that they were creations of the soil and thus captured their minds easily.

"YATRA": ANCIENT SPIRIT LOST

The *Yatra* which we have already referred to was an identical folk art with a marked degree of dramatic characterisation. It has been modelled and remodelled again and again in accordance with the advancement of our culture. The Lord of Navadwip with his great associates gave it a distinct colour and form which never was its lot before. With their passing away it fell and deteriorated. Attempts were made during the British regime to revitalise it and non-professional groups gave it a fillip with dramatic innovations from the West. High class classical songs were introduced along with such musical instruments as were unknown, like the violin from the Portuguese and harmonium frm the English. But in spite of these innovations the most important trait of the *Yatra* still remains the same, namely its songs. In the late 19th and 20th centuries the *Yatra* was embellished with a high order of music with Western mode of acting and expression as in a full-fledged drama, giving it the outlook of a stage drama. A new type of *Yatra* evolved and we find in 1910 the theatrical *Yatra* party with a stage and curtain, the remote background on the floor only to depict death scenes in order to avoid the carrying away by the co-actors the dead dramatic person from the arena. But this too had a shortlived existence. Today the

Yatra completely depends upon the mode of dramatic acting and the dialogue and thus its ancient spirit has been totally lost.

'PANCHALI': DASARATHI ROY

Panchali is another type of folk drama and is derived from the *Palagan*. Though it is now less practised we hear of *Panchalis* being played here and there today. Dasarathi Roy (1805), son of Debi Prasad Roy of Badhmura in Burdwan, was its great exponent. Dasarathi introduced a new form by walking as the etymology of the word conveys and completely reformed it casting away its vulgar parts. The *Panchali* was in great vogue in early and middle 19th century and exerted a great influence on public minds. But today it has become an obsolete art.

From the analysis made above we see that music is the backbone of all these primitive dramatic arts known as folk dramas. None of these could exert any influence on the public unless there were sufficient musical elements in it. No powerful acting or forceful dialogue is able to achieve this object. Sometimes incidental music is introduced to heighten an emotional state in a dreary drama. But there is no scope for introduction of such musical elements in a strictly realistic drama. Unless the people can weep bitterly, unless the soft and tender elements in their minds are sufficiently roused up the drama and its acting, it is certain, produce no effect in their mind.

The effects produced by *Yatra*, *Palagan* and *Panchali* on public minds were enormous in those days. The time has changed, so have public minds. They would not cause the same effect today even if produced properly with meticulous care. People will laugh at them, thinking them to be antiquated and vulgar.

REVIVAL ISSUE AND ACADEMY

The question of revival of the folk drama will therefore be a useless project. It would be as good as a fruitless attempt to revive a lost art which is sunk in oblivion. Even if we try to do this, they would influence their own special group and not the general public. If we try to accomplish such a project we would require for every performance at least three leaders or *Juris*, who could sing with full throated ease, chorus singers with sonorous voice, and musical accompanist and other associates. These will be too costly to maintain by a non-professional group. Many groups are there who would be reluctant to have recourse to it thinking it to be an obsolete art for which no mass support will be available from the generous public upon whose whims they are to fully depend. Again it would be impossible for a single group to secure the help of the so many talented persons together. As far as the modern *Yatra* is concerned, it alone can be staged since it is mostly theatrical today where dance drama (acting) and music are combined together to please the human eye. If we wish to preserve our ancient culture through the medium of the *Yatra* by staging it as a full-fledged modern drama we can do so provided sufficient financial help is available, if possible from the Government, for no private sources are adequate for this nor are they competent or reliable enough for undertaking such a responsibility. Some will perhaps argue that a Dance, Drama and Music Academy can well perform this job. But they forget that the students under training there will be reluctant to do so since they have no taste for the art except the one in which they are specially interested. No music student will go for dancing even for a single performance nor will any student of drama care for music. Hardly a single man can be seen possessing talents for three arts together. No school of dramatic art today can come forward to undertake this job, as they coach only on lines of modern drama and will not care to go backwards. Only solo music and dancing can be undertaken as a piece of craftmanship but revival of folk drama is completely impossible.

SUPERFICIAL INTEREST

Let us now consider the question of public appeal for the folk drama. How many persons are really interested in it? Their number is surely very limited. Students of dramaturgy will have but a superficial interest in it inasmuch as it is a subject for their study. Their interest is likened to the interest of a visitor to a museum where prehistoric finds, ancient relics and rare fossils are stored up. Some also argue that music and dancing of the type of *Tussu*, *Gambhira* and *Chou* and others can be presented through select pieces in variety programmes. Perhaps it is partially true but as far as the *Yatra* is concerned, it is impossible to capture its spirit in the course of one single hour.

Thus we see that there are practical difficulties for the revival of folk drama in West Bengal where today it is practically lost. For this none but we are responsible and therefore none can be blamed but ourselves. It was due to our accepting everything Western as good and true as the gospel. The *Yatra* has died long and is safely buried beneath the earth. It is no use trying to unearth the coffin for that would be a useless as well as a herculean effort.

Some of us think that we must return to the *Yatra* as the stage is too costly to maintain. It is true that modern *Yatra* will perhaps be less costly. But in a modern theatrical *Yatra* the spirit of the original *Yatra* will be completely lost. The proposition, however, is very difficult for which we should show no exuberance. However, if we are really bent upon undertaking it we might remodel the *Yatra* in the light of modern tastes as we find today in the "Theatre in the Round" in the United States of America from where it is now infiltrating into the United Kingdom. There is no stage, or screen and visitors sit around the show. This can well be done here but that would be but a poor manifestation of an art, long diseased, without its commanding spirit.

'NEW ANGLE' IN FILMS

(Continued From Page 227)

crash which the boom spells. I have never been in the least inclined towards the view of regimentation of ideas and activities in any branch of intellectual work, far less in filmart where free enterprise is highly welcome. But left in the hands of ignoramuses, films can be a dangerous instrument which can not only overbalance the equilibrium of the trade but can grievously injure the nation's rising stock in the international assessment of our films. Unregenerate adventurists worked up by a gambler's spirit can do and have in the past done immense harm to the indigenous industry which is still groping for light in darkness and these creatures must be shut out from the industry to keep the latter out of harm's way.

And pray, what are all these new vocal votaries of filmart purporting to give us? Almost all of them promise us a new heaven, a complete reorientation of our ideas of filmic progress. Their first entry into the fold is marked with a full-tongued fanfare of publicity for their supposedly daring and courageous ventures, offering us sweepingly dramatic new angles to our film themes, a new texture for the whole fabric. These ambition-flushed producers, quick to discover gullible financiers on whose wings they comfortably perch themselves for a flight into the tempting film-sky, always talk glibly, at so-salled press conferences, of replacing our worn-out, repetitious and conventional film themes. Their ignoble march away from the field after a miserably comic display of their accumulated artistic urge for the industry's redemption makes a pitiful reading, making one wonder as to why new victims of production craze are always found by the dozen out of those who refuse to profit by others' experiences!

One need not stretch one's imagination far to be told that the farthest point for all these loud assertions of dealing us the New Age in films, with novel angles in everything filmic, is almost invariably an empty boast or a 'damp squib', revealed in some oddly amateurish jobs and constituting only a new shock for the industry to absorb. Our industry and our Government should put their heads together to devise a means for weeding out these parasites on our limited indigenous resources of industry and a liability on our sense of patronization of the national film potentialities. Heaven help us from these self-appointed messiahs!

SATYAJIT ROY

There is absolutely no denying however that not all are of the same ilk and there has of late been pleasurable evidences of newer talents emerging on our film plane who appear to have been deeply actuated by the urge for the new angle as under the revolutionising artistic influence of the new trends and tendencies released by that infinite power-house of creative faculty, Satyajit Roy. This one man has, as if with the magician's wand, given a new prestige to India's whole concept of filmart and a new significance to the highly commercialised and thus conventional venture. Satyajit has proved that pictures produced in the good old accepted pattern of overcharged dramatic tension or overstrung 'entertainment' are now an antiquated and discarded pattern of movie work. He has brought into motion an onrush of new thoughts by his three great film endeavours.

Roy is immeasurably the fountain-head of a new school of film thinking, which presages a new style of film approach and execution. Of course this has given rise to a whole host of imitators who may be styled smaller 'Satyajits'. But the compelling values of the dynamic new force that Roy has generated can never have been lost upon the far wider generation of film fraternity. A rapturously admiring world outside has proved this to the hilt. The new outlook must produce new dreamers in the shaping of our films of tomorrow. Let us hope they will be a strong makeweight against the conventional films of today.

CALCUTTA SPORTS

(Continued From Page 225)

was not qualified to be a member of any college at all. The Association went against all evidence and one of its Sub-Committee members resigned in protest. If only there were a few more of this gentleman's courage and way of thinking!

This attitude has led to the emergence of a breed of sportsmen that regard the controlling bodies with disdain. Their approach to everyone, authorities, their own club officials, their rivals, referees is coloured largely with arrogance and the belief that they can never be wrong. This extraordinary outlook, in turn, wrecks the cause of Sports and ruins, for ever, all prospects of progress and improvement.

The solution to all this? How many more times am I to say it? A complete re-organising with only sportsmen, past and present, in control, and in this the Clubs must co-operate by sending the best qualified men to represent them on various councils, or else a seizure of power and authority by Government-sponsored committees. The latter is the last thing anyone would desire. It works very well in countries where everything is regimented but I don't think you, the general public, have done anything to deserve that.

This article has not been an easy one to write but as it was intended for a festive publication, it has been written with malice towards none. Those who find the shaft go home can hardly blame me; let them, at this period of goodwill, search their own hearts for the truth.

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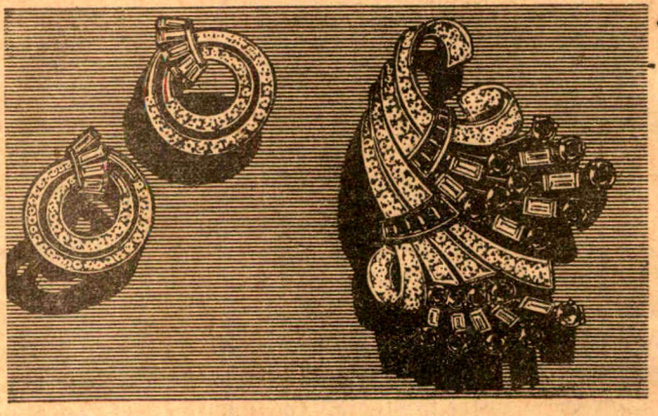

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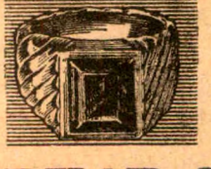

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HISTORY OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

By Dr. ANIMA SEN GUPTA, M.A. Ph.D. Patna University

THE need for re-orienting the history of Indian philosophy is greater today because this will enable us to get a comprehensive idea about the culture and heritage of one's country. It is, of course, not possible to study acurately the history of Indian philosophy of the ancient period because of certain difficulties. In the first place, a thorough chronological recording of thoughts and materials is not possible, because the Indians of that age cared more for the truth realised: obviously, they did not attach any importance to the life and date of the author. In fact, they were more interested in enjoying the fruits and flowers of the tree of religion rather than trying to find out the planter.

The position is, however, quite different if we refer to Western philosophy. While it is easy to give a detailed chronological account of the thought development of a particular philosopher of the Western world, with special reference to his age, date and the extent of indebtedness to the preceding thinkers, it is not so in the field of ancient Indian philosophy. The dates which have so far been collected through the strenuous efforts of many oriental scholars, are uncertain and the periods in which the history of ancient Indian philosophy is generally divided are arbitrary and artificial.

OUR HERITAGE

Happily today, we have become more particular about our own faith and philosophy, culture and civilisation. Today we realise more than anybody else the need for having a command over our own heritage. A mere chronological treatment of philosophical thought is not enough to realise the cultural heritage of a country. A true realisation of Indian culture presupposes an accurate analytico-synthetic knowledge of all important changes and developments, occurring in the different spheres of Indian life in different ages. In this respect, I find that all standard works on the history of Western philosophy lay stress on the chronological development of philosophical thought, thereby ignoring the socio-political background of that particular age. It is, therefore, felt that the traditional method of writing a history of philosophy needs a change. What is really needed is a new outlook. There should be a new method of approach by which it should be possible to trace, in the first place, the historical development of philosophical thought in the background of major social, political and economic changes.

On the soil of India, prophets and philosophers had appeared from time to time who had given a new method of thinking in the field of philosophy. Their messages were really the cumulative effect of the various factors relating to different aspects of life of that age. For example, we may very well refer to the philosophical teachings of personalities like Lord Buddha and Samkara in the context of social, political and religious conditions of their respective periods.

PHILOSOPHY OF BUDDHA

Although Buddhism was regarded as anti-Brahmanic and anti-Vedic in form and character, closer study reveals otherwise, because it resembles the teachings of the Upanisads. In fact, while studying Buddhism, one gains the impression as if he is studying something fully in accordance with the traditional faith, philosophy and religion. I should like to cite examples to show parallelism between Buddhism and the traditional Vedic thoughts.

The sages of the Upanisads realised by their insight and wisdom the utter worthlessness of this transitory world. They declared emphatically that nothing stands, nothing remains fixed and nothing endures for ever. Not only this: they were also eager to find out that which would make them deathless, would place them in the *amrita-loka* or the region of immortality.

In the philosophy of Lord Buddha, we find that the interpretations of the worldly life given by him and the ultimate object sought by him were not different from those of the Upanisads. Lord Buddha has said: "Oh Bhikkus, listen, I have found *Amritam* which will bring to man an assurance of immortality."

In the four noble truths which Lord Buddha has preached, he has taught that the world is transitory and is, therefore, painful. He has further said that there are noble steps which one can follow to remove desire which is the cause of worldly existence. So far as this cause of worldly existence is concerned, there also we find parallel truths in Buddhism and Vedic philosophy. It has been stated in the Rigveda: In the beginning there was *Kama*, the earliest seed of mind and the wise sages in their hearts found out the bond of *Sat* in *Asat*. In brief, we can say that according to this *Sukta*, desire is the only snare that binds the world—there is no other bond. In Buddhism, *Mara* is depicted as the evil one who is the root cause of all sorts of sufferings and this *Mara* is nothing but *Kama* or desire personified. The literature of the Vedic philosophy is full of this idea of *Kama* and its annihilation, and in this respect Buddhism is, indeed, an offshoot of the great tree of Vedic religion.

All these similarities and many others have been brought to light by several oriental scholars of the 19th and 20th centuries who took pains to show how Buddhism in essence was not different from the Upanisadic thoughts and ideas which constituted the "central force" of the Vedic religion.

ANTI-VEDIC FEATURE

The most remarkable anti-Vedic feature of Buddhism figured prominently in the form of the "non-soul theory" which had denied emphatically the substantiality and permanence of *Pudgala* or *Jiva*. Egoity and personality, however, are admitted as unreal by

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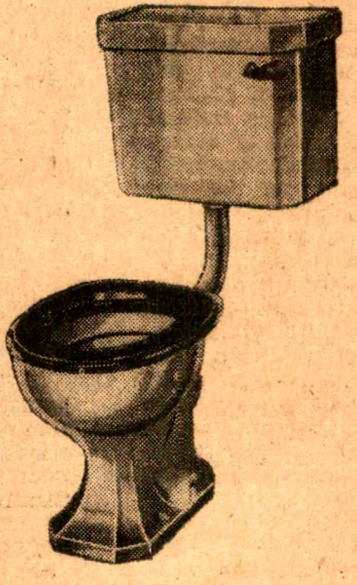

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all orthodox schools. So, by declaring the psychological self as false and fictitious, Buddhism could not show its difference from the Vedic philosophy and religion. The question of distinction and difference arises when one proceeds to find out if there is any permanent and transcendental soul beyond its phenomenal manifestation. The Vedic philosophy gives its view in the affirmative but Lord Buddha is silent on this point. This silence can very well be compared with the *Netivada* of the Upanisadic philosophy, as *Netivada* in a sense implies silence on the nature of reality. No adjective of the empirical world can be applied to *atman* and so it is better not to make any attempt to explicate its nature. It does not seem to me that Buddha has denied the existence of a positive and spiritual reality. To taste truth is to be immortal and this immortality can never be a negative term. It is fully concrete and positive. If a positive and permanent spiritual reality is wholly denied, then how are we to explain *amritattva* which Lord Buddha himself had sought and discovered? Here also, by observing "silence" on the question of immortal *atman*, Buddha has followed only in the footsteps of his predecessors of the Upanisadic age. So far as fundamentals are concerned, it is now evident from the materials collected by eminent scholars of the Buddhistic philosophy that it was by no means a deviation from the traditional Upanisadic philosophy and religion.

REASONS BEHIND LORD BUDDHA'S HERESY

The question, therefore, arises: why did Lord Buddha refuse to admit the validity of the Brahmanic literature? One may also pose a question: how Lord Buddha, despite being profoundly well-versed in philosophy of his age, could openly become anti-Vedic in attitude bearing in mind that his teachings in spirit tallied with the Upanisadic philosophy? The answer can be found out by analysing critically the socio-political atmosphere of his age. The social conditions of that age were not favourable for the Brahmins who were the sole dominating figures in the pre-Buddhistic age. According to Rhys Davids, warrior class was the most powerful section of the society in the age of Lord Buddha, and the power of the Brahmins paled into insignificance due to their various malpractices. Brahmins of that age were very much in favour of mechanical ritualism only and real philosophical quest was dead among them. The rigid orthodoxy of the Brahmins could not be stopped by the current ideas of the Upanisadic philosophy, and their rigorous insistence on *varnas* and *asramas* naturally aroused disgust and hatred in the hearts of free thinkers. While Upanisads admitted the sanctity of soul, the so-called followers of the Upanisadic philosophy started despising human beings only on the ground of *varnas*. The period was one of decadence of the Brahmanic religion and not of its expansion. The country needed a new mode of thinking to stop the ritualistic religion of the degenerated Brahmin class. This task was performed by Lord Buddha who gave India a new faith, philosophy and religion at a time when the priests and common people were steeped in narrow religious rites and superstitions. It was, therefore, quite natural for Lord Buddha to differentiate his new religion from the degenerated form of the traditional religion of the Hindus.

RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY

In modern age, a similar socio-religious task was undertaken in the 19th century by the great reformer Raja Ram Mohan Roy who like Lord Buddha, restored the religion of his ancestors to its original purity by introducing the more progressive and reformed religion of the Brahmo Samaj. The central core of Buddha's teaching was to re-orient the Upanisadic philosophy with a new emphasis. He was born in the Republic State of the *Sakyas* and he, therefore, automatically imbibed the spirit of freedom which was the accompanying virtue of a republican State. The profound rationality which found expression in the personality of Lord Buddha was thus due to the political atmosphere in which he was born. He used to declare to his followers: "As the wise takes gold by cutting, burning and rubbing it on a piece of touchstone, so *bhikkus*, you are to accept my words, having examined them and not merely out of your regard for me."

GOSPEL OF AHIMSA

The gospel of *ahimsa* which has become the most valuable gem of Buddhism is also not a new addition to our religion and philosophy. It was recognised as an important virtue even by the orthodox Hinduism of the pre-Buddhistic age. It was because animal sacrifices were too much in practice in the age of Buddha that he vehemently protested against this cruel action and declared *ahimsa* as the supreme virtue.

It is evident from some of the verses of the *Sutta Nipata* that Lord Buddha was not really an antagonist of a true Brahmin: he was disgusted with the malpractices of the Brahmin class of his age and was against the rigidity of the caste system. If we study the social and political history of Buddha's time, we shall find out that extensive liberalism, strict observance of moral principles, non-observance of caste distinction and a thorough rational outlook, which were the real ornaments of the Buddhistic religion, did not grow in Buddha through the grace of some supernatural agency. Buddha received them from the particular socio-political atmosphere in which he was born and educated. It is, therefore, felt that in preparing a history of Buddhistic philosophy, these profound influences of the socio-political factors should be carefully analysed. It is also necessary to emphasise in such study that in essence and fundamentals, Buddhism is not really different from the Upanisadic religion of the Hindus. According to Rhys Davids, Buddha was "born and brought up and lived and died a Hindu. Gautama's whole training was based on Brahmanism. He probably deemed himself to be the most correct exponent of the spirit, as distinct from the letter of the ancient faith, and it can only be claimed for him that he was the greatest and wisest and best of the Hindus."

PHILOSOPHY OF SAMKARA

I shall now briefly refer to the philosophy of Samkara. If Samkara were born in the age of Nagarjuna, perhaps he would have been a staunch Buddhist and not an *Advaita Vedantist* of the first order. Some of his thoughts and ideas seem to me to be the "echoes" of Nagarjuna's "Karikas." Despite so much affinity, Samkara became an *Advaita Vedantist* because during his time the religion of Buddha was in decay. Samkara's definition of *Nirvisesa-Brahma* reminds us of Nagarjuna's definition of *Tattva* or the ultimate reality given in his famous book *Madhyamika-Karika*. Nagarjuna has defined *Tattva* as that which is calm, blissful, non-dual and harmonious where all plurality is dissolved and all cries of intellect are stopped. The dialectical arguments used by these two great personalities of two different ages are similar and there is similarity also in their methods of approach. Both hold that the supra-intellectual non-dual reality cannot be grasped by the intellect

which can proceed by division and dichotomy only. Ultimate reality is "silence" and it has got to be realised directly. Relational intellect working through concepts and categories, can give us only a relative and conditional reality. Ultimately, it is false, because it is different from both *Sat* and *Asat*.

The conditional and relative reality is called *sunya* by Nagarjuna and *Anirvacaniya* by Samkara. Both of them have recognised the importance of the empirical world and have tried to give rational justification for its existence. In the *Madhya-mika-Karika*, it has been stated clearly that nobody will be able to reach the ultimate goal, if he neglects altogether the empirical truth of this phenomenal world. It is only through the lower that we can go to the higher.

In a brief article it is not possible to give a detailed analysis of similarities existing between *sunya-vada* of Nagarjuna and *Advaita Vedanta* of Samkara. I shall, however, try to analyse briefly the social and political conditions of India during the time of Samkara and also prior to him. Such analysis, I am sure, will make us understand the reasons for Samkara's allegiance to *Advaita Vedanta* school of Brahmanic religion.

AGE OF SAMKARA

Just before the arrival of Samkara in the field of ancient Indian philosophy, we find the glorious revival of the Brahmanic philosophy and Sanskrit literature during the age of the Guptas. In this age, Brahmanism enjoyed imperial patronage and naturally, therefore, it again started exerting the paramount influence on the life, religion and philosophy of our country. This is the age in which we also find the disappearance of kingless republic and the re-establishment of the traditional hereditary monarchy on the soil of our country. The king used to be looked upon as the representative of Lord Visnu, the supposed preserver of the entire world. This sort of political concept is nothing but a legacy of the age-old Vedic religion and tradition which remained in a subdued form during the period of supremacy of the Buddhistic religion. Of course, Brahmanic religion did receive imperial patronage during the reign of Pusyamitra Sunga who was a staunch enemy of Buddhism. It is held that he established a special hermitage for the grammarian Patanjali and encouraged him to write his great book *Mahabhasya*. Rights and privileges which the Brahmins lost during the reign of Asoka seem to have been restored to them by the Sunga King Pusyamitra.

The renaissance of the Vedic religion of the Hindus, however, was carried on brilliantly by the Gupta kings who reigned over the soil of India for many years. Hindu philosophy was systematised through their efforts and was also made popular among common people through *puranas* and *itihasas*. Sanskrit language which to a certain extent lost its glory during the age of Pali-Buddhism, was again restored to its original position. Even Buddhist philosophers like Dingnaga and Vasuvandhu started writing their books in Sanskrit which was the main language and vehicle of expression of the Brahmanic culture. Buddhism was at that time in a state of decline in Central and Southern India. In that decaying condition, many malpractices and superstitions crept into its body spreading evil influences on all sides. It allied itself with *Saktism* and Buddha-*tantra* became an important form of *tantric* religion in our country.

PRESSURE OF BRAHMINISM

The growing pressure of the Brahmanic religion was too much to be resisted by the dying religion of Buddhism and in order to maintain its bare existence, it had to adopt popular practices of the Vedic religion to such an extent that it could hardly be distinguished from being a sect of Hinduism in the 8th century A.D. It was in such an atmosphere that Samkara was born. It is, therefore, evident that Samkara with his great religious zeal should profess the faith of the Vedas and the Upanishads which formed the major religious force in India at the time. In spite of his sharp dialectical power and logical precision which could find parallel only in Nagarjuna, he could not adhere himself to Buddhism which was in a decaying state. Naturally, therefore, he came under the banner of Hinduism and began to start strong campaign against Buddhism. It seems to me that Samkara was well aware of the fact that *sunya-vada* of Buddhism was not in spirit different from the *Advaita* creed and that is why instead of refuting the doctrine of *sunya-vada* on proper logical ground, he took the word *sunya* in its popular sense of *Asat* and dismissed the theory unjustly in his *Bhasya*. Again, although in his philosophical treatise, Samkara appeared as an *Advaita Vedantist*, believing only in non-dual and characterless absolute; yet in his actual life, he was a worshipper of *God Siva* and a follower of the *bhakti* cult. This apparent anomaly in his life and teachings also could be explained by referring to the historical background of our country in the 8th century A.D. It was in this period that *Vaisnavas* and *Saivas* of Southern India started fighting against Buddhism and Jainism on the ground of *bhakti* and the cult of *bhakti* too, consequently gained considerable ground during this period of Indian history. It will, therefore, be not wrong to suppose that Samkara who belonged to the land of *bhakti*, could not overcome the theistic influence and in spite of his allegiance to *Advaita Vedanta*, he became the worshipper of personal God.

From the above discussion, it would be clear that a student of philosophy should be familiar with all these facts of great historical importance so that he is able to grasp easily the movement of thought from one age to another. The great personalities who introduced newer and newer forms of religion were not really the incarnations of God. There was nothing mysterious or inexplicable about them. Each of them appeared on the soil of our country as the result of historical necessity and it is time this aspect of history of philosophy is fully realised and grasped by every student of Indan philosophy and religion. It is true, the history of Indian philosophy is still in the process of making and the only comprehensive historical record we possess today is the voluminous work by the eminent oriental scholar late Dr. Surendra Nath Das Gupta. The works of Dr. Radhakrishnan, Dr. Chandra Dhar Sharma and others relate more or less to Indian philosophy in general but not to its historical aspect. In the context of new outlook discussed in this article, we should make a sincere attempt to prepare the history of Indian philosophy of different periods so that important social, political, and economic changes of a particular age may be reflected in a scientific manner. This way alone, we can expect to follow in the best possible manner the historical development of Indian philosophy of different ages.

LORD KRISHNA AND THE GITA

By M. HOSSAIN

WHEN we study religion and the religious teachings we find that religion and religious teachers of the world present before us a perfect programme of the life herein and hereafter. These teachers are styled variously by some as *Rishis*, *Munis*, by others as *Nabis*, *Paighambars* etc. Among these was one Holy Personage, I mean Sri Krishna, whom in Islamic phraseology I would call Krishna *Alaihis-Salam* (upon whom be peace!). I have no hesitation in regarding this great personage, whom the Hindus regard as an *Avatar* of God, as a *Nabi*—a Prophet of God. I, therefore, add the adequate salutation to the prophets. According to the teachings of Islam, the Muslims can make no distinction between the prophets of the world. Even as they regard Noah and Abraham and Moses and Jesus (upon all of whom be peace!) as prophets of God, even so do they regard the prophets of all nations. It makes no difference whether we know them or not. The Quran teaches that prophets have been sent in all ages, in all countries and amongst all nations. And it was but natural that they should come because man is made responsible for his actions, and he must have teachers and guides. The Quran boldly proclaims:—

(1) *"And for every people there has been a guide" (13 : 17).*

(2) *"And there has not been a people but a warner was sent to them" (35 : 24).*

(3) *"And certainly we sent Apostles before thee (Mohammad); there are some of them We have mentioned to thee and others whom We have not mentioned." (40 : 78).*

SIGNIFICANT LIGHT

It is clear from the above quotations that in the Quran only the prophets of those nations have been mentioned whose history was known to the Arabs, or with whom they had communications or who lived in their neighbourhood. In mentioning their old histories, frequent references have been made to their prophets. But the Quran expressly says there has never been a people to whom no prophets were sent. If, therefore, Sri Krishna is not mentioned by name in the Quran, that is no reason to doubt his prophethood. Would we believe for a moment that a nation whose civilisation and culture had spread over such a large part of Asia, whose philosophy and learning had influenced Greece and Egypt, was left without a guide and teacher? We are, therefore, forced to recognise the Teachers and sages of India as prophets. It should not seem objectionable if the Hindus regard their sages and prophets as *Avatars*. This word appears strange to the Muslims as the words *Nabi*, *Rasul*, *Paighambar* etc. appear strange to them. And these names and phraseology have become a cause of discord and the root of many mischiefs. We need not, therefore, lay too much stress upon words or phraseology.

BATTLE OVER NAMES

Mowlana Rumi, the great Sufi poet, in his Masnawi, related the story of four men whom a generous man had given some money to be used by all of them for buying only one thing. It was a small amount; each of the recipient wished to spend it on something to eat. The Arabs said he wanted to have *inab*, the Persian wanted *angur*, the Turk wanted *Ozam*, the Kurd wanted *istafil*. All these, however, wanted grapes, but as none of them knew the language of the other, there arose the dispute as to what they should get. They, therefore, fought each other, until a passerby who happened to know all these languages intervened and got for them the grapes. At this all the disputants marvelled at the wisdom of the passerby. The grapes in the story, satisfy the desire of those who believe in the *Rishis*, *Munis*, the *Avatars* and *Paramhangsha* on the one hand and of those who believe in *Nabis*, *Rasuls* and *Paighambars* on the other. So the commemoration of the birth of Sri Krishna is not only a blessing for Hindus, but also a blessing for the Muslims. According to the teachings of the Quran, a Muslim can make no distinction between the prophets. As he believes in the prophets who appeared before the time of the Israelites—Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Issac (upon all of whom be peace!), so also he believes in all the prophets of the house of Israel—Moses and Jesus (upon whom be peace!). He may thus naturally regard Sri Krishna as a prophet.

PROPHET "KAHIN"

There is no doubt that the name of Sri Krishna does not occur in the Quran. But when we consider its teachings about the advent of prophets among all nations, on the one hand, and the following tradition of Hazrat Mohammad reported by Dailami on the other, we cannot help believing that Sri Krishna was a prophet. The tradition of the Prophet runs as follows: "There was a prophet in Hind of Swarthy complexion whose name was Kahin." This tradition finds a place in Dailami's book "Firdusul Akhbar." Dailami is known as a celebrated Muhaddis (one learned in traditions) who died in 507 A.H. Some of the Ulemas may dispute the authenticity of this tradition, but it is at least certain that there was an idea prevailing among the Muslims of the 5th and 6th centuries that among the prophets who have passed away there has been one in India by name Kahin. It must be the popularity of this *Hadis* in his days that induced Dailami to record it as an *Hadis* in his book. This is not my personal view. The Muslims of 700 or 800 years ago also had this same idea. Just consider the Hindus, they accept Sri Ramchandra and Sri Krishna as their religious leaders. The Muslims must, therefore, unhesitatingly accept them as prophets.

WHERE WE DIFFER

It may be objected that the Hindus assign to these personages Divine attributes. This attribution is based upon the figurative language which is mostly found in the sacred scriptures of India, specially in Gita, by which one is tempted to extol the persons of the prophets to Divinity. In the Quran the following is addressed to the Prophet Mahammad:

1. *"Nor didst thou throw at them when thou didst throw but God did throw" (8 : 18).*
2. *"Verily, those who swear fealty to thee, do*

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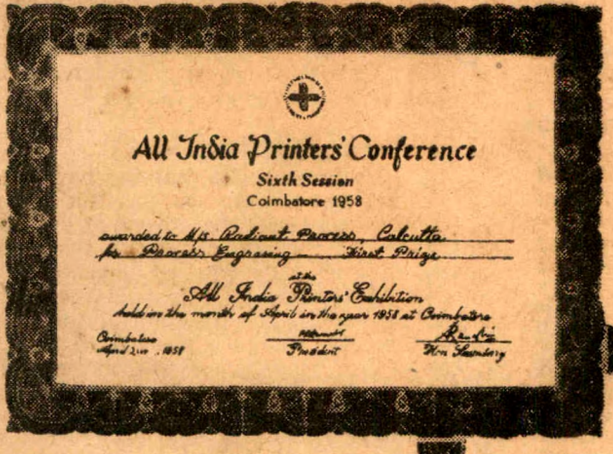

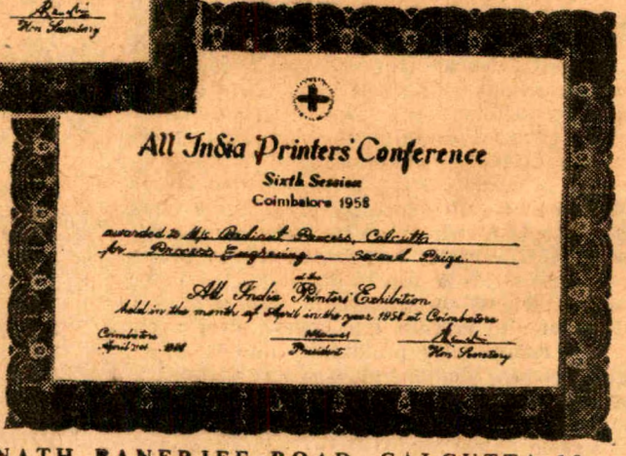

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not swear fealty to God; the hand of God is over their hands." (48 : 11).

In the above verses, God speaks of the Prophet's action as His own, his hand as His own hand, and says: "Say thou O my servants." The Sufis have in their own way, said all sorts of things when interpreting this verse.

SRIKRISHNA & GITA

There is no doubt that the life of a prophet points to God, it leads to God. The prophet brings men to Him when they are gone astray from Him. Through the prophets men come to have a deep connection with God. A study of the Gita makes it clear that it is God who is addressing Arjuna. The fact is that when a prophet speaks on behalf of God and in His name his soul does not act as a mediary. He becomes as merged in God as the iron which when put into the fire becomes fire. Owing to this merging of one into the other the Divine word flows even as God speaks through the tongue of the prophet. This is the style of the Gita also. And the people who knew nothing of the secrets of the Divine word took it as a speech of Sri Krishna, and attributed all power and might manifested therein to Sri Krishna himself. And so they took Sri Krishna to be God. This is the basis upon which the Hindus have enlarged extravagantly. But this does in no way detract anything from the greatness of Sri Krishna. The Gita stands there to bear witness to Sri Krishna's spiritual greatness and glory.

GITA & QURAN

A comparison of the teachings of the Gita and the Quran reveals a wonderful similarity. I will only briefly refer to two points leaving the details to the readers to think over. The Gita teaches only of *Karma* (action); it lays so much stress upon the performance of man's duty that it calls *Puja* (worship and service) and styles it as *Gnan* (Knowledge). The Gita then places before us only the one ideal of service. This service is to be performed without regard to consequences, with a sincerity of purpose which thinks of no self, no recompense. We find this very teaching embodied so prominently in the following verses of the Quran:

"Verily, my prayers, my sacrifices and my life and my death are all for God, the Lord of all the world." (16 : 163).

That is to say, the actions of a believer, all his movements, his activities, his sacrifices in life must be solely for God without any thought of self. This great teaching of both the Quran and the Gita forms the basis of the highest morality.

Some have been led astray by these teachings of the Gita to conclude that it inculcates *Ahimsa* and *Sannyasa*, whereas it inculcates the doctrine of work — Karmayoga — only, and regards the performance of duty all along as the true *Sannyasi* should do without attachment to it. It also considers it a man's imperative duty to wage religious war, to establish right and truth and to repel the wrong. When on the battle-field of Kurukshetra Arjuna shrank back from this sacred duty, Sri Krishna addressed him in what are now the words of the Gita. It is evident from verses 31—40 of Chapter 2 that religious war *(Dharmayudha)* has been inculcated as a man's duty, and Arjuna is told that it is a Kshatria's duty (*Dharma*): "O Partha, this war opens before thee a door to Heaven." (V. 32).

SRIKRISHNA & WAR

It is probable that a superficial reader of the Gita might take Sri Krishna to be a war-god, but as a matter of fact Sri Krishna exerted himself to his utmost to avert war before it was declared: he proposed a reconciliation between the Kauravas and the Pandavas, by persuading the Kauravas to restore to the Pandavas their right and it was only when the Kauravas elated with pride, totally refused the offer that the war was declared. The great philosophy of life that the Gita teaches is that in order to establish right and truth, no sacrifice should be considered too great. It is *Adharma* (sin) to see right and truth trampled under foot and not to sacrifice oneself for it. Not one, but a thousand lives may be sacrificed so that the truth may be preserved. No philosophy and law on earth denies the right of self-preservation. How then can the war for the preservation of *Dharma* which is dearer than everything else to be unlawful, when all law allows the right to fight against the oppressor for the preservation of life? It is not religion or morality to turn the other cheek when the one had been smitten.

QURAN & WAR

The Pandavas whose rights had been usurped were the oppressed and the Kauravas who are the oppressors and usurpers, could not be persuaded, in spite of all attempts at reconciliation, to restore those rights. The war was, therefore, inevitable and there could be no objection to it. The Quran contains the same teaching:

"Permission to fight is given to those who are fought against because they have been wronged; and verily God has the power to help." (22 : 41)

Again:

"And if it were not for God's repelling some men by others, surely cloisters and churches and synagogues and all places of worship wherein the name of God is mentioned much, would be utterly demolished." (22 : 42).

On another occasion Muslims are exhorted to fight in the way of God as the following verse of the Quran shows:

"And what has happened to you (Mohammad) that ye fight not in the way of God and the weak among men and women and children, say, our Lord, bring us forth from this city of oppressive people." (4 : 78).

Thus we see the agreement on this subject between the Gita and the Quran. Do we not see how all sages and seers agree? Does not this perfect agreement between the teachings of the Gita and the Quran impress us? Yes. But we, the Hindus and Muslims do not act up to the moral and religious teachings of the Gita and the Quran.

MUSLIMS AND GITA

The function of religion is to educate and train reason and sentiment so as to make them conform to each other. The Gita also trains reason and sentiment, and this is its philosophy. The personage therefore, who delivered the Gita deserves all honour and glory. We should bear in mind that the Gita only flowed from the lips of Sri Krishna, but in reality it is not his work. When, after the battle of Kurukshetra, Sri Krishna and Arjuna happened to be seated together, and Arjuna earnestly entreated Sri Krishna to repeat the Gita in the same strain as on the battle-field, Sri Krishna said he could not, because that was no occasion for it. This shows that it was not of his own accord that Sri Krishna could recite it but it was from God that the Gita flowed through his mouth. This is the truth. This great philosophical book, whose philosophy is always fresh and practicable, the Muslims would do well to study and comprehend and thus draw the Hindus closer to themselves, in order that by mutual understanding of one another they may learn to respect each other's religion. And this is at the present time the only means to bring about inter-communal peace unity and solidarity.

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